

The Trail Times

from the Oxford County Trails Council
Spring 2025



Oxford County's Trails Festival is set and ready for YOU! Tie up your hiking boots, grab some water (in a reusable container, of course) and be prepared to enjoy the beauty of our local environment. Take a Hike, Oxford! is scheduled for International Trails Day and this year, that's on Saturday, June 7, 2025.

All activities and events have been organized for the City's Pittock Park on the north shore of Pittock Lake, from 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. Four trails are close by: Sliver, Hickson, South Shore (via the dam) and Burgess. Also, many activities are offered for participants, including:

- Face Painting
- Birds of Prey Presentations
- Reptiles Display
- Trail/Nature/Birding Photography
- Live Music
- Continuous hiking all day
- Paint & Keep a Cut-out Animal
- Children's Activities & Stories (Early On & Woodstock Public Library)
- Other Activities as planned

For more details and locations, go to www.oxfordcountyltrailsCouncil.ca



Oxford County trails offer sightings of snowy owls in winter and screech owls year-round. But you need to be stealthy and keep your distance to enjoy these wonderful birds.

Most of the popular attractions from our 2024 event will be returning this year. Demonstrations, workshops and hikes for all ages combine learning and lots of fun!





The Woodstock Rec and Leisure Fair and Woodstock Public Library “Seedy Saturday” in March offered visitors information and updates on Oxford trails. Thanks to the organisers and volunteers we had two very busy days of smiles and handshakes from existing and new trail users.



Extend your interest in Oxford nature:

Oxford County offers some of the most diverse experiences in nature on its many and varied trails. Trail guides, on-line and printed reference materials on flora and fauna offer enhancements to those wanting to know more. Many Oxford nature lovers belong to associate organisations offering periodic in-person meetings, field trips and presentations by subject matter experts.

Two of note are:

- Woodstock Field Naturalist (woodstockfieldnaturalists.org)
- Ingersoll and District Nature Club (ingersollnatureclub.com)

Membership fees are very modest and they both offer an opportunity to meet with like-minded people with a passion for all aspects of nature. Just attend one of their scheduled events and ask about membership. It’s as easy as that.

A full house!



All bird nesting boxes on the Oxford Thames River Trail are cleaned out annually and dosed with a sprinkling of diatomaceous earth to discourage small insects that could harm chicks

and their parents. The good news is that all boxes were occupied during the 2024 nesting season, attesting that the Oxford Thames River Wetlands offers near ideal habitat for migrating birds including martins, swallows and bluebirds. Always observe nesting box activity from a distance to ensure they remain productive.

Flooding – the bad and the good.

As soon as the Oxford Thames River Trail is dry enough, a work party with a loader will make good any erosion and regrade parts of the trail for safety and accessibility. Flooding can be beneficial to wetland areas because the sediment carried down the river and deposited on otherwise dry land can be nutrient rich and encourage the growth of riverine flora. Please remember to keep your distance from any heavy machinery working on the trail.



New and refreshed trail signage!

A grant from Oxford Community Foundation has contributed to new health and safety signage on the Hodges Pond, Hickson and Oxford Thames River Trails. In addition, the weathered, small signs along the Oxford Thames River Trail will be refreshed for improved readability. Please take a moment to read the new health and safety signs to optimise your trails experience.

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