the Bluestem Banner

Summer 2005 **Tallgrass Ontario** **Volume 6, No. 2**

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

Tallgrass Ontario thanks:
The Ontario Trillium Foundation
Habitat Stewardship Program
Endangered Species Recovery Fund
Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario
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Our members
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Tallgrass Ontario Charitable Registration 88787 7819 RR0001

4th Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Forum
Brantford, Ontario
Old Prairies and New Prairies
September 21-22, 2005

Register Now!!!

Please complete the enclosed package OR go to www.tallgrassontario.org to download a copy. See you there!!!
And turn to page 2 for more information about Forum 2005

Photo above by Paul O'Hara of smooth aster seed head. You can download a copy of the Bluestem Banner IN COLOUR from www.tallgrassontario.org

Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Forum: Old Prairies and New Prairies

We hope you will join us for our biannual Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Forum at Onondaga Farm, near Brantford, Ontario, on September 21 to 22nd, 2005.

The site of this year's forum is terrific. Thanks to our hosts, the Brant Resource Stewardship Network, and with the generous support of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, we have the opportunity to set our forum in a beautiful location. **TIM HORTON'S ONONDAGA FARMS** is one of five Tim Horton Children's Foundation camps established in Canada (there is one more in Kentucky) to provide children who would not otherwise have the opportunity, a chance to enjoy a summer camp experience. At Onondaga Farms, there is year round programming in the areas of environmental education, agriculture, astronomy, creative arts and recreation/adventure. Check out the Onondaga Farm website: www.timhortons.com/en/pdfs/brochureInformation.pdf

Our theme is Old Prairies and New Prairies. We are very grateful to the Bradley Family of Lambton County for allowing us to use a 1914 photo of their grandfather, Bruce Bradley, surveying the prairie on his farm on the Thames River (above) The sessions, taking place on September 21, 2005 will be followed by a banquet. On September 22, 2005, a breakfast wrap up session will take place, followed by tours in and around Brantford and environs. You can choose between an Old Prairies tour and examine some restored (and not so restored) savannas and prairies; or, take the New Prairies tour. Here you will see gardens, larger "creations" and visit native plant nurseries in the area.

The Old Prairies theme will address some thorny issues about recovery planning for tallgrass and savanna remnant sites in Southern Ontario, the methods by which they can be restored and maintained, and the future of tallgrass in Ontario. We will focus on research into best practices and new research, tackle species specific vs. ecology based approaches.

New Prairies is designed for gardeners and landowners who want to plant a prairie "garden" – either in their front yard, or in the Back Forty. You will learn about species selection and sourcing native plants, design, buffer strips, and some economic uses of tallgrass. And of course, some ideas about maintenance.

Jan Hunter of the "Green Ribbon Initiative" in the Toledo, Ohio area is our keynote speaker. You will enjoy hearing about the successes of this great project as well as fabulous food at the banquet on Wednesday evening. Check out www.oakopen.org to learn more about the Green Ribbon Initiative. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the displays, the banquet and/or the tours the next day.

A registration package will be included in this edition of the Bluestem Banner OR you can download a full package from www.tallgrassontario.org

Fairfield on the Thames - a new prairie project for TGO and partners

Thanks to the generousity of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Tallgrass Ontario and the Horticulture and Environmental Studies Program at Ridgetown College will be working with the Fairfield Museum to design and implement a naturalized landscape on Fairfield's thirty five acre property near Bothwell, Ontario. In the first year, the project will consist of development of a master landscape plan, installation of about one acre of tallgrass prairie as well as a brochure describing the Fairfield site, prairie/savanna ecosystems and role in both the area and for First Nations. Upgrading of access (pathways, stairs) for the Transcanada Trail – which follows the Thames River through the property - will also be developed.

Fairfield Museum is a unique property in Southwestern Ontario. It is a National Historic Site and its history is truly fascinating. Fairfield Village was settled around 1790 by Moravian missionaries and Delaware First Nation people who emigrated from Eastern Pennsylvania. David Zeisberger, a founder of Fairfield, is pictured left. A church and school along with about 40 dwellings were constructed and the community actively engaged in trade throughout the region. During the War of 1812, however, the village was sacked as a result of the defeat of the British at the Battle of the Thames, where Tecumseh was killed. A new village was built across the river in 1815 or so. In the 1940s, the old site was excavated and the results of this archaeological dig are housed in the museum. You can find more information about the excavations, including the photo of Daniel Zeisberger at www.virtualmuseum.ca/

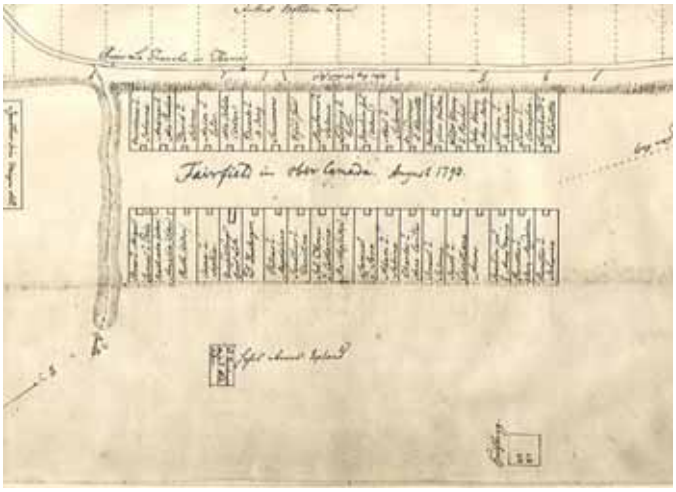
The property itself boasts some old growth Carolinian forest, and is adjacent to a number of tallgrass prairie and savanna sites that are currently undergoing development. This area was once a vast oak savanna. The project is designed to bring together the environmental and historical aspects of native habitats, settlement, trade, First Nations and Moravian culture and economics at Fairfield. Quite an order! But we have great resources through Ridgetown College, Fairfield Museum and many community groups eager to see the site fulfill its potential. And we thank Mathis Natvik, of Orford Ridges Native Plants who has provided expertise on prairie in the area and advice on the establishment of prairie at Fairfield.

If you are interested in helping out –

and how could you resist –

contact info@tallgrassontario.org or fairfield.museum@sympatico.ca. Fairfield is located at RR #3, 14878 Longwoods Road, Bothwell, Ontario N0P 1C0 Telephone: 519-692-4397 - about 10 km northeast of Thamesville, in Chatham-Kent.

At right, is a map of Old Fairfield drawn by Moravian Missionaries in 1793. Thanks to www.virtualmuseum.ca



Southern Ontario Meadow: Accepting the Weeds with the Wildflowers
By Paul O'Hara

I seeded a ten-acre prairie at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Burlington the spring of 2002. I did my homework. I planned ahead. I used regionally appropriate species and locally sourced seed. Spray, wait, spray, wait, spray, wait, seed. Well, a few months after seeding I felt like the poster boy for the Shirley Shirley line in *Restoring the Tallgrass Prairie*:

"Inexperienced restorationists almost always are convinced they have a failure the first year."

Uh-huh. I couldn't see a single seedling. I saw Dock, Black Medick, Bindweed and Doorweed, Mustards, Vetchs, Pigweed and Ragweed. Most of the grass seedlings were Quack Grass. Where was the Big Bluestem? Most of the forb seedlings were Lamb's Quarters. Where were the Butterflyweed and Bushclover? Did I do something wrong? Was there something I forgot? Or was there something I wasn't seeing?

By early summer I began to think the land had different ideas. So I took off my science cap - eternally wedded to certainty, measurable results and the pursuit of general nerdiness - and took a good, hard look.

Sweet Ox-eye, Queen Anne's Lace & Chicory at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Summer 2004

Lamb's Quarters, Ragweed and Mustards blanketed the ground; they protected the soil from the wind and sun. Queen Anne's Lace, Dock and Dandelion dug in their feet; they gave the land a deeper drink. Weedy legumes scrambled over weedy grasses; they nourished the soil. There was a subtle, yet powerful intelligence at work. The land was healing itself.

By late summer I began to see the natives seedlings. They lay nestled in the weeds: Wild Bergamot, Black-eyed Susan, Sweet Ox-eye, New England Aster, Heath Aster, and Hairy Aster.

There was even some Indian Grass and Butterfly Milkweed. The Sweet Ox-eye, Queen Anne's Lace and Chicory made for a beautiful, high-summer colour combination. Out of twenty-five seeded species it wasn't the conservative prairie natives that did the job. It was the Southern Ontario meadow species who rolled up their sleeves and set to work healing the land. The native, early successional meadow species that grow with the weedy pasture grasses (i.e. Orchard Grass, Smooth Brome and Timothy) on roadsides, field edges, hedgerows, and turnpikes.

Spurred on I looked to the old field meadow for inspiration. I collected the seed of Black-eyed Susan, Wild Bergamot and Common Milkweed. I collected garbage bags full of Aster and Goldenrod fluff and broadcasted them with good success: New England Aster, Heath Aster and Hairy Aster; Smooth Aster on clay and Azure Aster on sand; Grey Goldenrod and Arrow-leaved Aster in rocky pastures; and Lance-leaved Aster and Grass-leaved Goldenrod in the swales.

Late Winter Meadow

Southern Ontario Meadow for Sale *Paul O'Hara*

Wandering autumn meadows can really clear the head. I realized what beautiful places they are, how they buzzed with life and how increasingly rare they are becoming. What old field meadow in the Golden Horseshoe doesn't have a 'for sale', 'build to suit' or 'notice of rezoning' sign in front of it? We are losing our meadows at an alarming rate, and with them the possibility of any kind of restoration, prairie or otherwise.

Mentioning the plight of the Southern Ontario meadow to a knowledgable colleague I was met with: "But meadows are everywhere." Precisely. And it is because of that fact that we must not only encourage prairie and savanna conservation, but also grassland conservation in general.

High quality Hamilton Meadow bulldozed, Fall 2004

Seriously folks, in the Golden Horseshoe you might as well be screaming from the top of the CN Tower about prairie conservation. Between the cell phones, caffè lattes and bouts of road rage you ain't gonna win these urbane creatures over with prairie, at least not in the short run. But start talking about the Aster and Goldenrod and their connection to the Monarch Butterfly and their connection to their neighbourhood meadow (and backyard garden!) and you might start raising some eyebrows. A simple message is needed.

Yes! Prairie conservation! Yes! Savanna restoration! But yes, Southern Ontario Meadow recognition and appreciation. Landscape professionals - planners, biologists and builders - have an obligation to protect these places. Citizens have a responsibility to understand the basic ecology of their local landscape - our shared natural heritage.

I can see a time when each year we will celebrate the Southern Ontario Meadow; when the kids go back to school and the Aster and Goldenrod are in full bloom. Until then, the old field species continue to gain ground at Gate of Heaven Cemetery and I'm learning to accept the weeds with the wildflowers. For that is the basis of friendship. And it is friendship where we must begin.

Paul O'Hara is a botanist, landscape designer and native plant gardening expert. He is the owner/operator of Blue Oak Native Landscapes, former Landscape Coordinator for the Catholic Cemeteries of Hamilton and current board member of Tallgrass Ontario.

Text and photos on this page by Paul O'Hara

Please turn to page 8 for an album of Paul's meadow flower photographs. You can view them in colour at www.tallgrassontario.org

Grassland birds: *If you plant it, they will come*

photos and text by P. Allen Woodliffe, MNR District Ecologist, Aylmer District

The Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) is a sparrow-sized bird that, because of its black and yellow bib, has been described by some as a smaller version of a meadowlark. Its core breeding range is the mid-western part of the continent, from Texas to southern Manitoba so it is not a species that most Ontario birders encounter very often.

The native grasslands of the tallgrass prairie region have always been its preferred habitat, adapting to hayfields and pastures as those original natural habitats disappeared. However in years of drought in the core of its range, they tend to move away to where moisture conditions provide for better vegetation growth. It is during those drought years when they sometimes show up in southwestern Ontario. The current year is such an example. Even though it is relatively dry here, it is still more lush than parts of the mid-west. As a result southwestern Ontario has experienced a moderate invasion of this species.

Dickcissel *Spiza Americana* *P .Allen Woodliffe*

In May of this year a Dickcissel was reported from a grassland site at Bronte Creek Provincial Park. In mid-June this species was detected initially at two different sites in Chatham-Kent, with numbers ranging from approximately seven birds at one site to as many as twenty at the other. As of early July, they had been recorded from at least six different areas of Chatham-Kent, and been confirmed as breeding with the discovery of at least two nests, one of which was situated in a well-developed clump of Virginia Mountain-mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*).

Dickcissel *Spiza Americana* *P .Allen Woodliffe*

The site with the largest number of birds is a privately owned area of grassland. The one where nests have been found is on crown land, and interestingly it had been planted as a prairie nursery site in 1996. There is a profusion of prairie wildflowers and grasses at this site, and in addition to Dickcissel, hosts at least 20 Bobolink, four Eastern Meadowlark, and a number of Savannah, Song and Field Sparrows.

Grassland birds: If you plant it, they will come continued from page 6

Even more exciting than the occurrence of Dickcissel is the appearance of two Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*)! This diminutive and secretive species has declined drastically in most of the northeastern U.S. states where it has been known to occur. In the core of its mid-western range, it experienced severe declines. For example in the state of Illinois, Breeding Bird Survey results indicate it had declined by ~94% from 1958-1993. However since then it appears to have increased in numbers somewhat in its core range.

Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) P. Allen Woodliffe

Henslow's Sparrow was declared Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC) in 1993 and added to Ontario's *Endangered Species Act* in 1994. Due to the Endangered status of this species in Ontario and Canada, the specific location of its occurrence in Chatham-Kent is not being divulged. The second Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas is just completing its fifth and final field season.

Results after the first four years of data collection indicate that the species showing the most drastic decline are those that require grassland habitats. It is therefore a glimmer of encouragement to see that some of these tallgrass prairie creation sites are being used by a good diversity of typical grassland birds, and occasionally by some of the rare and endangered species!

Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) P. Allen Woodliffe

To date many people are content to see the vegetative results of such prairie plantings, and there has been little formal monitoring of the success of them. It is important to document the impacts of such activities, and more specific efforts at conducting breeding bird surveys in tallgrass prairie creation and restoration sites are being planned for the future.

Please go to www.tallgrassontario.org to see Allen's photographs of grassland birds in colour

A Prairie and Meadow Flower Album *photos by Paul O'Hara* *continued from page 5*

Ox-eye daisy, a beautiful weed. **Paul O'Hara**

Hoary Vervain: drought-tolerant with long-lasting violet-purple blooms in summer **Paul O'Hara**

Hard meadow workers: Canada Goldenrod, Heath Aster and New England Aster. **Paul O'Hara**

Natural garden companions: Black-eyed Susan and Butterfly Milkweed **Paul O'Hara**.

Volunteers Can Help with Restoration Monitoring

by Nikki May, M.Sc., University of Guelph Email: cnkmay@sympatico.ca

A large number of restoration projects take place every spring. Volunteers are involved with many, if not, most of them. Enthusiastic people with many different levels of expertise get involved and make meaningful contributions to the site preparation, planting, and removal of exotics among other activities.

One area of restoration work that often gets overlooked, however, is the monitoring and aftercare of projects. But if a project isn't monitored, then its relative success or failure is unknown, and opportunities to improve or change the approach are lost . Monitoring is also important because it yields information about the relative effectiveness of different restoration techniques.

In a study at the University of Guelph, I evaluated a group of methods that appeared to be straightforward, and yet robust enough to be used by volunteers to assess restoration projects in a quantitative as well as qualitative way. The first part of the study was designed to test whether the combined results from these methods could be used to differentiate between good, medium and poor progress in restoration projects. Using a group of well-known monitoring techniques from the disciplines of forestry, plant ecology, and soil science, I looked at three young forest and savannah restoration sites in Norfolk County, and compared their progress against nearby reference sites.

Most of the methods turned out to be relatively quick and easy to use in the field.

In two and a half days, an assistant and I were able to collect enough data to characterise the soils, and vegetation structure and composition at each of the sites.

Analysing the results took more time, but there was sufficient information to clearly distinguish different levels of progress among the projects, see Table 1. More detailed results can be found in my thesis, Volunteer Monitoring of Forest Restoration, on the Tallgrass website. Some of the methods I tried turned out to be either too complex in use, or provided results that were difficult to analyse. These were discarded from the final toolbox.

Table 1. Some Results Comparing Restoration Sites to Reference Sites

Indicator	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3
Tree density relative to reference	Significantly larger	Significantly smaller	Significantly smaller
Woody Species overlap with reference (Jaccard similarity coefficient)	0.48	0.22	0.20
Canopy Cover	<1*	25	7
Soil texture match	Exact	Similar	Similar
Soil moisture regime match	Exact	Similar	Wetter

* due to the age of this project, trees are all too small to provide canopy cover

Volunteers Can Help with Restoration Monitoring *contined from page 9*

The next stage in the project was to assess whether inexperienced workers would be able to use the methods to provide valid data on restoration progress. Three groups of students with very little field experience were asked to use a couple of the key methods to evaluate a restoration or reference forest.

Photo above by Cathy Quinlan

The first group of students used the quadrat method to evaluate a one-year-old restoration project. The trees had been direct seeded, and students were asked to do stem counts of 7 species of tree seedlings and about 20 species of herbaceous plants. They were given a 20 minute training period on how to set up the quadrats and how to identify plants. They were also given keys, with pictures. The results clearly showed that while the training period was sufficient to teach the basics of setting up quadrats along a transect, it was not enough for the students to properly learn plant identification for so many plants.

The second group of students were constrained to 50 minute periods out of their class time. In one period, they were given a 20 minute training session in using the Point quarter method to determine woody vegetation structure and composition. In the subsequent half hour, each group of students did one point on a transect. The combined results appeared to have some validity based on two criteria; the stem density of trees measured by the students was similar to that determined from the planting plan for the project, and the scatter in the results was similar to that obtained by myself and an assistant in our work. The key reason why the students in this group performed better than those in the first group was the number of species they were asked to identify. The second group was asked to identify less than 10 species in total, and they had more support.

The third group of students were Ontario Rangers working for the Brant County Stewardship Network for the summer. They spent a day and a half using the point quarter method and the soil auger method to evaluate a reference forest. They were given an hour of training in each method and continual support from experienced supervisors. The stem densities of trees and shrubs that they found agreed well with those that were found for other Carolinian forests in this study, and the statistical scatter in their results was similar to ours. The soil analysis that they did was thorough and gave results that were consistent with what might be expected for that site.

The conclusions from this study were that the group of chosen methods can be used to distinguish between good, medium and poor progress in restoration projects and that they can be used by inexperienced workers to provide valid data, but that good initial training and some continued support by an experienced person for a period of time are important to ensure that the data is valid. Further work is required to determine the willingness of volunteers to analyse the large volume of data that can be produced by this work. However, the study does demonstrate that it is quite feasible to expect that volunteers can contribute to the monitoring, and thus, the greater long-term success, of restoration projects.

Focus on: The West Elgin Nature Club and the Dutton- Dunwich Prairie

The West Elgin Nature Club traces it's beginning to the year 1946. Through the interest and encouragement of the late Dr. W.E. Saunders, a group of the local people assembled in the West Lorne Public School for the inaugural meeting and V.E Lemon was chosen the first president of the club. The club is a member of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Canadian Nature Federation. The club has a full slate of activities, including indoor meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. September to April (with the exception of December) at the West Elgin Elementary School in West Lorne. Field trips are scheduled during April, May and June and an annual canoe trip takes place in August with a picnic.

The West Elgin Nature Club in partnership with the Elgin Stewardship Council leased 2 miles of abandoned railroad right-of-way from CSX rail system. This 24-acre tract is found in the township of Dutton-Dunwich and is bisected by the Coyne Road. The area is rich in provincially rare and endangered prairie plants such as the compass plant, gray headed coneflower, ohio goldenrod, blazing star, and pale purple coneflower. The more abundant grasses include such species big bluestem, Indian grass and cordgrass. The site had been neglected for some years and a great deal of woody vegetation had grown into the prairie, but a program of prescribed burns has helped restore many parts of the habitat.

How to Locate the Dutton-Dunwich Prairie:

- Exit Hwy 401 at interchange #149 (Currie road-Dutton)
- Go south to the first road - Pioneer Line
- Turn right (go west) on Pioneer Line to the Coyne road.
- Turn left (go south) on the Coyne road to te railroad tracks.
- Look for signage on the left along the abandoned right-of-way.

Check the website at www.westelgin.net/club.shtml and get involved with the West Elgin Nature Club, a local organization whose efforts have saved one of the most valuable prairie remnants in Southwestern Ontario.

And A Special Note of Thanks

The last four issues of The Bluestem Banner have been published with a donation from the HIVA Environmental Fund. Many readers have commented on the improved content, presentation and overall quality of the Bluestem Banner over the past year. In addition we have been able to provide the Bluestem Banner online at www.tallgrassontario.org and increase our mailed circulation to over 1,000 copies. Tallgrass Ontario, native plant enthusiasts and prairie denizens of all types thank you.

Prairie Surfing

We get lots of suggestions for great websites, so here is a sample recommended by our members and readers.

You can find regional profiles on The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) website at www.trilliumfoundation.org. These profiles are based on the 2001 Census results from Statistics Canada and provide insight into the diverse needs and characteristics of communities in Ontario.

Wasyl Bakowsky notes that there is a great new search engine that searches only academic texts (e.g.,journal articles, theses, books, preprints, and technical reports) across any area of research. A test version of the search engine is available at http://scholar.google.com/

Check out (www.natureserve.org) A Network Connecting Science with Conservation, Boston. MA

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has developed a **computer game targeted to prairie landowners**, wildlife enthusiasts, farmers and youth. Players learn the distinguishing features of habitats for each Species at Risk in the southern Saskatchewan region, the reasons why animals are disappearing from prairie grasslands and farmlands, and some of the land management practices that are beneficial for these species. If you would like to play the game please visit www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/hawk .

AND OF COURSE www.tallgrassontario.org. Membership information and an application are online.

Email us at info@tallgrassontario.org or write to: Tallgrass Ontario, Head Office, 659 Exeter Road, London, Ontario N6E 1L3 OR Tallgrass Ontario, Field Office, Mitton House, Ridgetown College, Ridgetown, Ontario N0P 2C0

Bobolink **photo by P. Allen Woodliffe**

2005 Tallgrass Prairie & Savanna Forum:
Old Prairies and New Prairies – September 21 –22, 2005
FORUM REGISTRATION

Name:_____
Affiliation: _____
Address:_____
City:_____**Postal Code**_____
Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

The forum fee includes sessions, breakfast, lunch, refreshments for Wednesday September 21, plus a continental breakfast and forum summary plus preoceedings on Thursday September 22. Please use one form per person. Questions? info@tallgrassontario.org OR tpcharlton@sentex.net

- ***Extra banquet tickets can be purchased for those not attending the forum. See page 3 for details about our keynote speaker, Jan Hunter, Green Ribbon Initiative***
- **Thursday's tour fee includes bus transportation and a box lunch. *Extra tour tickets can be purchased for those not attending the forum.***
- **PLEASE indicate your preference for Wednesday sessions and Thursday tours below – space is limited. Substitutions can be made on the day depending on space availability. Confirmation of registration and additional information will be mailed upon receipt for registrations received prior to September 17th, 2005.**

Display space (free)	**yes/no**
Wednesday, September 21	
Forum sessions	**$ 80.00**
Banquet	**$ 30.00**
Thursday, September 22	
Bus Tour	**$ 40.00**
Registration Total	**$_____**

Brant Resource Stewardship Network

Ontario

DON'T FORGET TO circle the sessions you wish to attend (see program on page 2 & 3 of this registration package for more details):

Old Prairies:	**Session 1**	**Session 2**	**Session 3**
New Prairies:	**Session 1**	**Session 2**	**Session 3**
Field trip :	**Old Prairies**	**New Prairies**	

Please detach this form and mail to: Tallgrass Ontario, Mitton House, Ridgetown College, Ridgetown, ON NOP 2CO with a cheque made payable to Tallgrass Ontario.

Check out www.tallgrassontario.org for more information and additional registration forms, or email info@tallgrassontario.org

Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Forum:
Old Prairies and New Prairies
September 21 & 22, 2005, Brantford, Ontario

Wednesday September 21, 2005

8:00- 9:00 Registrations – Mezzanine. Continental Breakfast.

9:15-9:45 Welcome, Tallgrass Ontario

9:45-10:15 Plenary Session – Brant Resource Stewardship Network
***Grand River Plains – past and future*,**
Graham Buck - *Natural* Connections *Program*.

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 **Session 1: Old Prairies**	**10:30-12:00** **Session 1: New Prairies**
Ecosystem and Species Recovery Action **Moderator: John Ambrose** **The roles of ecosystem vs. specific species recovery approaches will be discussed by Donald Kirk, MNR. James Duncan of the NCC will address recovery via land trusts and related tools. Rob Wallis, BRSN, will discuss recovery through landowner stewardship.**	**Native Plant Gardening: Plant Selection and Plant Selection** **Moderator: Ken Nentwig** **Lorraine Johnson will give us an introduction to the subject of prairie and savanna gardening with common and uncommon plants and Mathis Natvik will discuss creating plant lists (mixture, diversity, fast, and slow colonizing species), seed preparation, role of plugs, seed collection from remnants and tips and techniques on preparing and propagating difficult species.**

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:15 - 2:30 p.m. **Session 2: Old Prairies**	**1:15 – 2:30 p.m.** **Session 2: New Prairies**
Restoration Techniques **Moderator: Peter Carson** **Larry Lamb, University of Waterloo will discuss restoration techniques for tallgrass prairie, savanna and woodland remnants in southern Ontario Sandy Dobbyn, of Ontario Parks will discuss experiences at Rondeau regarding use of fire for oak savanna habitats. Tracey Etwell will present her work on burning intervals for oak savanna and wood, with research based at Pinery Provincial Park.**	**Creation** **Moderator: Michelle Kanter** **Rural Lambton Stewardship Network will share experiences with planting and caring for habitat/restoration scale plantings.** **Paul O'Hara will give pointers on how to plant and care for a "garden size" prairie, including tips on site preparation, design and maintenance.**

Program - continued

2:30-2:45 Break

2:45-4:00 p.m. **Session 3: Old Prairies**	**2:45 – 4:00 p.m.** **Session 3: New Prairies**
Volunteers and Restoration **Bronwyn Smith from NCC will discuss the opportunities and costs of using volunteers to restore prairie, savanna and woodland in southern Ontario. Vojka Miladinovic will talk about hands on experience at High Park Savanna, in Toronto.** **Nikki May from the University of Guelph will share her insight into using volunteers for monitoring**	**Projects for the Rural Landscape** **Moderator: Cathy Quinlan** **Dave Reid, Norfolk Land Stewardship Network and Paul Gagnon, Long Point Region CA will share their experiences with projects for the rural landscape – buffer strips, wildlife plantings, forage plots.** **Jeff Thompson of Thompson Environmental will talk about the three scales of restoration: city lots, rural lots and industrial/commercial lots.**

4:00-6:00 Open
Displays, networking, relax and enjoy the grounds of the host facility.

6:00-8:00 Banquet Key Note Speaker – Jan Hunter
Green Ribbon Initiative – Toledo, Ohio
www.oakopen.org

The Green Ribbon Initiative is a grass-roots effort to save the Oak Openings Region in Ohio - a natural community as rare and significant as the rainforest. This globally distinct ecosystem has been designated by the Nature Conservancy as "One of the 200 Last Great Places on Earth." , Ecologists have identified 6,000 acres of high-quality greenspace running like a ribbon through the area. The Green Ribbon initiative's mission is to protect this habitat by creating a biological and recreational corridor of preserved land-a "green ribbon" of natural beauty, rare plant and animal species, and quality recreation opportunities stretching across Northwest Ohio and Southeastern Michigan. Check out www.oakopen.org to find out more about the great work of this organization.

Thursday September 22

7:00-8:00 Breakfast

8:30-9:30 Tallgrass Ontario wrap up of Wednesday sessions
Each moderator will present take home points from their session.

10:00-3:00 Field Trips:
Old Prairies: Remnants under restoration in the Grand River Plains

New Prairies: Gardens and Landscape scale projects

Directions to Tim Horton Onondaga Farms

From Highway 401

- Follow Highway 401, to **exit 282** in Cambridge
- Take exit 282, and follow **Highway 24 South** (through Cambridge) towards Brantford
- Highway 24 becomes Hespeler Road – follow this all the way South through Cambridge
- Keep going south on Highway 24 through the south end of Cambridge
- Turn left onto **Glen Morris Road East (NOTE:** you may first notice a green road sign pointing you towards the town of Glen Morris. DO NOT turn here! Keep going up the hill. At the top of the hill, where the passing lane merges back into one lane, is Glen Morris Road East. Turn left here!)
- The entrance to the camp will be on your right, only one kilometer from the highway

From the QEW/Highway 403

- From the QEW, take **Highway 403 West**, towards Brantford
- Take the Brantford exit for **King George Road - Highway 24 North** (towards Cambridge)
- Follow King George Road through Brantford which turns into Highway 24 North
- Turn right onto **Glen Morris Road East** (about 10 kms from the edge of Brantford)
- The entrance to camp will be on your right, only one kilometer from the highway

Accommodations

Rooms are available at Tim Horton Onondaga Farm in dorm type facilities. The cost is $50.00 per night, double occupancy. Contact Pam at tpcharlton@sentex.net for more information.

Also available:

Best Western Brant Park Inn
19 Holiday Drive, Brantford (Highway 403 & Gretzky Pkwy)
519.753.8651
www.brantparkinn.com

Days Inn
460 Fairview Drive, Brantford
519.759.2700
www.daysinnbrantford.com

Comfort Inn
58 King George Road. Brantford
519.753.3100 1.800.228.5150
www.choicehotels.ca/cn257