

The Trail Times

Oxford County Trails Council

Summer 2023

Bench strength!

Volunteers Glen, Bill, Dan and Ken installed a new two-seater bench on the Oxford Thames River Trail west spur to replace the existing wooden one that was moved to the extreme east end of the trail. The new bench was donated by Woodstock resident Ralph Flood in loving memory of his wife, Barbara. Ralph chose this location because of its tranquility and abundant flora and fauna.

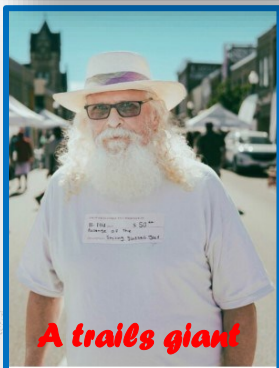
The offer of new memorial benches is welcomed by Oxford County Trails Council. They can be in the form of a tax-receiptable cash donation or an in-kind gift. Please contact us for more details at admin@oxfordcountyrailsCouncil.ca



"Now, just leave me alone willya!!"



A female snapping turtle walks the Oxford Thames River Trail in search of her nest site. Fewer than 1% of her offspring will make it to adulthood.



It is with deep sorrow and much surprise that we mourn the very sudden passing of Mike Kijewski on April 27th, 2023, at the age of 70 years.

He will be remembered for his uniqueness, his stories, his sense of humour, his music, his helpful and open nature, his appreciation of small things, and his willingness to go against the grain. Mike was kind and generous, often sticking up for the marginalized and disadvantaged.

Mike loved his walks in nature with his dogs. He was involved with the Hickson Trail Committee from its inception and a day seldom passed when he wasn't on the trail checking for maintenance issues and enjoying the sights and sounds of what has become his enduring legacy.

Pollinator gardens tilled and seeded.



*Your donation
dollars at work.*

The seed mix was crafted specifically for the soil and environment. An overseeding of oats will buffer the emergent seedlings from weather extremes. It will take several years for the gardens to reach their full potential.

Following an early May tilling by Bob Thompson Landscaping, the pollinator gardens on the sandhills section of the Oxford Thames River Trail were expertly seeded by technicians from Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in early June.



Photo and text by Richard Skevington

The **Eastern Screech Owl** is the most common owl found in Southern Ontario. It can be found year-round in our towns and cities, but its normal habitat is rural woodlots. It roosts and nests in mature tree cavities as well as high up in large trees next to the trunk. The owl in this photo is not in its normal daylight roosting spot. Screech Owls have 2 colour phases, one being the less-likely reddish colour seen in this picture and the other being the more common grey colour. They are strictly nocturnal, only hunting at night, preferring to eat insects and rodents. Nesting early in the spring, they generally raise only one brood. When nesting they are highly protective of their territory and have been known to attack humans by hitting them in the back of the head with their talons. Beware!

Two of Southwest Oxford Animal Care & Control By-law No. 76-2017

Trail users are reminded that dogs must be kept on a leash at all times when on this property – this includes other parks and public spaces (open spaces, trails, sidewalks, etc.). Permitting your dog to run at large could result in a fine of \$300. Failing to remove excrement left by your dog may also result in a fine of \$155.

Keeping your dog on a leash helps reduce incidents of blacklegged tick bites, dogs biting another human or animal. Incidents of dog biting must be reported to Southwestern Public Health and the OPP and under provincial legislation, may result in fines up to \$10,000 or imprisonment of up to 6 months (or both).

Oxford County Trails Council

www.oxfordcountytailsCouncil.ca