

the Lower Trent Conservation Authority in 1970 to be preserved as a wildlife sanctuary.

Tallgrass plants of interest include round-head bush-clover, prairie buttercup, Indian grass, black oak and tick-trefoil. The conservation area contains a total of 12 km of trails and a Conservation Centre. For more information or specific directions to the prairie pockets, call the Lower Trent Conservation Authority at (613) 394-4829.

Directions: From Brighton, go 12.6 km north on Hwy 30 to the junction with County Road 28. Turn west onto 7th Line of Brighton and go 5.4 km.



Other Public Sites

- Bronte Creek Provincial Park (905-827-6911)
- FWR Dickson Conservation Area (Grand River Conservation Authority, 519-621-2761)
- Grand River Trail (Grand River Conservation Authority, 519-621-2761)
- Holland Landing Prairie (MNR Aurora, 905-713-7400)
- Lambton Park Prairie (City of Toronto, 416-392-1888)
- Longpoint Provincial Park (519-586-2133)
- Lorne Park Prairie (City of Mississauga, 905-896-5384)
- Niagara Gorge (Niagara Parks Commission, 905-371-0254)
- Point Pelee National Park (519-322-2365)
- Rondeau Provincial Park (519-674-1750)
- St. Williams Tract (MNR Aylmer, 519-773-9241)

- South Walsingham (Long Point Region Conservation Authority, 519-428-4623)
- Spencer Gorge (Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, 1-888-319-4722)
- Wasaga Beach Provincial Park (705-429-2516)
- Waterloo-Clyde Road Prairie, Shade Mills CA (Grand River Conservation Authority, 519-621-2761)

Created Prairies

There is a growing list of created tallgrass prairie sites in southern Ontario. These prairies have been planted by volunteers, stewardship councils and land managers in schoolyards, parks, and conservation areas and by private landowners in their own yards and farms. The Tallgrass Ontario website contains a listing of created sites in southern Ontario, many of which are open to visitors.

Recommended Resources

Wake, Winnifred (ed.). 1997. A Nature Guide to Ontario. University of Toronto Press Incorporated.

University of Waterloo, Ecology Lab Website:

www.fes.uwaterloo.ca/resources/ecology/projects/prairie/

Natural Heritage Information Centre newsletter (spring 1999):

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/nhic/newsletter.html

For More Information

For more information on tallgrass prairies and savannas and conservation efforts, contact:

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This factsheet is one in a series about Ontario's tallgrass prairie and savanna communities. Some of these include:

- #1 Get up, get out and see some tallgrass
- #2 Fire and the prairie
- #3 Identifying tallgrass prairie species
- #4 An owner's guide to managing tallgrass prairie and savanna
- #5 Looking for help?

Illustrations by Judie Shore.



Burnie the Badger

TALLGRASS

FACTSHEET 1

O N T A R I O

Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association

Get up, get out and see some tallgrass

To fully appreciate the beauty and diversity of a tallgrass prairie or savanna, you must visit one. They are unlike any other natural ecosystem in Ontario. From the mellow blue violets in the spring, to the brilliant yellow sunflowers in the summer, to the rusty red grasses in the fall, each season holds its charms. Sightings of butterflies, dragonflies, songbirds, reptiles and small mammals add to the experience.

In Ontario, tallgrass prairie and savanna are found in southern and northwestern Ontario.

Tallgrass prairie and savanna, including alvars (calcareous prairies), once covered at least 1000 km² in Ontario. Today only about 30 km² remains in approximately 200 known remnant sites. The majority of these properties are in private ownership but there are approximately 45 publicly-owned sites in southern Ontario. Eight of these are described in some detail in this factsheet and several others are listed on the back page.

Like any outing to a natural area, it is wise to wear long sleeves and pants and bring insect repellent, field guides, binoculars, a camera, and water. July and August are the best months to see a range of prairie flowers in bloom. **Take only pictures, leave only footprints.**

Map of sites described in this factsheet



Legend

1. Ojibway Prairie Complex
2. Dutton-Dunwich Prairie
3. Howard Watson Nature Trail
4. Pinery Provincial Park
5. City of Brantford Greenway
6. Turkey Point Provincial Park
7. High Park
8. Goodrich Loomis Conservation Area

1. Ojibway Prairie Complex

The Ojibway Prairie Complex, located in Windsor, is one of Ontario's largest and most important prairie-savanna sites. It consists of five natural areas totaling 350 ha. Four of these areas, Ojibway Park, Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park, Black Oak Heritage Park, and Spring Garden Natural Area, are administered by the City of Windsor's Ojibway Nature Center. The fifth area, the Ontario Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve, is owned by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

More than 700 flowering plants are found here, some of which are found nowhere else in Ontario. Interesting and rare wildlife include the Massasauga rattlesnake, yellow-breasted chat, Butler's

garter snake and over 80 species of butterflies. Information and interpretive programs are available at the Ojibway Nature Centre: 519-966-5852.

Directions: Take Hwy 401 to Windsor and follow the signs to the Ambassador Bridge. The highway becomes Huron Church Road. Turn left (west) onto the EC Row Expressway (C.R. 18) and then turn left on Matchette Road. Go 1.3 km to the nature center on the right (west) side of the road.

2. Dutton-Dunwich Prairie

This prairie grows along and between a set of abandoned railroad tracks in Elgin

County near the Town of Dutton in Dunwich Township. In 1999, members of the West Elgin Nature Club negotiated with the landowner, CSX Railroad, to lease and manage the site. The prairie had become overgrown with woody plants since the once frequent railway fires ceased. A prescribed burn was undertaken in the spring of 2000 to revitalize the site. Blazing-star, grey-headed coneflower, compass plant and most of the prairie grasses are found in abundance.

Directions: Take Hwy 401 to Exit 149 and go south 0.8 km on Currie Road. Turn right (west) on Pioneer Line and travel 3.7 km to Coyne Road. Turn south (left) and go 0.9 km to the railway track. The prairie is on the left (east) side of the tracks.

3. Howard Watson Nature Trail

The Howard Watson Nature Trail was established in 1988 on an abandoned Canadian National Railway right-of-way in Sarnia. Interesting prairie plants present here include wild lupine, rough blazing-star, fringed puccoon, porcupine grass, butterfly weed and stiff goldenrod. The section of trail from Modeland Road to Blackwell Side Road is flanked by tallgrass prairie on both sides. Beyond the prairie is a fringe of woodland containing black oak, sassafras and fragrant sumac. The trail, 2.2 km in length, is owned by the city and managed by Lambton Wildlife Incorporated.

Directions: From Hwy 402 take Exit 6 and go north onto Modeland Road (Regional Road 27). Go 2.8 km to the parking lot which is on the right (east) side of the road.

4. Pinery Provincial Park

Pinery Provincial Park's oak savanna is the largest in Ontario and one of the largest in North America. This savanna contains many unique species such as dwarf chinquapin oak, wild lupine, Olympia

marblewing (butterfly) and eastern hognose snake. Nearly 800 species of plants and 300 species of birds have been recorded.

To restore and maintain the native habitats in the park, several management projects have been undertaken including the removal of planted pine trees and the reduction of the white-tailed deer population. The park's extensive sandy beach and numerous hiking trails are additional attractions. For information on hikes and interpretation programs, drop by the Visitor Centre or check out their website at

www.ontarioparks.com/english/pine.html

Directions: Located 5 km southwest of Grand Bend on Hwy 21. Follow the signs.

5. City of Brantford Greenway

This public greenway, also called the Gordon Glaves Memorial Parkway, was established in 1990 on an abandoned Canadian Pacific rail line in the City of Brantford along the Grand River. A 500 metre section of trail from Hardy Road to Dufferin Avenue is flanked by tallgrass prairie on both sides, totaling 5 ha. A prescribed burn was carried out here in 1998.

There are many interesting plants to look for including dwarf chinquapin oak, green milkweed, porcupine grass, round-head bush clover, and side-oats gramma.

Directions: Take Hwy 403 to Hwy 2 (Paris Road) and travel south to Toll Gate Road. Turn right and travel west to Ava Road, then turn left and go south for 500 metres to Glenhyrst Gardens. Park there and walk down to the river bank and rail-trail.

6. Turkey Point Provincial Park

This 300 hectare park on Lake Erie offers visitors a chance to see a classic black oak savanna that is undergoing restoration. In 1992, a prescribed burn program was initiated to eliminate the shrubby and



Brantford Greenway Prairie. Donald Kirk

herbaceous plants that were filling in the savanna. The planted pines are also being thinned.

The park contains black oak savanna, oak-pine woodland and prairie openings, habitats that were once common in this region. Fern-leaved false foxglove, cylindrical blazing-star, green milkweed and bird's-foot violet are just some of the interesting plants found here. The park is also an excellent place to view a variety of birds including waterfowl, bald eagle, snowy owl and sandhill crane in season.

Directions: From Simcoe, take Hwy 24 south to Regional Road 10 and follow the signs. The park is west of Normandale and east of St. Williams.

7. High Park

Located within the City of Toronto, High Park's black oak savanna and woodland communities are considered continentally significant by virtue of their northern location, size, and species richness. Interesting plants include cup plant, wild lupine, sassafras and open-grown black, red and white oaks. There are several intact parcels of savanna along the west side of West Road.

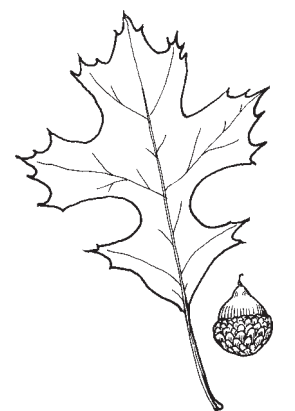
The public has been very committed to the protection and conservation of this unique habitat. There are opportunities for public participation in plant propagation, planting, weed removal,

monitoring and interpretation. Contact the Parks Department at (416) 392-1748. The Nature Centre and trail network make High Park an excellent place to learn about savannas.

Directions: The north entrance is located off Bloor Street West, west of Parkside Drive at High Park Avenue.

8. Goodrich Loomis Conservation Area

The Goodrich Loomis Conservation Area, located north of Brighton, contains numerous small prairie remnants and an oak savanna that is presently being restored. This 179 hectare conservation area is part of a larger area of oak-pine woodland with open prairie habitat on the kames and eskers (mounds of till deposited by glacial streams and waterfalls). The property was donated in part by Frank Goodrich and Roy Loomis to



Prairie scene at the Ojibway Nature Reserve. P. Allen Woodliffe