



the Bluestem Banner

Summer 2006

Tallgrass Ontario

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To achieve the identification, conservation, management and restoration of tallgrass prairie, savanna and related ecological communities in Ontario

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Photo by Ken Nentwig

Go to www.tallgrassontario.org to download the Bluestem Banner in colour.

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One Drink Too Many

There is an old pasture in this county that I periodically stop to enjoy. Occasionally there have been cattle grazing in it, but more often it is not being grazed. However I delight in the melodies of the meadowlark, the buzzy songs of the savannah sparrow and the flutter flight and bubbling songs of the bobolink. Grasses swaying in the breeze and stunted shrubs scattered throughout are a reminder of a time not so long ago of a slower paced, pastoral landscape commonplace in southwestern Ontario.

These views also are a reminder of a relatively common landscape present right here in what we know as the municipality of Chatham-Kent, but long before European settlement: that of tallgrass prairie. These prairies, with their deep rich soils and treeless landscape were easily converted to agriculture. Today, those fields that have the best production of corn and soybeans, both in Ontario and the various midwestern states, were undoubtedly tallgrass prairies in a former time. Healthy prairie are rich and diverse, a riot of colours changing weekly as well as full of a surprising diversity of bird, mammal and insect life. Few people today have any familiarity of such a place, because it is one of the most endangered natural habitats left in North America. The very richness of its soil and ease of access has been its downfall. Less than one six-hundredths of one per cent of the original tallgrass prairie in North America survives today under any form of protection.



Little used pastures are hardly a substitute for the original tallgrass prairie, yet superficially they do bear some resemblance. This is what has attracted me to stop and enjoy even a pasture, as a reminder of our natural heritage.

A portrait of the author by his daughter Kristin, at Rondeau Oak Savanna

Today I drove by this old pasture, and saw the savannah sparrows, the meadowlarks and bobolinks. However they were not against a backdrop of green, swaying grasses as they should have been this fine spring day. Instead everything was brown, and it seemed that I could detect a note of concern in the bird song. The brown wasn't the result of a drought. Rather the plants had had one drink too many, the critical one being an intentional chemical spray. Indeed one could see the outline of the sprayer boom in places where it had gone wide at the corners, slightly missing its target. There, valiantly struggling to survive, bits of greenery persisted, almost shouting to anyone who cared to notice of the environmental injustice that had taken place. But alas, another area would now fall to the plow, victim of the perceived need to grow another few acres of corn or soybeans.

Perhaps the bobolinks and meadowlarks will hatch their young this year in spite of the death of the pasture, but will there be any food for them? As the vegetation dies, so do the numerous forms of animal life so intricately woven together in a relationship biologically referred to as a community.

Do we need more corn and soybeans? Perhaps, but at what cost. How much does a county have to contribute before enough is enough? Approximately 96% of the Chatham-Kent landscape has already been so severely altered it will never return to any resemblance of its former self, at least in our lifetime, without a tremendous input of money, resources and technical expertise that still can't duplicate what nature can do quite nicely by itself if given the chance. I say we reached "enough" in this part of Ontario a long time ago. It is time we started to reverse the trend. - P. Allen Woodliffe

Professionally managed fires to revitalize globally rare tallgrass prairie and savanna on the Oak Ridges Moraine

Todd Farrell reports the successful completion of a prescribed burn program during Spring 2006 with over 15 hectares successfully burned by June 2006. The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and members of the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative and Caring for the Moraine-Ganaraska Hills Area project brought in provincial fire experts to manage and oversee a number of prescribed burns to revitalize rare tallgrass prairie and savanna habitat this spring. The prescribed burns are designed to help restore habitats within the Northumberland County Forest, Peter's Woods Provincial Nature Reserve and Burnley-Carmel as well as sites in the Ganaraska Forest area.

Mark Stabb, NCC's Central Ontario Program Manager noted that tallgrass prairie and savanna plant species depend upon fire to live. As natural fires have long been suppressed in southern Ontario, conservation scientists across North America use professionally-managed prescribed burns to bring new life to these threatened places.

The burns prescribed for the Oak Ridges Moraine sites are deliberately ignited ground fires used to restore globally rare tallgrass prairie and savanna habitats. All of the burns will be carried out by trained professionals. For example, as part of the Caring for the Moraine-Ganaraska Hills Area project the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority and Kawartha Conservation have hired Lands and Forests Consulting, a private company that annually conducts prescribed burns on tallgrass projects throughout southern Ontario. Detailed burn plans, fire permits and insurance are obtained in advance for each site. In 2005, Lands and Forests was hired to burn a prairie remnant in the Ganaraska forest. Ken Towle, an ecologist shared by the two Conservation Authorities, noted that the native prairie plants responded to the fire.

All of the burns took place within the Oak Ridges Moraine, one of the most significant geographical features in Ontario. The moraine supports a distinctive mix of southern and northern flora and fauna and plays an essential role in maintaining the quality and quantity of water resources in the region. Tallgrass prairie and savanna once covered an estimated 15% or over 200 square km or 20,000 ha of the moraine, largely in the eastern portion. Today, less than 1 percent of the 1 million square kilometers of prairie and savanna habitat that once covered central Canada and the United States remains, making it one of the rarest ecosystem types in North America.

The prescribed burns occurred through two partnerships, both of which have received support from the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. The Rice Lake Plains Initiative, created in October of 2003, includes NCC, the County of Northumberland, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, Lower Trent Conservation, Ontario Parks and Wildlife Habitat Canada's Wetland Habitat Fund. The partners envision restoration and protection of tallgrass prairie and oak savanna habitat through co-operative efforts with landowners, conservation science, land stewardship, public outreach, and legal protection of land. The Ganaraska Hills partnership was formed in 2005 and is made up of 15 groups promoting and coordinating restoration and stewardship activities on a large portion of the moraine in the vicinity of the Ganaraska Forest.

Contact Todd Farrell at todd.farrell@natureconservancy.ca for more information about the Rice Lake Plains Initiative and check out a copy of the Savanna Sentinel at www.tallgrassontario.org.

Russ' Creek Cemetery – under the blade once more

In Spring 2006, Alnwick/ Haldimand Township released an advertisement issuing a request for tenders to cut Russ Creek Cemetery's grass every two weeks or as necessary from May 22 to October 31. Barry King reports that the action has resulted in a strong response by supporters of Russ' Creek. These individuals and groups are requesting that the cemetery be left in its current state in order preserve what remains of the clumps of wild lupines and provincially rare prairie buttercups live on the cemetery's site along with other tallgrass species which were once part of the Rice Lake Plains.

In spite of the outcry and acknowledgement by the township that provincially rare species are present on the site, the Abandoned Cemeteries Board has no plans were made to discontinue mowing. According to a report in the Independent, a local newspaper, authorities indicated that mowing was required to provide safe walking conditions.

Several descendents of those buried in the cemetery strongly disagree, as does Ontario Nature. In its letter, the OEN stated that they encouraged the Township Council to preserve the rare flora existing within the cemetery, so that current and future generations could experience this very small remnant of Ontario tallgrass prairie left by the pioneers of the Russ' Creek settlement.

In August 2005, Ed Heuvel, a biologist who specializes in restoring native plants species and was responsible for help restoring Red Cloud Cemetery, noted that there were rare and endangered species growing in the cemetery and that restoration would take time as well as a decrease in the amount of mowing.



Russ' Creek faces many of the same hurdles and misunderstandings of many similar sites throughout Ontario, from Ojibway in Windsor to the Rice Lake Plains. You can support community efforts to preserve Russ' Creek by contacting barryking@eagle.ca.

Photo of prairie buttercups at Russ Creek Cemetery, above, courtesy of Barry King.

Canada Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*) text and photos by Allen Woodliffe

Canada Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*) is a delightful and sometimes abundant wildflower found throughout the tallgrass prairies and open woods of southern Ontario.

The genus *Anemone* is derived from a Greek term meaning 'wind' and the species name means, of course, of Canada. Another common name is Prairie or Canada Windflower. There are 10 species of *Anemone* in Ontario with four of them being closely associated with prairie communities.

Canada Anemone can grow to a height of about 0.6 metres, but is often shorter. In addition to typical, moist prairie habitats, it will also grow at the edges of ditches and amongst the stone ballast along railway corridors where there is not a lot of competition from taller and denser vegetation. The leaves are deeply five to seven parted and have hairy, prominent veins. The basal leaves have long petioles and are in whorls of three, while the upper leaves are sessile and paired.



The solitary, five-petaled white flower is on a long stalk. Although individual flowers may only last a few days, a stand of Canada Anemone may begin flowering in mid May and continue until early July. Later, a bristly looking seed head of flat achenes develops. After the seed head darkens upon maturity, it shatters easily.

Please turn to page 6

Canada Anemone continued from page 5. Two other relatively common members of *Anemone* occur in prairie and savanna habitats. They are known as Thimbleweed (*A. cylindrica* and *A. virginiana*). Both are typically taller than *A. canadensis*. In addition, they have a more elongated fruiting stalk, which upon maturity produce seed heads that appear as cotton balls. A much rarer *Anemone* is Pasque-flower (*A. patens*) which in Ontario occurs only in some of the dry prairie sites of northwestern Ontario.

The roots of Canada Anemone were used for medicinal purposes by some of the mid-western aboriginal tribes such as the Poncas and Omaha. It was used internally and externally for wounds, and was especially important for certain maladies of the eyes.

Canada Anemone is an ideal addition to a natural garden. It will grow well in any open setting, especially where there is not a lot of competition from taller vegetation, such as in a rock garden. The seeds are easy to collect, and it does especially well by dividing the rhizomes when the plants are dormant. Please keep in mind that plant collecting in provincial and national parks is not permitted. The principal disadvantage in growing this species is that it sometimes does too well, and can be invasive. Some gardeners recommend surrounding a clump of Canada Anemone with a metal or plastic barrier to prevent the rhizomes from spreading too vigorously.



Review: “Grasslands” by Richard Manning

Every so often a book comes along that is a defining moment of sorts, as it addresses an issue or brings together ideas that the populace would do well to be aware of. Some are inspiring, such as Teale’s 1950s series on “*The American Seasons*” or Leopold’s “*A Sand County Almanac*”. Others are alarming, such as Carson’s “*Silent Spring*” of 1962. Less known, but every bit as important, is “*The Late Great Lakes*” by William Ashworth (1986). The latter work is an environmental history of the Great Lakes, and should be mandatory reading for everyone living in the Great Lakes watershed.

In the 1990s, Richard Manning wrote “*Grasslands*”, published by Viking Press. It is done in a similar vein as *The Late Great Lakes*. Although it focuses a bit more on the Great Plains area, it does overlap with the tallgrass prairie region, and in particular highlights the issues surrounding water, soil erosion, the conversion of the natural grasslands to production of row crops and beef and the arrival and effect of exotic species. Some examples include:

- The midwest is not covered with cows, but with corn and grain, 70% of which goes to feed livestock. A cow produces 16 times the feces of a human. The number of cows grazing on or near the mountain streams of the greater Yellowstone ecosystem produce the equivalent sewage of a city of 1.6 million people, and most of it gets washed, untreated, into the river.
- Gentle streams meander through the grasslands, hidden by willow and brush. The roots support the streambed and form mini-dams that slow the water to produce periodic floods. These water the entire riparian zone, which sometimes stretches out several hundred feet on either side of the stream. Cows eat willows. In recent years in a region of Nevada where the cows weren’t doing an adequate job, ranchers poisoned the willows on the assumption that willows use water and water is for cows. As a result the water speeds up and starts to down-cut, eroding a new and lower stream bed. Now the willows can’t come back, as their roots can’t reach the water. The water is forever siltier, faster and warmer. Of the 150 species of fish native to the West, 122 are either extinct, endangered or candidates for listing.
- American agriculture, with all of its technology, subsidies and labour supports a population of 45.5 million cattle in the plains states, the same area that held 50 million bison without any of these inputs. Bison grazed the naturally occurring grasses and did not require grain. Seventy per cent of the grain crop of American agriculture goes toward livestock that replaced the bison that ate no grain. Therefore we get a fatter meat at a huge cost to our own health, the economy and the landscape.
- In the late 1800s Frank Meyer, under the auspices of the USDA, went on expeditions to China, Mongolia, Manchuria and Siberia to examine the species of plants that would withstand the rigours of the arid western plains of the US, with the intent of bringing them to the US. He brought in over 2500 exotic species of plants! These included crested wheat grass, lilac, Siberian elm, Russian olive, catalpa, ginkgo, honey locust, bamboo, Chinese chestnut, tumbleweed and crown vetch. Many of these supplanted species native to North America. Chinese chestnut had developed an immunity to the chestnut blight, but the American chestnut had not. When the blight arrived on the Chinese chestnut, the American chestnut was doomed.

There are many other examples and issues discussed by Manning that leaves one shaking one’s head. Is it an inspirational work? Not at all, but it is an eye opener to some of the influences of the grasslands of North America, and as members of Tallgrass Ontario wrestle with ways to protect and enhance the remnant prairies and savannas of Ontario, it provides important context. I highly recommend it.

P. Allen Woodliffe



Badgers ARE cute, honest.....Ron Gould, Species at Risk Biologist, OMNR Aylmer, sent these field notes of a badger "site-ing" and photograph to Tallgrass Ontario. Sound like fun?! Please send your badger stories and photos to Ron at ron.gould@ontario.ca

"After many hours of monitoring the den site yesterday without any activity, one of the young finally emerged just after 8:45pm to do some persistent digging around the right side of the sand mound (just to the right of where I had the remote camera set up of course). "

"As it was emerging it briefly chased a bumble bee, almost trapping it against the wall. Once dusk had set in after about 30 minutes of digging and lounging, it wandered across the front of the barn then over to the old kiln behind the greenhouse. Still very small in size compared to an adult, I would say 2/3 adult size of adult female at best, but well developed, proportioned and alert."



"I was following at a fair distance, so lost sight of it temporarily as it went along the north wall of that building. I ended up relocating it as it peeked out from the gap in between the doors of the kiln along the north wall. It waited several minutes until any trace of sunlight was pretty much gone, then bee-lined it toward the horse pens at the rear of the house (thankfully there was enough residual light coming through the windows at the back of the house for me to see it lumbering across the grass). "

"After arriving at the horse pen, I thought I had lost it in the darkness until I heard the unmistakable sound of crunching kibble in the area of the back porch. Upon closer inspection I found the badger munching away at the food the house renters have been leaving out for a stray cat that recently had kittens in one of the kilns. It seemed to exhibit behaviour typical of a startled badger and at times almost guarding or mantling the food as I approached to focus for a photo. "

"Getting a better look at it yesterday I think it's a female, yet to be confirmed. It does have that distinctive break in the white face stripe between the eyes, creating a white spot on the snout that resembles a reverse-shaped layout of Pelee Island. Also it has noticeably white toes on the rear feet, similar to adults found road-killed in the region."

"I spoke to the renters about the occurrence, asking them to refrain from putting out any more food or milk, since young badgers have other important survival skills to develop at this time, instead of sniffing out Meow Mix and 2% [milk]. They promptly agreed that it was a good idea, and commented that they had noticed that the milk bowl that they have also been leaving out has been mysteriously knocked over the past few nights. I will also ask them to keep their dogs on a leash when outside over the next few weeks, since at least this one young badger has developed a habit of coming around the house."

"No sign of the other young or adult before I left shortly after 10, but the fellow who lives there mentioned he almost certainly saw the adult the night before, startling it coming around the rear corner of the greenhouse. He said it was noticeably larger than the young he has observed together on recent occasions, and much more aggressive in its behaviour. He said it hissed, growled and emitted a strong musky odour that helped to direct him away fast. I will check the camera this afternoon on my way back from Ancaster to see if it has got anything new."

Website News

Many of you are already aware that the Niagara Parks Commission has created another another NPC website, www.niagaraparksnature.com, with funding provided by Botanical Gardens Conservation International (BGCI). In the next few weeks and months they will be adding greatly to the content of this website, and their goal is to increase the profile of the site so that www.niagaraparksnature.com will be at the top of the first page of any search relating to nature/environment/conservation/SAR/ etc. within NPC and general Niagara Falls area. Those of you with related websites should consider adding a link to www.niagaraparksnature.com. Another accomplishment, associated with the Nature website development, is the linking of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens Plant Collections Records which are now searchable from anywhere in the world via the RBG Edinburgh MultiSite (http://rbg-web2.rbge.org.uk/forms/multisite2.html). NPC suggest you try it out whenever you need to know about their plant collections or plant collections from other botanical gardens that rank among the best in the world. For more information contact rritchie@niagaraparks.com

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Royal Ontario Museum have developed a website, in partnership, called Ontario Species at Risk at http://www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php. OMNR has developed a website focused on Species at Risk with links to a wide range of areas and issues at: http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/speciesatrisk/ - "Our lifelong health and quality of life depend on biodiversity – a rich diversity of wild plants, animals and habitats. We are fortunate to live in a province of rich biodiversity but more species become endangered every year as a result of ever-increasing human activities. More than 170 of Ontario's wild species are at risk – that's over one-third of all of the species at risk in Canada." In 2005, the Ontario government announced Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy as part of a global effort to protect biodiversity and ensure sustainable use of biological resources. The Strategy recommends actions by government, non-government and private sector organizations to protect and preserve our natural heritage, including species at risk. You can download a copy from this site.

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Please make cheque payable to Tallgrass Ontario and mail to: 659 Exeter Road, London, ON N6E 1L3 • (519) 873-4631

As part of our Save Ontario Savannas project, Tallgrass Ontario (TgO) has created a series of six principles to offer support to the landowner who wishes to maintain and enhance their tallgrass habitat. These principles are derived from the experiences of tallgrass habitat managers from across the eastern portion of North America and apply to all the various tallgrass habitats including prairies, savannahs, woodlands, and most types of alvars.

Principle # 2: Let the Sunshine In

The single most important thing that you need to actively provide for your tallgrass is sunlight. Tallgrass plants are adapted to high levels of sunlight and they won't grow unless they get it. In natural stands of prairie, fire, drought, heavy grazing, flooding, windstorms, and other disturbances keep the numbers of shrubs and trees down to a minimum. In addition, these types of disturbances periodically destroyed the natural build-up of dead plant matter that any grassland produces.

All these disturbances tend not to happen in domesticated landscapes and we need to make up for this static situation, particularly with regard to the eradication of shrubs. So, if your patch starts to look brushy, and the grasses and forbs are getting lots of shade, get out and grub out the bushes! You can do this by hand, with a chainsaw, or with a Brush Hog, but let the sun shine in. (But, see Principle #4 before you start*) Finally, avoid planting trees in and around your tallgrass.

In our recent survey of tallgrass habitats around Ontario, we discovered that the single greatest threat to extant tallgrass is planted trees, particularly red pines. You need to make a decision to have tallgrass habitat or a forest; it really isn't possible to have both in the same exact area. If you decide that you want a savanna or woodland, then you must keep the number and size of your trees down to where the total canopy cover of all the trees combined is less than 60% (preferably less than 30%) of the total area. In addition, you want to only use tree species that occur naturally in, and are adapted to, savannas and woodlands, e.g., oaks, white pines, jack pines, and hickories, for the most part. Finally, remember that you want trees and not saplings. In a natural savanna or woodland, the vast majority of saplings are destroyed by fire or drought each year. Saplings shade out grasses and forbs, so, unless you consciously choose to keep one that you want to grow as a tree, remove the younger trees! *Will Wilson, Project Director*

**You can obtain copies of the 6 Principles by contacting info@tallgrassontario.org or download them from www.tallgrassontario.org/publications. The 6 principles are:*

- 1. Use Local Seeds
- 2. Let the Sunshine In
- 3. Work Towards A Circle
- 4. Disturb the Equilibrium
- 5. On the Use of Muscles and Chemicals
- 6. Know Your Habitat and Keep Records

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A Big Thanks and Farewell to Lindsay Rodger

One of Tallgrass Ontario's 'foremothers' has retired from the Board of Directors. Lindsay Rodger has worked tirelessly for over 8 years for tallgrass conservation. Lindsay began her practical career of involvement with tallgrass prairie in Chatham back in the mid 1990s working with Kim Delaney and the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network. Her main focus was seed collecting and planning restoration projects. She then moved on to work with the World Wildlife Fund, still with a focus on endangered species and spaces.

In 1997, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources found money for an ecosystem recovery plan. With a push from Allen Woodliffe, a partnership was forged with the World Wildlife fund to allow Lindsay to lead the writing of a plan for tallgrass prairie and oak savanna. This was a daunting task as very few ecosystem-scale recovery plans had ever been written, but Lindsay was up to the task. In 1998, the *Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan* was published. The Plan was very well received. One of the key recommendations from the plan was that a Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association be formed to oversee the implementation of the recovery plan. Lindsay helped form this group called the Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association, later shortened to Tallgrass Ontario, with Lindsay serving as the first Chair.

Since those early days, Lindsay has helped Tallgrass Ontario develop into a charitable organization with part-time staff, numerous contracts and out-reach projects. She was instrumental in the first two tallgrass forums held in Windsor and Ridgeway. Most recently, she has chaired the subgroup tasked with updating the Tallgrass Recovery Plan.

We'll miss Lindsay's calm and thoughtful contributions to the Board as well as her sense of humour and comradery. Lindsay has moved to Ottawa to work with Parks Canada, facing new challenges and projects in the species-at-risk arena. I'm sure our paths will cross again – no one gets away that easily. The Board thanks Lindsay for her years of leadership and contribution to Tallgrass Ontario.

Cathy Quinlan, President

And a Big Hello to TgO's New Program Coordinator, Graham Buck

Graham Buck graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1994 from the University of Guelph. He worked from 1994 to 2001 for a company developing insects and release procedures for the biological control of agriculture pest insects with parasitic wasps. In his spare time Graham pursued a passion for botany, native plant gardening and ecological restoration, particularly tallgrass prairie, oak savanna and oak woodland.

In 2001, after discovering two new to Canada plant species and numerous new locations of provincially rare plants Graham joined the Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC). With the NCC Graham completed plant inventories, prepared management plans and completed restoration projects. In 2004 Graham pursued his passion for tallgrass prairie by becoming the Natural Connections Program (NCP) coordinator for the Brant Resource Stewardship Network in Brant County. The NCP works with landowners to restore, enlarge, connect and create new tallgrass and oak habitats. Also in 2004 Graham started Nith River Native Plants to continue to develop his passion for native plant landscaping, ecological restoration and botanical inventories that he started over ten years ago.

Graham is newly married (August, 2006) to Bronwen Smith. They currently live in Guelph, Ontario. Congratulations and welcome, Graham.

OEN Fall Conference and Annual General Meeting will take place on October 27-29, 2006 at the Pearce Williams United Church Christian Centre, near Fingal (just south of London).

Please visit

http://www.oen.ca/events/fall2006/fall2006_index.html for more information .

Arboretum America , October 20, 2006 at 7:30 pm, London, Ontario. Diana Beresford-Kroeger brings her message of environmental salvation through the miracle of trees.

The Thames Talbot Land Trust is also sponsoring a ***Seed Collection Seminar*** scheduled for September 23 & 24, 2006. For more information on these events and TTLT, please to go to www.ttl.ca.

2006 Ecological Monitoring & Assessment Network National Science Meeting, Winnipeg, MB, November 20 to 25, 2006. For more information, contact Kathy Finch, eman@ec.gc.ca

Check out... www.blueoak.ca.

Paul O'Hara's new website is "is meant to inspire, educate, challenge, entertain and agitate"!

Snakes and turtles? Nadean Schryer, Wildlife Biologist with Southern Science and Information, is looking into past/present monitoring for snakes and turtles in Ontario and doing research on monitoring techniques as well for these species. Please contact her for more information at 3301 Trout Lake Road, North Bay, Ontario, P1A 4L7/ (705) 475-5571

Growing Sustainable Connections. Working Together To Protect Our Unique Nature in Southwestern Ontario - Carolinian Canada Coalition Forum 2006 on Friday, Oct 20 in Ingersoll, Ontario . Information and agenda posted at www.carolinian.org

Tallgrass Ontario at NAPC Tallgrass members Paul Pratt and Allen Woodliffe attended the North American Prairie Conference in Kearny, Nebraska on July 23-26, 2006. We set up the Tallgrass Ontario display in the conference exhibit area and made available copies of our brochures and recent publications to over 270 conference participants. Many American publications about tallgrass prairie do not include any discussion about prairie north of the US border so this was a way to tell people about Ontario's active prairie community.



The conference included a day of field trips and over 90 talks and posters on topics such as invasive species, prairie restoration, seed collecting and storage, butterflies, roadside prairies, mowing, prescribed burning, birds, mammals, education, etc. A complete list of talks is available at: www.napc2006.org. The next prairie conference will be held in the summer of 2008 (site not yet selected). Why not consider attending as it is a great way to see some of the best remnant and restored prairies while learning about prairie ecology, restoration and stewardship. Look for a detailed report on the conference in the next edition of the Bluestem Banner.