

THAMES TALBOT LAND TRUST

TaTTLe^r



Ross's Woods sign by David Wake

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Celebrating Ross's Woods

TTLT purchased Ross's Woods, its 20th nature reserve, in 2020, the same year as TTLT reached its 20th anniversary. This parcel of 23 hectares (56 acres) is an important wildlife refuge situated in the Five Points Woods Wetland Complex near Ingersoll, ON. Its mix of deciduous/coniferous forest, cold-water streams, and spring-fed provincially significant wetlands creates many unique and unusual habitats that support various rare species of dragonflies, butterflies, birds, and plants.

In true TTLT fashion, we held a party on September 25, 2021 to celebrate the newest addition to the TTLT family. The Snider family, whose property is adjacent to Ross's Woods, graciously offered the space to host this momentous occasion. Armed with masks, hand sanitizer, COVID-19 certificates, and rain gear, guests gathered to celebrate the protection of this unique natural area. Those present were reminded of the many conservation achievements of the late Ross Snider, for whom this reserve is named.



A hiking group exploring Ross's Woods by Sarah Hodgkiss

The skies cleared just in time for guided hikes and allowed everyone to enjoy some incredible desserts, peruse the 20 years of TTLT timeline, and learn more about Ross Snider.

Who is this Ross Snider I keep mentioning? Well, Ross was a local naturalist who lived near the reserve we now call Ross's Woods.

(Continued on Page 2)

Celebrating Ross's Woods (cont'd)



Ross Snider memorabilia by David Wake

where he cared for injured birds. Ross also contributed to the recovery of the endangered Loggerhead Shrike and came to be known as the "Shrike Whis-

He was an avid birder, well-respected bird rehabilitator, and founder of the Tamarack Raptor Rehabilitation Centre

perer". His name is a strong reminder of how the passion and dedication of one individual can truly make a difference.

When Ross's Woods became available, TTLT quickly moved to purchase it by dipping into our Opportunities Fund. Now we need your help to replenish these funds to be ready for the next conservation opportunity. Contributions will also support the ongoing stewardship of Ross's Woods. You can donate online at https://www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca/ross_s_woods_about, by cheque, or by calling us at 519.858.3442. Every donation makes a difference.

- Darby Alderson

Upcoming Events

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

PASSPORT TO NATURE

Passport to Nature is a series of free events hosted by Thames Talbot Land Trust (TTLT) and its volunteers. Pre-registration is required. More information about each event is available on our website.

Nature Photography Webinar with Antony Chodas

Thursday, November 18th, 7 pm

Photography is a great way to explore nature. Any camera can snap a photo but, with skill and creativity, you can achieve much more - an image that conveys mood and the essence of a scene.



Stock photo from Canva

FUNDRAISERS

Mark your calendars for Giving Tuesday!

Time sure does fly! It seems like yesterday Rebecca was showing off her juggling talent, Colin was a woodpecker, Daria's arm was temporarily tattooed, and Darby went for a polar dip (see Facebook videos from Giving Tuesday 2020).



This year's Giving Tuesday is **November 30th**. Circle it on your paper calendars, highlight it in your planners, and CAP LOCKS it on your phone because we need your help! Our goal is to raise \$6,000, all of which will be matched by some amazing people for a potential total of \$12,000.

Keep a look out in your inbox and on our social media pages for more information leading up to the day. Together, we can raise funds to protect, restore, and nurture nature.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



@thamestalbotland



@thamestalbot

Creating a Legacy for Nature

Does this sound like you?

- 🍃 You love nature and take joy in spending time outdoors.
- 🍃 You have shared your passion for conservation with family and friends.
- 🍃 You have supported nature protection to ensure these special places endure into the future.

Your story is about nature and we are honoured that TTLT is part of your story. Your support has made conservation in our community possible – new nature reserves full of life and meaningful opportunities to connect with nature. As you write your life story you are creating your lasting legacy – a greener and healthier world for future generations. A place of wonder, inspiration and thriving wildlife.

To honour the extraordinary stories of our supporters, Thames Talbot Land Trust has launched the Nature Legacy Fund. Our joint story of nature is about protecting land forever – that's a long time! Whatever the future brings, we need to meet any challenges and keep our promises. Our responsibility to current supporters and to future generations includes ensuring the sustainability of our efforts.

The Nature Legacy Fund will help TTLT raise the needed capital to sustain our operations into the future.

The Nature Legacy Fund will include a portfolio of gift options – securities, insurance, gifts in Wills and more – to suit the goals and circumstances of our supporters. The objective is to raise enough capital to use solely the income generated by the Nature Legacy Fund to support core operations of the land trust, ensuring a sustainable source of annual income. We have set an ambitious target to raise \$5 million in funds or pledges in the first 10 years. Donations to the Nature Legacy Fund can be made now, but we anticipate raising the funds primarily through planned gifts for the future (e.g. gifts in Wills). We would be happy to discuss which donation options are best for you.

TTLT received the first gift to the Nature Legacy Fund in 2021 in the amount of \$34,887 (see below). We are incredibly grateful to Mary Ann and Dinie for this initial gift to our new “forever” fund!

- Daria Koscinski

Sharing a Legacy: The VanDenBelt Family

It is hard to believe that TTLT is 20 years old, yet it is hard to imagine what it was like before. We take for granted that nature will always be there, that “someone” will protect it.

Well that “someone” took the form of a small group of people that included Bernie VanDenBelt.

Twenty years ago, those individuals saw the necessity of building a local land trust to protect local habitats. These community leaders worked tirelessly, organizing and fundraising to turn this dream into what it is today. We are discovering more and more each day about the beneficial role of nature to our own mental health and to the greater health of our planet. Climate Change is showing us the necessity for pro-



Mary Ann Hodge (left) and Dinie VanDenBelt (right)

tecting our natural environments to help absorb carbon and mitigate flooding.

The VanDenBelt family wanted to express its support for TTLT's vision, and a small inheritance Mary Ann received provided the means to do so. Now the family is pleased to help launch the Nature Legacy Fund with the creation of the VanDenBelt Family and

Friends Fund. This fund sends a big Thank You to those who saw the vision 20 years ago with a donation to ensure the ongoing operations of the organization. We recognize that, although TTLT started as a volunteer organization, it will take paid staff and stable funding to keep it thriving.

(Continued on Page 4)

Sharing a Legacy: The VanDenBelt Family (cont'd)

A firm financial foundation underpins all that TTLT does and hopes to do; we cannot take for granted that its operations will be financed "somehow". We invite you to celebrate the achieve-

ments of TTLT's founders and to plant the seeds of future success by donating to the Nature Legacy Fund.

- The VanDenBelt Family

Meadowlily Bridge Repair a Success!

Thank you to Nature London for supporting this project.

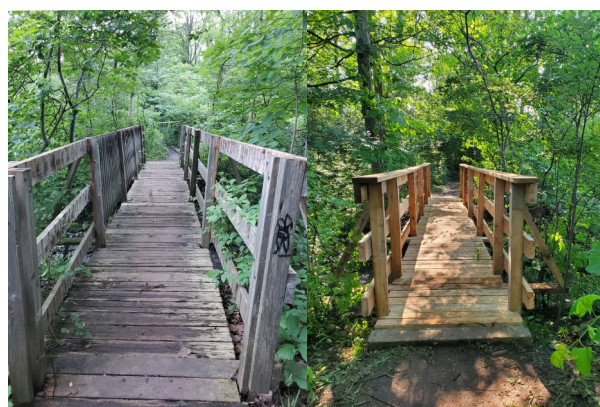


Nature London

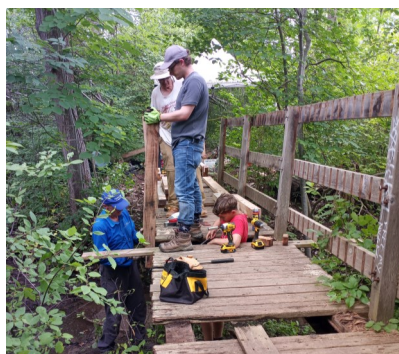
To preserve and enjoy nature

Yes, the Meadowlily bridge rebuild has been completed! The end result looks great and should well serve the Land Trust and the many visitors to this very special natural area for many years! This project has taken over four years to reach fruition as follows:

- Along with Tilman, my friend and Thames Valley Trail Association (TVTA) construction mentor, I performed the initial rebuild assessment in 2017.
- My son and I completed interim repairs in 2019.
- Nature London generously supported the project in 2020 and provided multiple extensions as we circumnavigated both COVID-19 and weather challenges!



Before and after of Meadowlily bridge by Colin Johnson



Volunteers hard at work by Daria Koscinski

much of the existing structure and as many screws as could be done safely, much to the delight of the mosquitoes while slightly unnerving the TTLT staff! I consider feeding the

mosquitoes to be one of my major contributions to those who subsequently formed the work crews!

The main three-day effort indeed presented a number of technical and weather related challenges, enthusiastically tackled by an incredible team composed of TTLT staff and volunteers from TTLT and TVTA (I love these collaborations!). Everyone who participated should be proud of how, together, they worked sometimes in roles they hadn't been asked to or were unused to, as Jack Mayos said to "Get the job done"! Some even took ownership of certain roles and returned following the construction to complete finishing touches!

A personal call out to Tilman and Jack, who, as always, supported and led us through the days. They are two of my longstanding mentors who typify what I aspire to be and who keep me and others focused and motivated. I hope that everyone signed their name on the bridge and had fun working with such a great group of people. I'm looking forward to the next one!

- Ian Bailey



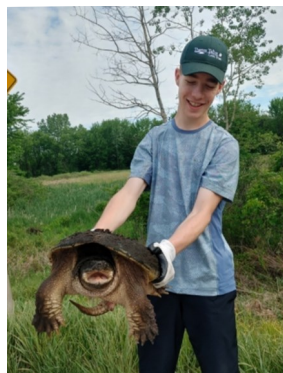
A volunteer's graffiti art by Darby Alderson

Staff of the Season



Luke T. and Tim keeping the Five Points Forest sign company by TTLT staff

We have had the pleasure of more seasonal staff at TTLT this year than ever before. Seasonal staff members are an integral part of daily operations, both on our nature reserves and in our office. With the Conservation Canada Corps internship program, we had Timothy Tan and Luke Trotta. Each interned with TTLT for the summer along with our high school summer student intern, Ryan Luksys. They gained valuable experience in conservation training, and TTLT was gifted with their contributions of hard laboring stewardship work on our nature reserves. This included involvement with invasive species removal, trail maintenance, and the turtle program.



Ryan Luksys helping a Snapping Turtle cross the road by Colin Johnson



Ria with Oakley, the sometimes office puppy courtesy of Ria Joson

Thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program, we were able to have Ria Joson. She held down the fort in the office, mastering our social media, inspiring students through our Schools Program, and assisting with our Vision

20/20 campaign.

Payton Landsborough and Luke King-Godard joined us later in the season, also thanks to the CSJ program, to help with our fall rush. They helped with removing invasive species, collecting seed, monitoring restoration sites, and leading naturalist hikes.

Our time with seasonal staff has once again flown by. It's been a pleasure having all of these skilled hands to help us in our efforts. We wish we could keep every one of them longer.

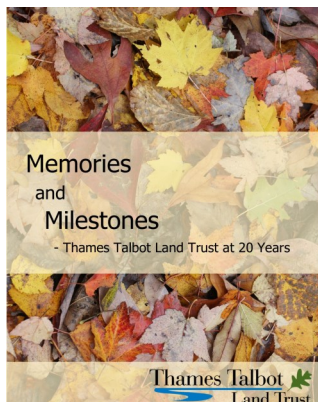
- Colin Johnson



Rebecca providing stewardship wisdom to Payton and Luke K. by Colin Johnson

Memories and Milestones – TTLT at 20 Years

In 2020, TTLT celebrated its 20th anniversary. While the pandemic derailed some of our plans to mark the milestone, one initiative that did proceed as planned was the production of a commemorative book.



TTLT's Commemorative Book Cover

Memories and Milestones – Thames Talbot Land Trust at 20 Years chronicles the first two decades of the Trust. In its 44 pages, the book profiles TTLT's early years as well as special events such as our Eco Folk concert series.

Also highlighted are each of the Trust's 20 nature reserves and relat-

ed stewardship activities such as ecological restoration. Complementing the text are dozen of striking photographs.

The project included contributions from numerous TTLT volunteers and staff members under the leadership of Ric Symmes. The layout and editing of the book was generously and capably undertaken by Dave and Winnie Wake, and we are most grateful to them for their efforts in bringing all the pieces together.

Copies of the publication can be ordered online at https://www.ttl.t.ca/commemorative_book, by cheque, or by calling the TTLT office at 519.858.3442. Book orders will be available for pick-up at the office or, for an additional \$5, can be shipped to your home. All proceeds will support TTLT's conservation efforts.

- Bernie VanDenBelt

Deshkan Ziibi Conservation Impact Bond

Since 2019, Thames Talbot Land Trust has been working with several partners on a new collaborative effort to accelerate nature protection and restoration across our region. From the start of the project, I saw the value in building relationships that would help safeguard nature in the area we work in. TTLT has a particular protocol for how we protect nature, but I was open to exploring other opportunities for more collaborative projects. Everything came together at the right time – the people, the funding and the opportunity to restore lands, something all partners were committed to. This was a unique opportunity to change the way restoration could be funded and to develop something completely new. I am thrilled to be part of developing the Deshkan Ziibi Conservation Impact Bond (DZCIB).

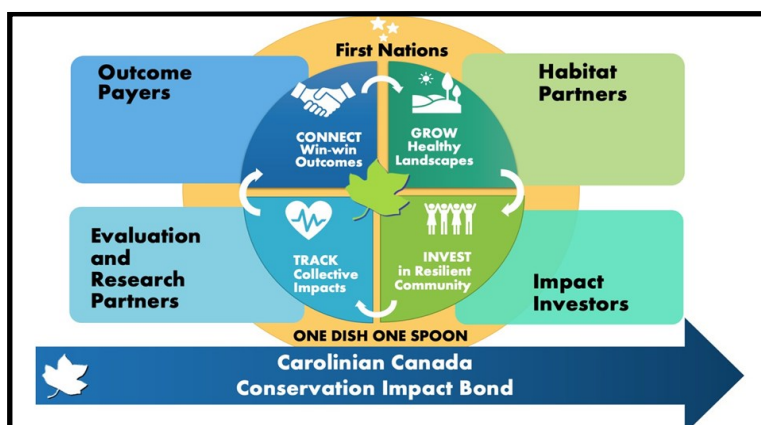
Who is part of the team? The DZCIB Leadership Team includes Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, VERGE Capital, Thames Talbot Land Trust, Ivey Business School and Carolinian Canada Coalition. Additional “habitat partners” were involved in the restoration activities supported by the project, including Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, ReForest London, Camp Kee-Mo-Kee, City of London and The Living Center.

What exactly is a **Conservation Impact Bond** you ask? Conservation Impact Bonds (CIBs) are types of social finance approaches that involve payment for the achievement of predetermined environmental outcomes (e.g. ecosystem services such as pollination or water retention). These models are based on a premise that someone (or a group) believes there is a tangible, monetary value associated with a service provided by nature – and they are willing to pay to ensure nature continues providing this service. The CIB model is a financial instrument aiming to address the conservation funding gap by engaging a diverse set of local partners mobilizing towards the common goal of accelerating healthy landscapes and reconciling people and ecosystems.

The CIB model was co-developed and refined concurrently with the design and implementation of the DZCIB pilot project. This was supported by a local Leadership Team with place-based knowledge, cross-cultural, and cross-sectoral representation, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This Leadership Team supports the model becoming locally adapted and community-driven through the identification of desired projects, outcomes, and selection of impact metrics.

The Conservation Impact Bond is place-based, and in our case, the focus is **Deshkan Ziibi**. The name Deshkan Ziibi comes from the original

Anishinaabemowin name given to the Thames River which translates to “antlered or horned river”. The project focuses on the Thames River region and the traditional territories of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. From November 2019 to June 2021, Phase 1 of the DZCIB supported



Graphic from The Deshkan Ziibi Conservation Impact Bond Project report.*

35 habitat improvement projects covering 59 hectares (146 acres) with numerous positive ecological, sociocultural, and economic impacts. Four restoration projects at TTLT nature reserves were supported by the DZCIB.

I have learned a lot from our Indigenous partners on the DZCIB and I have chosen to learn independently as well. The development of the bond provided the space for discussion, sharing, honesty and building trust. I find I am eager to learn more, understand the world from more viewpoints, and consider and challenge my assumptions. I also see a greater role for TTLT in supporting land protection through more collaborative processes and projects. I am really grateful for our partners’ willingness to share, teach, and build trust to make this work possible. It has been a truly amazing, inspiring, and life changing experience!

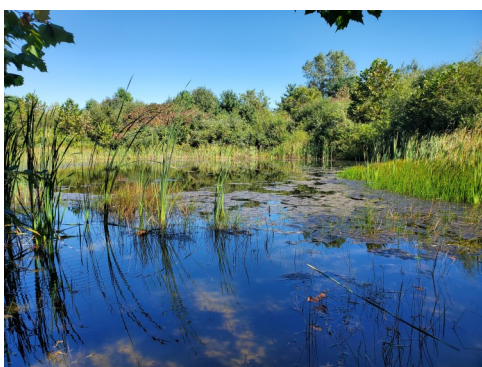
-Daria Koscinski

*Deshkan Ziibi Conservation Impact Bond Leadership Team (2021). *The Deshkan Ziibi Conservation Impact Bond Project: On Conservation Finance, Decolonization, and Community-Based Participatory Research*.

Gratitude for the Caveney's

The beginning of October was an exciting time for TTLT as we welcomed another nature reserve to our growing list of protected areas. Meadow-Woods, generously donated by Stan and Anita Caveney as part of TTLT's Vision 20/20 Campaign, is an important wildlife corridor along the Lake Erie shoreline in Elgin County. Featuring 105 acres of steep wooded ravines and valleys as well as restored meadows and wetlands, Meadow-Woods offers a variety of habitat for a diversity of native flora and fauna.

Last spring, Stan took me on a journey through MeadowWoods on the many trails that he designed throughout the reserve. He had, for every landscape, a story of a rare bird or an interesting beetle that had previously crossed his path. It was amazing that he could point out every tree sapling, and then show me where the parent tree was and what year the seed had dropped. Stan has also spearheaded many restorations on this land ranging from a series of wetland ponds to the forest to the meadows. Each and every step had purpose and



MeadowWoods pond by Darby Alderson



Three generations of the Caveney family by David Wake

hard labour involved. He even showed me his favourite spot to camp when he would stay overnight doing stewardship work on the land. Every memory and story was related to seeing this piece of land grow in ecological value. It is clear that Stan cares so much about this place and that he will remain the stewardship lead for this nature reserve.

It is an honour that the Caveney's have entrusted TTLT to continue his hard work.

To commemorate this wonderful gift, TTLT held a celebration on October 3rd to show our appreciation for this ecologically valuable nature reserve. We are excited to call it a TTLT protected area and are extremely grateful for the Caveney's passion in permanently protecting this land.

To learn more about the Caveney's story and how MeadowWoods came to be, check out the London Free Press article, *For the love of nature*, at <https://lfpres.com/sponsored/business-sponsored/thames-talbot-land-trust>.

- Colin Johnson



Fungi by Sarah Hodgkiss

Did you know you can support your legacy with a gift in your Will?



Creating or updating your Will takes time and effort, but it is a fulfilling and important step in your estate planning. Your Will is the ultimate expression of the values and beliefs you hold in life. It is about your interests and passions, not merely your assets. Your Will can support the work of a charity important to you and provide for your loved ones too. If nature conservation is a priority for you, we hope you will consider leaving a gift in your Will to TTLT and the Nature Legacy Fund.

Word Find: Snails and Mimicry

Solutions will be posted at https://www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca/the_tattler.

Find the words in the word list using the article below. Brackets indicate the amount of times the word appears—make sure to find them all!

The Weird and Wonderful with a Biologist: *Aggressive Mimicry*

Many organisms have evolved to use mimicry as a defense from predators. The two types most often taught in school are Batesian and Müllerian mimicry. Batesian refers to an edible organism that evolves to look like an unpalatable organism to try to avoid being eaten, such as a harmless fly looking like a stinging bee. Müllerian mimicry refers to an unpalatable organism looking like other unpalatable organisms, such as a stinging bee having similar colours to a stinging wasp. Many bees and wasps use the same yellow and black patterning so predators know to avoid these colours in general. There is another type of mimicry which is less common: aggressive mimicry. Aggressive mimicry refers to an organism looking like another organism in order to obtain a food source or be eaten itself. This is most often done as a dupe by an animal looking like prey to draw in a small predator which is then eaten by the mimic. For example, a Bolus spider will emit a chemical similar to the sex pheromones emitted by a species of



Succinea putris snail with a parasitic *Leucochloridium* worm in its eyestalk (cropped photo) by Thomas Hahmann, CC BY-SA 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)

moth. This entices a real moth to come and mate. When the moth arrives, it will be eaten by the spider. Another example is the parasitic worm *Leucochloridium*. This parasite lives inside of birds, but needs to travel between birds to find mates so that, when one bird host dies, it will continue to live in other birds. In order to do this the parasite lays its eggs inside the bird's digestive system, which will then be pooped out. The poop is then eaten by snails that will accidentally eat the parasite. The parasite will take over the mind of the snail so that it moves out into the open exposing it to predators, a behavior that is unusual for the snail. The parasite then moves to the eyestalk of the snail, engorging the eyestalk and making movements that resemble a caterpillar. Even though a bird will not usually eat snails, the bird will pluck the eyes off the snail which look like caterpillars. Once the parasite is back into a bird it will start the whole life cycle once again.

- Colin Johnson

Word List

Batesian (x2)

Bolus

Defense

Digestive

Eyestalk (x2)

Müllerian (x2)

Mimicry (x4)

Organism (x5)

Predators (x3)

Parasitic (x6)

Stinging (x3)

Unpalatable (x3)

Thames Talbot 
Land Trust

P.O. BOX 25054
LONDON, ON N6C 6A8

519.858.3442

Thames Talbot Land Trust is a registered charity. Our mission is to protect, restore, and nurture nature within Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford and Perth counties, contributing to a stable climate, human wellbeing, and healthy habitats for all species.