



# DUCK'tario

WINTER 2020 – VOLUME 27

**NEWS FOR YOU FROM DUCKS UNLIMITED CANADA**

*UNLIMITED IMPACT. UNLIMITED POTENTIAL.*

**PARKER FOUND PURPOSE  
IN A PANDEMIC-DISRUPTED  
SUMMER**

**PROTECTION FOR  
ST. LUKE'S MARSH**

**NEW HIGHWAY  
SIGN ARRIVES IN  
WOODSTOCK**



### This year has been unlike any other in our organization's history.

Like you, we've learned to work in new ways on short notice. Difficult choices were thrust into our leadership's hands. Yet, this was also a year when we turned to our senior leaders and found them ready and willing to guide us.

This assurance allowed our conservation team — our front line — to carry on with their work as soon as it was possible. So, despite the challenges, we met our 2020 conservation targets in Ontario. And interest in the amazing breadth of what wetlands can do continues to grow.

So, we're still here. And we have news for you about our accomplishments in this extraordinary year. We hope you can take a few minutes to look back —and forward — with us.

We've missed you! Catch up with us on our website ([ducks.ca/ontario](https://ducks.ca/ontario)) where you'll find resources specific to Ontario including program updates, announcements, resources, habitat restoration services, and our role in generating rural green jobs.



**Ducks Unlimited  
Canada**



### Stay in touch!

**MyDUC™** is a member portal that helps you find stories and contests, check your donor impact or shop on our online store. Select your personal interests within the app to receive only the news you really want to know. [ducks.ca/myduc](https://ducks.ca/myduc)

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### About the cover image

**Welcome to the wetland!** Our cover hero, Parker Beaudry, was captured by DUC conservation specialist (and Parker's mama!) Jenn Lavigne, when they stopped to check out a seasonal wetland on the Carden Alvar that fills up after rain events (see page 9).

### DUC'TARIO: NEWS FOR YOU

**DUC'tario** is a newsletter for DUC volunteers, wetland landowners and other partners in conservation in Ontario. We strive to inform and engage our valued supporters with stories and news about the people, projects and events that make up our Ontario community.

Curious about something? Got a bright idea? Send your story ideas to the editor:

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*In these extraordinary times, many DUC employees are carrying out their work from home. Please leave a detailed message and we will connect you with the right person as soon as possible.*



**We're glad you're here. Search for @DUCOntario to join us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.**





*Swans, geese and ducks at St. Luke's Marsh*

## A coastal gem protected in perpetuity

One of the few remaining coastal wetlands on Lake St. Clair is now protected from development, a conservation success that was many years in the making. The acquisition of St. Luke's Marsh ensures the long-term conservation of nearly 500 acres (197 hectares) of exceptional habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife in southwestern Ontario.

St. Luke's Marsh is right next door to the St. Clair National Wildlife Area, a large sanctuary for waterfowl and other bird species, and federally listed wildlife at risk of extinction including king rails, least bitterns and eastern foxsnakes. The habitat on the lake also supports migrating monarch butterflies.

St. Luke's Marsh includes coastal shoreline, provincially significant coastal wetlands and other mixed wildlife habitats. It's part of an extensive system of significant migratory stopover areas for waterfowl around the lower Great Lakes.

St. Luke's Marsh is one of 22 conservation properties held by DUC within the Great Lakes watershed, adding up to nearly 7,000 acres (2,833 hectares) of protected habitat.

Permanent protection of ecologically precious lands requires strong partnerships based in trust. Fortunately, many conservation-minded allies were eager to join forces with us.

A generous personal bequest from the late Louise Gendron was part of the successful campaign to fund the St. Luke's purchase. Financial contributions came in from our conservation partners at Ducks Unlimited, Inc., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and state wildlife agencies through the Fall Flights Initiative (including Ohio and Michigan, which directly border Lake St. Clair).

The acquisition was also supported by the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada's Nature Fund.

Working together, we will develop a comprehensive management plan for the stewardship of this coastal gem. Careful consideration will be given to balancing possible recreational use with the need to protect this important habitat.



### A rare opportunity

Coastal wetlands like St. Luke's Marsh are rare—and extremely valuable. Only 1.5 per cent of historic wetlands remain in the densely populated area surrounding Lake St. Clair.

Lake St. Clair lies on the border between Ontario and Michigan in southwestern Ontario, connecting two Great Lakes—Lake Huron and Lake Erie. The lake receives waters from several major rivers—including the St. Clair River, Thames River, Sydenham River and Clinton River—which then pass to Lake Erie, making the health of this lake an important ecological goal for the continent.

*Many thousands of ducks and other birds gather at Lake St. Clair during migration.*

©CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE/JOHN HAGGEMAN





# Greg's Marsh

THE LEGACY OF A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR WATERFOWL AND WETLANDS

There's a marsh in the fertile northeastern terrain outside Temiskaming Shores that changed the landscape for waterfowl in the lower Blanche River Valley. Thirty years ago, the place flooded every year and had been abandoned as viable farmland.

That was when Greg Dunn saw an opportunity to create a sanctuary for migrating birds at the southern tip of the Northern Claybelt, not far from Lake Temiskaming. It was the early 1980s and Greg was working for DUC so he was on the lookout for significant wetland restorations.

The marsh he championed, then named Casey Marsh, would become DUC's first large, permanent wetland restoration in Northern Ontario.

"I remember everyone at the time saying how cool it was that a hardcore waterfowl hunter was now working to create wetlands and had really found his 'calling,'" recalls Pete Gilboe, Greg's friend and long-time DUC supporter.

In 1987, Greg's vision became reality when the 316-acre (128-hectare) marsh was secured by a legal conservation agreement. DUC built a ring dyke and installed water-level control structures to expand the habitat for ducks and geese gathering to feed before continuing on their migration journeys.

A few years later, Casey Marsh was purchased through the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture thanks to support from the State of West Virginia and, in 1996, the marsh was transferred to the Province of Ontario.

The restoration changed the local wetland landscape for ducks and quickly became the most heavily used habitat in an area known as the Little Clay Belt, formed when a prehistoric glacial lake drained and left behind a rich, arable landscape.

In 1993, the Hilliardton Marsh Provincial Wildlife Area was created with a 550-acre (223-hectare) wetland restoration project by DUC in the same region—providing shelter for even more migrating waterfowl and wildlife of all kinds.

## Flypast lifted the spirits of family and friends

This year, Casey Marsh was renamed in memory of Greg Dunn. It was his marsh in all but name already. As he requested, the marsh is a wildlife sanctuary and hunting-free zone.

In September, Greg's family and friends gathered outside at the marsh to remember his life and conservation impact together. During the memorial, their spirits were lifted by a flypast of the first significant goose migration of the season.

*Greg's Marsh is publicly owned by the Government of Ontario, which renamed the marsh on the request of the Dunn family. The water-control structures have been maintained by DUC since 1987.*

*"Greg's legacy runs deep in our little corner of the world."*

— PETE GILBOE

The new sign honours Greg Dunn, a passionate advocate for waterfowl and wetlands.

**Greg's Marsh**

**Protected since 1987**

Greg's Marsh is 316 acres (127.9 hectares) of prime waterfowl habitat located at the southern end of the Northern Ontario Clay Belt. The restoration of this site transformed the landscape in the lower Blanche River Valley for the benefit of wildlife that rely on wetland habitat for survival.

Protected by a 99-year conservation agreement

Greg's Marsh is publicly owned by the Government of Ontario. Optimal water levels for healthy wildlife habitat are managed by water-control structures maintained by Ducks Unlimited Canada.

**In honour of Gregory Clarence Dunn**

Casey Marsh was renamed Greg's Marsh in September 2020.

Greg's Marsh is a tribute to Greg Dunn, a passionate advocate for waterfowl and wetlands, who was the driving force behind the creation of this living legacy. Greg was instrumental in establishing this first large, permanent wetland restoration in Northern Ontario and, as per his wishes, Greg's Marsh remains a wildlife sanctuary and hunting-free zone.

Ducks Unlimited Canada

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Ontario

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Environnement et Changement climatique Canada

Northern Signs



# Focus on water

Science helps us to build a strong business case in southern Ontario for investing in wetland restoration that complements the water-management role of built infrastructure in our communities.

## Do wetlands improve water quality in working landscapes?

In southwestern Ontario, we are looking to wetland restoration to help improve water quality in agricultural watersheds. Research is underway north of Lake Erie examining the extent to which small, restored wetlands capture nutrients (e.g., phosphorus) before they move downstream to raise the risk of algal blooms in rivers and lakes.

Early findings show that restored wetlands act as “phosphorus sinks”, capturing the most worrisome form of phosphorus — called soluble reactive phosphorus — at a 59 per cent reduction efficiency through all four seasons of the study year. Notably, three of the wetlands performed extremely well at 93 per cent, 96 per cent and 99 per cent efficiency.

The second year of data collection will complete in September 2021. Already, the research has informed our standard general principles for small wetland design in Ontario, which now include an option for a “sediment capture basin” when there is significant surface-water flow into the wetland. The feature will capture sediment before it enters the wetland, removing nutrients while protecting the health and longevity of the habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

*This research is led by DUC's Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research and has received support from Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. We are grateful to the wetland landowners for their ongoing cooperation.*



**Learn more: The Power of Small Wetlands for Clean Water**

[ducks.ca/stories/policy/the-power-of-small-wetlands-for-clean-water](https://ducks.ca/stories/policy/the-power-of-small-wetlands-for-clean-water)

A report of the first year of study was presented in February 2020 at the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority offices.

## How can we leverage wetland restoration to reduce flood risk?

We commissioned a study with Emmons and Olivier Resources to explore how wetlands are currently integrated into flood management in southern Ontario communities. We discovered a growing awareness of the benefits of wetlands in water-control management among, for example, public sector and water-management experts. We also confirmed that the natural flood-management services of wetlands are a cost-effective complement to traditional infrastructure built to protect communities from floods.

Our interest in this area lies in understanding what is needed to remove the barriers that prevent deeper integration of wetland conservation into flood management plans. We see an increased need to better understand and communicate the benefits of wetland habitats beyond their value for waterfowl, so that we continually maintain support for wetland conservation.

*This research was supported by Ontario Trillium Foundation.*



**Learn more: Natural Infrastructure for a Climate-ready Ontario**

[ducks.ca/stories/policy/natural-infrastructure-for-a-climate-ready-ontario](https://ducks.ca/stories/policy/natural-infrastructure-for-a-climate-ready-ontario)



*In 2019, Sarah French and Danny McIsaac sampled aquatic invertebrates three times at the 28 wetlands.*

## Do small wetlands support aquatic invertebrates?

Visiting scientist Sarah French is an aquatic ecologist completing post-doctoral research in southern Ontario that explores to what degree restored, or created, wetlands are impacted by surrounding land uses, specifically by pesticides, and whether they support aquatic invertebrates which are important food sources for waterfowl.

The field work took place at 28 open-water wetlands in the summer of 2019. Identification and analysis of invertebrates, insects and fish are anticipated to wrap up in early 2021. Results thus far indicate that the wetlands host diverse food webs and Dr. French looks forward to sharing results about the wetlands with the landowner partners.

*This research is led by the University of Waterloo and DUC's Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research and supported by a Mitacs Elevate Postdoctoral Fellowship. We are grateful for the ongoing cooperation of the wetland landowners.*



*A presentation about wetlands and flood management at the Town of Innisfil in January 2020 was featured in local news. Pictured are Sean Rootham, DUC conservation specialist, with Mayor Lynn Dollin (right) and Barrie-Innisfil MPP Andrea Khanjin (left).*





# A sustainable partnership

*Adapted from A Sustainable Partnership prepared for Ontario Grain Farmer Magazine. Written by Michael Buttenham, Grain Farmers of Ontario's market development coordinator for sustainability and environment.*

Living in Ontario, we sometimes forget how unique a place we live in—not only across Canada but the world. Our province is home to some of the most productive farmland in the country, where we grow not only grains and oilseeds but a host of other vegetables, fruits and specialty crops.

Along with the uniqueness of our agricultural sector, we also have a unique natural environment; but it's only as valuable as our ability to preserve and protect it. DUC brings willing partners together from the agricultural sector and the conservation sector to create win-win solutions for both groups.

DUC has been working in Ontario since 1974 with a mission and mandate around waterfowl conservation. “But we also know, thanks to our research, that wetland conservation benefits many wildlife species as well as waterfowl,” says Owen Steele, DUC's head of conservation in Ontario. “Our work as an organization is guided by science and we are fortunate enough to have a group of scientists across Canada to help us with that.”

Leveraging this strong science-based expertise, DUC has produced various research projects in the areas of wetland and waterfowl research. Steele says there is a lot of interesting research work on a wetland's ability to recharge groundwater, to help with surface water quality and to help mitigate the impacts from flooding. They are also interested in the value of wetlands in helping to address water quality issues in Lake Erie and have begun research in southwestern Ontario to quantify the role of small wetlands in removing excess nutrients from surface-water runoff.

DUC partners with the agricultural community on a number of its conservation programs. In 2019, 75 out of 85 projects in Ontario were completed on private lands. When farmers reach out to the organization, typically they want to discuss what can be done with an area on their farm that is marginal or isn't farmed. However, Steele says, in some situations they hear, “every other year I get stuck, or this part of the field isn't ready at the same time even with tile drainage and my yields are consistently poor.”

These types of scenarios often present the perfect opportunity for DUC to implement conservation projects. “DUC will work with farmers directly on their land to determine what they had in mind with a project,” says Steele. From here, DUC looks for a shared vision: “We focus on what the farmer is looking for and what DUC programs are designed to do and what we can support.”

Once a shared vision is agreed upon, DUC and other partners will put forth permits, implement and help fund that project.

Winter on Lambton County farmer Scott Stephens' pond.



© SCOTT STEPHENS



### Steve Yantzi

Steve and Gail Yantzi live in Perth County and have lived on the home farm since the early 1980s. The farm is a 100-acre parcel with around 82 acres of workable land.

For years they had a wet, sloppy three-acre area on the east side of the farm. “We tried to tile and several other things, but it just wasn’t cutting it,” says Yantzi.

It started to impact the workable land as it had to be perfectly dry before the land could be worked. As a result, Yantzi talked to a friend in the excavation business who mentioned DUC might be able to help with this wet spot.

As a result, a wetland was built in collaboration with a neighbour. Now, Yantzi notes, everything in the field can be worked at the same time, there are no worries about the patch of wet that wouldn’t necessarily dry out. Beyond the benefit to the land, Yantzi says they do see a lot more wildlife such as birds, ducks and all sorts of different species.

“The process was very easy for me, DUC looked after things and did everything,” says Yantzi. “The support from DUC and the support from cost-share programs made this project well worth it.”

Yantzi suggests that if you are a farmer with areas that might fit a pond or wetland to strongly consider talking to DUC.

### Scott Stephens

Scott Stephens farms in southern Lambton County growing around 800 acres of corn, soybeans, and wheat. Stephens participated in a project to build a wetland on one of his farms. He did this because of a field that has some lowlands where the creek goes by and floods often.

“It is kind of hit or miss whether you harvest a crop, it is decent land but floods out a lot,” explains Stephens. He decided to talk to some farmers in the area about this and through a partnership with DUC and Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS), a wetland was built.

*Along with the uniqueness of our agricultural sector, we also have a unique natural environment; but it's only as valuable as our ability to preserve and protect it.*

“I am the first one in my area to implement a project like this and the process was pretty easy,” notes Stephens. There was a bit of paperwork involved and maintenance in the first few years to get the trees established, but now he and his family are taking advantage of the benefits of the project.

“We often will 4-wheeler out and tour around the wetland seeing the benefits and increased wildlife. We played hockey on the pond in the winter.”





# Three small wetlands, One big sign

A NEW HABITAT PROJECT FOR WOODSTOCK

A new community project is coming to life just outside of the City of Woodstock. Three small wetlands will be created on the south side of Highway 401, where commuters and travellers will see the daily changes and long-term progress in the habitat.

The wetlands will be a natural backdrop for an eye-catching sign that celebrates the progress of wetland restoration in Woodstock. Twenty years of committed action for the environment, such as the restorations at Hodges Pond and Brick Ponds, have made Oxford County a healthier community.

“What better way to mark our environmental achievements than a beautiful demonstration project visible from the busy highway,” asked Phil Holst, DUC director and lifelong resident of the area. “Our latest conservation achievement in Woodstock will show thousands of passing travellers what wetlands do and how they change beautifully from season to season.”

Holst and DUC’s manager of development in Ontario, William Jones, met with project partners, Mayor Trevor Birtch and Heather McLachlin, president of Cowan Insurance Group Ltd, at Woodstock City Hall with a mock-up of the new sign.

“The many wetland restoration projects in Oxford County help to align this community with our goal to make a positive difference in the lives of Canadians,” said McLachlin. “Partnerships of this kind amplify the ability of organizations to make significant change for the health of communities.”

*“We want to show Canada what urban wetlands can do for us.”*

– PHIL HOLST



## Local leadership and investment support healthy watersheds

DUC has led more than 100 conservation projects in Oxford County. These projects total 1,706 acres (690 hectares) of wildlife habitat that support the natural infrastructure of the local landscape with wetlands, forests, grasslands and clean water—providing wildlife habitat, improving everyone’s quality of life and boosting resiliency from the effects of extreme weather in today’s climate.

First steps have already been taken at the site, which is owned by the City of Woodstock. The invasive reed, phragmites, has been removed because it squeezes out native plants needed for effective wetland functions. When the wetlands are established, local partners plan more naturalization projects for the site.

*Above (left to right): Heather McLachlin, Mayor Trevor Birtch, William Jones and Phil Holst.*

“Woodstock is a liveable community that provides the best possible services,” said Mayor Birtch. “Wetlands and waterways are part of what we need to enjoy a healthy community life here. We plan for nature in the same intelligent way that we plan for all of our services and facilities.”

*Watch for the sign on the south side of Highway 401, just west of the Highway 59 exchange! Snap a picture (unless you’re the driver!) and send it to us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter (@DUContario) or by email (du\_barrie@ducks.ca). **You might win a hat!***

Hodges Pond restoration





Summer bloom captured by Wetland Hero Parker Beaudry at DUC's Nonquon Project.

## Wetland Heroes

[ducks.ca/wetland-heroes](https://ducks.ca/wetland-heroes)

### Parker in the field

This past summer, Parker Beaudry joined his mom, Jenn Lavigne, on some of the many road trips that are part of the job when you build wetlands for a living—meeting with landowners, overseeing construction, inspecting project infrastructure and, sometimes, hiding from the bugs.

With schools closed and Parker's usual summer activities curtailed, Jenn faced long weeks ahead with no plan for her son. That's when she asked about taking Parker on her road trips.

"I am really thankful that our leadership was so ready to pivot during this time of emergency, or I don't know how I could have done my job. Parker and I will never forget this time together."

Parker made the most of every moment. Whenever they arrived at a site, he would take out his blue camera and start taking pictures of everything: beach glass, snake skin, burrows and of course, wetlands. Then he'd take out his notepad and jot down what he saw, writing about everything from duckweed to solar pumps.

Parker and Jenn shared their pictures and field notes with us for "Parker in the Field", a fun social media series that ran all summer.



© JENN LAVIGNE



© BILL MCMULLEN

### Stepping up for ducks

For some kids, nature was in while school was out last spring. When student projects were interrupted by school closures, Liam McMullen and his father helped the Ottawa WCE by maintaining and documenting the wood duck nest boxes at the Bill Mason and MacSkimming Centre for Outdoor Education. Liam went on to then share his stewardship message with Ottawa's CTV evening news!

*"I'm looking forward to seeing the nest boxes used again for new generations of wood ducks and other species, especially eastern screech owl."*

— LIAM MCMULLEN

*"Wetlands are hard to build. Really hard. It's better to keep the wetlands we have than build new ones."*

— PARKER BEAUDRY



Parker's adventures in the field were a summertime staple on our social network.

## Wetland Centres of Excellence

[wce-education.ducks.ca](https://wce-education.ducks.ca)

Facebook: @EducationDucks

The passionate leaders at DUC's Wetland Centres of Excellence remain committed to fostering environmental stewardship in the students under their care. We'll be moving ahead together on the many conservation projects underway, just as soon as it's safe to do so.

**DUC Education is proud to support youth-led conservation. Have a project idea? Contact us at [education@ducks.ca](mailto:education@ducks.ca) or visit [ducks.ca/education](https://ducks.ca/education)**



# More than jargon

## WHY DO WE TALK ABOUT “NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE” IN CONSERVATION TODAY?

You may have come across the term, natural infrastructure, that’s being used to talk about conservation these days. It’s a way to capture the value of natural ecosystems as equivalent to the infrastructure that communities build for protection and prosperity — things like transportation infrastructure, communications infrastructure, or stormwater management infrastructure.

We’ve also heard the term used a bit differently, such as *green infrastructure* or *natural green infrastructure*—even *nature-based infrastructure*. As one of our staff recently said: “Terminology around this area is a bit of a head-scratcher!”

Although these terms may seem like a bunch of jargon, we think they’re good news for wetlands.

### Speaking each other’s language

We know that healthy landscapes with wetlands, forests, grasslands and waterways are essential for birds and other wildlife. We also know that the functions of a healthy landscape are essential to the places where people live.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada has defined natural infrastructure as “a strategically planned and managed network of natural lands, such as forests, wetlands and other open spaces,

which conserves or enhances ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations.”

Sounds like we’re on the same page, doesn’t it? The jargon can sometimes make you scratch your head but we agree on the concepts: conserve, restore and naturalize when necessary.

### Placing a high value on nature and its solutions

We constantly seek to articulate our mission in ways that will resonate with decision makers who are in a position to help us restore (and protect) habitat on the landscape at a larger scale than our on-the-ground restoration program can do.

DUC has long advocated for public investment in wetland restoration as part of the landscape’s natural infrastructure. Using large-scale restoration to build landscape resilience can be a powerful and cost-effective complement to costly water-management infrastructure, such as dams, culverts, stormwater ponds and water treatment plants.

We know that wetlands can help reduce capital and operating costs, and extend the lifecycle of built infrastructure while continuing to provide food and shelter for wildlife including birds and species of conservation concern.

## Tangible results

### Wetland restoration in lake country *City of Kawartha Lakes*

Kathleen Cooper wanted to see more wildlife on her 100-acre farm. She didn’t have to wait long. The pond was constructed in 2019, adding new breeding habitat for ducks and geese to the already rich mix of wetlands, waterways and forests on the landscape northwest of Lindsay—a mosaic connected to protected wetland habitat south of Balsam Lake.

What this little pond can do:

- ➕ Make space for waterfowl and other wildlife, including declining species such as turtles
- ➕ Improve water quality by filtering sediment in surface-water runoff
- ➕ Capture excess nutrients and sequester carbon
- ➕ Help restore resiliency to the landscape to reduce flooding and flood-damage costs
- ➕ Create jobs for local contractors hired for construction, monitoring and other work



**Above:** “An old straight line drainage ditch was replaced and, in less than a year, water flow has forked into two lines of natural drainage into the pond, the edges are fully vegetated and lots of frogs, small fish and aquatic plants have moved in, awaiting the ducks next spring.” – landowner Kathleen Cooper.

*This restoration was supported in part by the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture, an international partnership that provides matching grants for wetland conservation projects for migratory birds in Eastern Canada, and the Species at Risk Partnerships on Agricultural Lands.*







## Proof of concept

**Avian arrivals at a new wetland near Napanee** | *Lennox & Addington County*

A heron with a knack for selfies has been keeping the outdoor cameras busy beside a new wetland in Eastern Ontario.

The recently constructed habitat is at the Lennox Generating Station north of Lake Ontario near Napanee, a priority region for waterfowl conservation. So, we weren't surprised when birds and other wildlife appeared on the trailcam feed — but we were definitely delighted.

The wetland gets a boost from adjacent newly planted trees and nearly six acres (2.4 hectares) of new grassland habitat, explained Mike Williams. “The cameras are rewarding because they demonstrate how quickly wildlife find new habitat on the landscape.”

Mike is the Ontario head of DUC's consulting service, Conservation Solutions, which provides science-based restoration to offset loss of wetland, aquatic and upland habitats. Mike worked with TC Energy, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority to carry out the project on the grounds of the natural gas-fired facility.

The design of the wetland harnesses natural processes and vegetation to create robust habitat that will shelter wildlife and withstand harsh environmental conditions. Birds and other wildlife are attracted by the varying water depths and adjacent mounded terrain for shelter. Other

features help keep the habitat resilient, such as a silt trap to stop sediment in surface runoff from entering the wetland and a spillway overflow for high water.

Healthy landscapes with wetlands, grasslands and forests support waterfowl and other birds. But these habitats do even more work on the landscape, supporting clean water, reducing the impacts of flooding and helping to sequester carbon.

*OPG, the owner and operator of the Lennox Generating Station, is collaborating with TC Energy to expand its existing wetland habitat. The wetland and native tree plantings were financed by TC Energy and OPG supported additional grassland habitat at the site.*



*Caught on a trailcam, a handsome heron steals the show at the new wetland.*

*“The cameras are rewarding because they demonstrate how quickly wildlife find new habitat on the landscape.”*

— MIKE WILLIAMS





Rob and Jessalyn Harmon with daughter Clare

## Volunteer Milestones

Kim Black	40 Years	Aylmer
Ronald Walker	40 Years	Aylmer
Wayne Buck	35 Years	Campbellford
Matt Herrington	35 Years	Kingston Fall
Terry Lehovich	35 Years	Temiskaming Shores
Terry Olsen	35 Years	Thunder Bay
George Roberts	35 Years	Markham Sponsor
Jeff Weaver	35 Years	Campbellford
Leslie Eves	30 Years	Long Point Bay
Larry Porter	30 Years	Iroquois Falls
Jeffrey Rees	30 Years	Oakville
Kelly Reuben	30 Years	Moosonee/Moose Factory
Edward Seagram	30 Years	Toronto
Doug Claus	25 Years	Aylmer
Jackie Down	25 Years	Port Perry
Rob Elliott	25 Years	Napanee
Terry Herbison	25 Years	Brockville
Guy Labine	25 Years	Chelmsford
Andrew Laidley	25 Years	Brock Sportsman
Jean Oliver	25 Years	Lakefield
Luc Quesnel	25 Years	Fort Frances
Michael Abercrombie	20 Years	Georgian Triangle/Collingwood
Robert Armstrong	20 Years	Mount Forest
Ron Baldwin	20 Years	Aylmer
Jerry Bell	20 Years	Long Point Bay
Patti Brinker	20 Years	Long Point Bay
Ken Craik	20 Years	Aylmer
David Hoffman	20 Years	Geraldton
Mark Kimmett	20 Years	Napanee
John Knott	20 Years	Long Point Bay
Steve Lewis	20 Years	Georgian Triangle/Collingwood
James Lim	20 Years	Cochrane
Charles Tatham	20 Years	Georgian Triangle/Collingwood
George Wallace	20 Years	Toronto

The Volunteer events program in Ontario got off to its usual terrific start in 2020. But, as you know, March brought abrupt changes to everyone's lives — and in-person events had to be put on hold.

The pandemic ended event-based fundraising for the rest of the year, and we had to pivot and sprint in an entirely new direction. I'll bet that sounds familiar to many of you in your own lives! And many of you have also been part of our efforts in the past months to find new ways to have fun together, take meaningful action and continue to raise funds for wetlands.

It hasn't been easy. Some staff were furloughed and some programs suspended. Yet, we count ourselves fortunate to have deep roots in our communities helping us navigate the tough decisions we've had to make in postponing or cancelling events.

This year has rubbed out many of the dates that we look forward to on our calendars. The need for social distancing sidelined many fine plans.

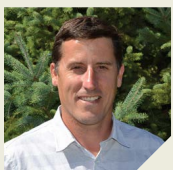
Some committees did find a way to pivot, like Rob Harmon and the 613 Committee who took it outside with a summertime Poker Run in beautiful Eastern Ontario. Local business support was fantastic and a shout-out is well deserved for Kingston sponsors Spearhead Brewing Company, Atkinson Home Hardware, Ontario Archery Supplies and Smoke N' Barrel restaurant. The 613 Committee, and many others, have found that local businesses continue to offer their generous support, even in this uncertain time.

Many of you, who would usually attend a dinner or rally or tournament, have asked how you can help the ducks right now. So, we put together a short guide for giving, How can you help the ducks today (*see page 12*)? If you have a new idea, or you'd like to start your own fundraiser, please reach out to staff. We are here to support and guide our volunteers in all conservation and fundraising activities.

Staying in touch today presents unique challenges. We introduced a mobile app last year that we're really glad to have with us now. If you haven't taken a look at it, please give it a try.

You'll find it here: [ducks.ca/myduc](https://ducks.ca/myduc)

Let's keep in touch!



**TIM BINCH**

National Manager of Volunteer Fundraising

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## How can you help the ducks today?

### Get in on the auction

Did you catch the latest auction, *Duck the Halls*? You can enjoy the excitement of outbidding your friends in a live auction when you join us online! Bid on DUC-branded merchandise and exciting sponsored items and experiences. Watch for announcements so you can mark your calendar! [ducks.ca/auctions](https://ducks.ca/auctions)

### Ontario 2021 raffle calendar

Hurry to purchase your calendar before they sell out—again! You can buy a beautiful calendar for only \$40 and be entered in the raffle for the firearm of the week. You'll love the great photos each month and you'll really love the chance at a weekly prize from Stoeger/Bennelli, Beretta, Sako, Tikka or Franchi. [ducks.ca/ontarioguncalendar](https://ducks.ca/ontarioguncalendar)

### Ontario 50/50 raffles

Each ticket you buy online gives you a chance to win cash while you support wetlands, forests and wildlife in Ontario. Our summer winner, Kaija Jalbert, won \$5,475—and so did the ducks! Thank you for playing, Kaija! Watch your email for our next raffle announcement. Sponsored by Spearhead Brewing Company. [ontario5050.ca](https://ontario5050.ca)

### Start your own fundraiser

You may have a passion in your life that you can draw on for conservation. Give your side-line a new purpose—nature and wildlife—and inspire others to join you, whether the gathering is virtual, separate or outdoors. DUC director Kevin McFadden turned his love of biking into the Canada Life Ride to the Lake, an annual fundraiser that continued this year with careful health guidelines.

### Be a monthly donor

Your recurring gift is one of the best ways to help the ducks. Once you have donated \$35 or more in a year, you'll become a member and receive our *Conservator* magazine, the latest e-news and special offers from DUC and our partners.

### Honour a personal loss

You can donate to the conservation of Canada's wetlands in honour of, or in memory of, an important person in your life—such as a family member, neighbour, friend or colleague.

### Speak for conservation

Maintaining a high quality of life, for wildlife and people, depends on the health of landscapes that are changing rapidly, particularly in southern Ontario. Our on-the-ground work is critically important but we make extra headway when we find ways to reduce the large-scale erosion of habitat seen all around us. We cannot achieve our mission by restoring habitat at a small scale while other factors relentlessly erode large areas of habitat. [ducks.ca/advocate](https://ducks.ca/advocate)

### Just in time for the holidays: Canadian print collection (shipped direct!)

A collection of iconic Canadian prints chosen with a variety of home and workplace styles in mind. Select a welcome refresher for your home-office wall. Light up a cottage dining nook. Or perhaps you'd like to share the gift of conservation? Your display-ready gift can be shipped right from the website. [fundinginnovation.ca/programs/duc-support](https://fundinginnovation.ca/programs/duc-support)



The Toronto Chapter, putting in some quality time together back in 2019. Left to right: Matt Pomeroy, Mike Brower, Mark Scott, Ed Seagram, Brett Grant-ham, Greg Lever, Tim Binch and Peter Kruuk.

## Ontario's 2020 Volunteer of the Year

### Congratulations to Ed Seagram of Toronto!

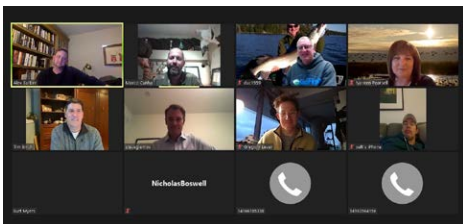
He's been a fixture on DUC's legendary fundraising scene for decades. It's his attitude that stands out; his consistently encouraging approach inspires volunteers and supporters to strive for the title of DUC's top-earner, year after year, for the Toronto Conservation Dinner.

Ed's mentorship has energized the Toronto committee since he took on the challenge of leading its venerable banquet, held at the end of January at the elegant Ritz-Carlton hotel.

"We share a passion for wild things and wild places," said Ed. "We see wetlands and wildlife as an essential part of a healthy, vibrant and lasting environment for all Canadians."

Ed flew to DUC as a youngster under the wing of his father, Ed Seagram Sr., a longstanding champion of wetlands and wildlife. Ed served first with the Scarborough Chapter, where he credits the late Al Glassford for inspiration, and spent many years there as chair before he joined the Toronto Chapter.

Today, Ed is a member of the fundraising leadership for DUC and has helped sound the call for conservation at Queen's Park, connecting with influential leaders to make the case for wetlands as part of a healthy future.



Making a difference is different now! The committee for the Toronto Conservation Dinner meets online to plan their virtual fundraiser for January 2021.

© BRYAN RUSHTON



Help us protect wetlands like this peaceful winter wonderland from the 2021 Ontario raffle calendar.





## Forty years as staff, 30 years as volunteer

After four decades with DUC, **Rick Robb** has retired from the Kingston office. Rick headed up DUC's Ontario engineering group for many of those years and his genial personality is truly missed by his engineering colleagues, Craig Berga and Steve Mack. Rick has also been a dedicated DUC volunteer and, in 2013, he joined retired DUC director George Merry to receive their Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medals. Last year, Rick celebrated another milestone when he received his 30-year service decoy at the Frontenac banquet. He probably won't get away from that job so easily!

*Below: A smiling Rick Robb joined colleagues for his final DUC national engineering meeting in 2019.*

## New Ontario director on DUC's Board

**Welcome Rob Tamblyn!** A third director for Ontario was elected recently at DUC's fall board meeting. A passionate conservationist, Rob has spent more than 30 years in the group insurance industry and brings extensive experience to his new role in new business and partnership opportunities, customer service, stewardship and support.



**Rob Tamblyn**  
Director  
WINDSOR



**Greg Weeks**  
Senior Director  
PORT PERRY



**Phil Holst**, *Committee Chair, Conservation*  
WOODSTOCK

*DUC's board of directors is made up of professionals and philanthropists from across Canada and the United States. All directors serve in a volunteer capacity. For more information, visit [ducks.ca/annualreport](http://ducks.ca/annualreport)*





In an unprecedented year of sudden change, support for our work to restore and conserve wetlands and improve the health of our shared landscapes has continued to grow. It has been incredibly heartening for us to see that our supporters—from individual volunteers to family farms to large corporations—have not turned away from the core conservation values that we share together.

In fact, we needed help in 2020 with a very welcome problem in the Lake Erie watershed. We've been working with private landowners in this region since the 1970s and together we've restored nearly 600 small wetlands. In recent years, however, landowner interest in wetland conservation outstripped available funding.

This year, the Coca-Cola Foundation came forward to help us engage 20 private landowners in sustainable water stewardship by restoring wetlands on their private rural properties—directly contributing to enhanced surface water quality, groundwater recharge and healthy habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife.

Water is the first ingredient in many prepared beverages. For this reason, replenishment of water resources and respecting water as a shared resource are two of the top principles for Coca-Cola's sustainability goals. By our calculations, these wetlands will process about 889,660 cubic metres of water through the beneficial effects of filtration, sedimentation and infiltration before moving downstream into rivers and lakes. Those are big results for small wetlands!

We're excited to have supporters who include sustainability of the natural environment as an ongoing part of their mission. This year, we also moved ahead in Oxford County where we began a demonstration project that will be visible to the thousands of travellers on Highway 401, thanks to support from the Cowan Foundation and the City of Woodstock (see page 8). And we again benefited from the generosity of Louise Gendron, whose legacy gift to DUC was part of the milestone purchase of St. Luke's Marsh (see page 3). Ms. Gendron's bequest has been pivotal in several other conservation achievements including the DUC-owned property in the Carp Hills.

Our work together for ducks creates a swell of benefits that flow to all Canadians including clean air and clean water. All of us who contribute to the conservation mission are supporting the environment and the economy in real and powerful ways.



**Above:** Restored wetlands on private rural properties with support from The Coca-Cola Foundation.



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