



# GUELPH HIKING TRAIL CLUB NEWSLETTER

[www.guelphhiking.com](http://www.guelphhiking.com)

PO Box 1, Guelph, ON Canada N1H 6J6

VOLUME 50, ISSUE 4, NOVEMBER 2022

## RAMBLINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

by John Fisher

While I was out walking my dog, Martin, along the Eramosa river one recent morning, I found myself reflecting on the Club's 50th Anniversary year. It was a beautiful fall morning, the sun was shining, and yellow leaves were raining down on the pathway and I realized that for me no other season marks the passage of time as does Fall. Time is perhaps the scarcest commodity we have at any age and this realization becomes even more pronounced as we get older.



As I reflected, I realized that I and the executive members often find ourselves reeling off tasks that must be accomplished rather than taking time to step back, reflect upon, and properly appreciate and enjoy the things we have achieved. For example when the executive committee first met to discuss how we might celebrate the club's 50th Anniversary, we decided the highlight would be the party in September. However, during the year we hoped to complete several other projects, as well as carry on our regular business, and now we need to consider the necessary steps needed to survive and prosper for the next 50 years.

I began to feel quite uncomfortable as I found myself moving at warp speed into the future instead of taking time to reflect. But demographics, technology, lifestyle changes and legal requirements continue to evolve and multiply, and as a club we must adapt to these changes and manage the challenges they present as we try to ensure that precious volunteer time is used in the most productive manner for volunteers and members alike.

One of the legal changes we will be facing is the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) which will require compliance by 2024. This act will provide us an opportunity to reassess our articles of incorporation and our bylaws, to confirm they are consistent with the act and the direction members want the Club Executive to take. We will update you on the details of ONCA as we learn more in the coming months.

Enough about the future. One thing that my reflections on the 50th celebration brought home to me is the debt of gratitude we owe to former presidents, executive committees and volunteers who have successively and successfully led the club over the years. Their leadership forms the foundation upon which we continue to build. For me a highlight of the September party was seeing many of these past leaders and members in person and in the photo loop which reminded us of past activities in which we participated and enjoyed.

It's a rich legacy upon which to build.

Lastly, it was recently membership-renewal time. Thank you for your continued engagement with the Club; we are pleased with retaining the majority of new members from recent years. Your membership fees help with fixed expenses and trail maintenance throughout the Guelph Hiking Trail network.

... See you on the trails.

P.S. if you haven't had the opportunity, please consider making a donation to the Crane Park Community Bridge. The Bridge is our 50th Anniversary Legacy Project. We hope to have it opened before Christmas.



## YOUR GHTC NEWSLETTER – WINTER ISSUE

**We thank Renee, The Outdoor School, and Pauline this month for their contributions. Check them out on Pages 8, 10 and 12!**

In **2022** your newsletter has been published in March (for Spring/Summer), July (for Fall), and November (for Winter), and was sent to club members, landowners, advertisers, other trail organizations, and club supporters. Articles, announcements and advertising were included to support club objectives, to share club activities and projects, celebrate community impact, and to inform and entertain.

We know that too many of our members are not reading all the great content and announcements included here. We also know that some of the information you do receive is not timely enough.

In order to serve our members better with rich and timely information, in **2023** we will be transitioning from the traditional 12-pager-style newsletter online and printed, to an e-Newsletter to be emailed to members and friends of GHTC on a monthly basis. We'll include upcoming scheduled events, announcements, celebrations, and links to newsy articles that will be posted on our website. We know this will better serve our growing membership while conserving funds and volunteer hours for other priority activities.

We're excited to make another change in a long history of our Club's newsletter!

## TEMPORARY TRAIL CLOSURES

The central section of the Speed River Trail (Sideroad 10 to Wellington Road 124) is closed to hiking as marked by red 'Trail Closed' signs from Sept. 1, 2022 to Jan. 20, 2023. It is also closed for public hunting while open for hunting only to members of the Vimy Ridge Hunt Club.

Radial Line Trail Section 4 is closed Oct. 1 to Dec. 31 for Ministry of Natural Resources bow and arrow hunting season, at request of landowner.

(Please visit our [website](#) for further details and updates)

## ABOUT THE GUELPH HIKING TRAIL CLUB

The Guelph Hiking Trail Club is committed to recreational hiking through building and maintaining a system of trails between the Grand Valley (Fergus, Elora, Cambridge) to the west and the Bruce Trail (at Limehouse – near Acton) to the east. The majority of the **85 km of trails** are linear but there are several pleasant loops that make transportation easier. All trails (Radial Line, Speed River, and Kissing Bridge) are suitable for a family outing.

The trail system was established **50 years ago** and exists through the generosity of landowners who provide access to the trails, volunteers who maintain the trails, and members whose annual membership fees offset the cost of maintaining the system. **Heartfelt thanks to all of you!**

## GHTC CONTACTS

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## 50TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

by Lisa Slater

The Club celebrated its 50th Anniversary party on Sunday, September 18 at The Arboretum. Seventy-five guests, many of whom hadn't seen each other for years, hugged and reminisced over a delicious lunch by Foodies Anonymous, a piece of cake from Longos, and a complimentary coffee from Barres and Bells.

The celebration was off to a great start with opening remarks by Guelph Mayor, Cam Guthrie, who praised the Club's contribution to the quality of life in the city and surrounding communities, as well as its commitment to caring for the environment.

President John Fisher provided a review of some of the Club's recent achievements as further proof of the Club's continued vibrancy and hiking trail advocacy.

Earlier in the year the Club applied for and was awarded a Community Benefit Grant from the City of Guelph to produce a promotional video. We contracted Bloom Media from Guelph to work with us on the project and showed the video at the party. You can find it in the News section of the website, or click here: <https://guelphhiking.com/event-5037839>

Guided Arboretum trail walking before and after the event were led by Arboretum staff who provided historical and botanical information, enabling participants to gain a deeper appreciation of the natural beauty surrounding them.

So enthusiastic were the guests that even intermittent rain didn't dampen spirits or the determination to attend, revive old friendships, and take much needed walks outdoors!



## YOUR MORNING "JOE"

It's not too early to be thinking about consumable gifts for the Christmas season (and all year for that matter)!

Barres and Bells generously helped us out at our 50th Anniversary celebration with the complimentary coffee table and now they want to take that one step further by donating \$6.00 to GHTC for every bag of coffee sold. What a great new collaboration for Club members. Go to the link below to learn more and to order. Ian and Lauryn make the delivery/pick-up extremely easy and build it into their daily routines.

It's a great way to consume what is an "essential" morning starter for many and at the same time support the Guelph Hiking Trail Club. "By the way it's great-tasting coffee", says President, John Fisher.

They are also working on a "Get Ready to Hike" workshop to help us prepare for Spring in the New Year!



<https://www.barresandbells.com/shop/coffee-in-support-of-the-g2g-2h7ka>

## RLT END-2-END

By: Jim Hoare

As part of GHTC's celebration of 50 years, hikers had the opportunity to participate in hikes that covered the Radial Line Trail in two separate hikes.

### Part 1: Guelph Line to Guelph's covered bridge on September 11, ~18 km



We had 11 registered with Cynthia and Vanessa the leader/sweep.

### Part 2: Limehouse back to SR 30 at Guelph Line on September 25, ~ 20 km

There were 14 registered. We had a school bus to get most hikers from the covered bridge to Limehouse. A couple of vehicles were left at Guelph Line & 30 SR and those drivers were shuttled to Limehouse for the start of the hike. This worked out great for shuttling the hikers at the end back to the covered bridge.



Some hiking was damp, but hikers were determined to get it done ... Congratulations!

Remember that a GHTC E2E badge may be purchased by hikers who have completed the Speed River Trail and Radial Line Trail either with the organized hikes or individually!

## NEW SRT SIDE TRAIL OPENS

by Bill Mungall, SLT Trail Coordinator

A completely new 900-metre side trail off of GHTC's Speed River Trail (SRT) is now open. This footpath, the Imperial Road Side Trail, was built across lands owned by the City of Guelph during the summer and early fall by a number of hard-working work parties of club volunteers.



For many years City Councillors had emphasized the need to connect the west end of the City (i.e. Ward 4) with the City's Royal Recreation Trail network and with GHTC's trails. City staff turned to GHTC to expedite this work, by suggesting we construct an initial connection to these two trail systems with a "tertiary" hiking trail, connected to the south end of Imperial Road, and running east to a trailhead on the SRT, about 100 metres north of the former site of the humane society. Parking is available at the former GHS site and also in the plaza at Imperial/Wellington.

Given the increased trail traffic that this link will generate, GHTC also greatly improved the nearby crossing of the SRT beneath the Hanlon Expressway (Hwy. 6) that leads to the recent extension of the Speed River Trail easterly through to Edinburgh Road (i.e. to the parking lot at the skate park). GHTC also worked with the City to secure a route along the west bank of the Northwest Drain such that a continuous SRT trail can be maintained during construction of an expanded wastewater plant.

The new side trail itself threads through a narrow band of magnificent fir and pine that were first planted back in 1902 to screen the wastewater treatment plant from views off of Wellington Road (once Highway 24). Old age and road-salt runoff from Wellington Street have killed off some of these big trees, and Emerald Ash Borer has killed all of the ash that had grown up amidst the conifers. The City's arborists have now marked the dead trees that will be removed over the winter months, when the trail will be closed temporarily for these operations. In the meantime, here, as elsewhere, trail users would be wiser to stay out of the woods during periods of high winds.

The Imperial Road Side Trail is an excellent example of cooperative relations with the municipality. The city's residents now gain a key trail link built in a timely way by GHTC, and the City is supporting this new amenity with the professional skills of its arborists and foresters by removing standing dead timber and by creating a forest management plan for tree succession inside the 1902 plantation along the side trail.

This support flows directly out of the City's recent approval of an update to its trails master plan. It provides for "tertiary" trails to be built by third-party groups on City lands that are "community led, City supported". The Imperial Road Side Trail is a very good example of this new partnership approach.

Finally, I should mention that Sandy Remigis, a new member, nearby resident, and participant in several of the trail work parties, has accepted the role of Trail Captain for the side trail.



### RADIAL LINE TRAIL - SECTION 5 BOARDWALK

by Frank Schoenhoeffer, RLT Trail Coordinator

The trail through the Blue Springs Scout Camp on Radial Line Section 5 has many delights, especially the gorgeous cedar forest, and also the impressive wooden boardwalk which meanders thru a swampy area and across Blue Springs Creek.

The scouts built the boardwalk back in the 1990s, using cedar lumber they had sawn on the camp warden's saw mill. The GHTC has taken over maintenance of it, and replaced quite a few weak and rotting deck boards in 2017, and again in 2018 and 2019. Similar work couldn't be done during the pandemic of course, as this section of trail was closed during that time.

But this year, after the trail was re-opened in the spring, we had a close look at the deck boards, and decided there were enough that could use replacement, so we started planning a work party. And then, on a lovely fall day in October, we replaced about 125 boards.

Thanks to Scout Camp Manager, Paul Garofolo, for helping bring the boards by tractor from the

parking lot down to the boardwalk, to Jim Hoare and Brian van Nostrand for key prep ahead of the work-party day, and to GHTC trail maintenance volunteers Mike Curtis, Andreas Hug, Mark McDowell, Sandra Morrill, and Paul White for completing this project!





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### GHTC VOLUNTEERS PLANTED TREES WITH 'GREEN LEGACY'

By Mike Curtis

On a sunny Wednesday morning, November 2, a dozen volunteers worked along the Kissing Bridge Trailway planting several varieties of 100 trees in support of the Green Legacy Programme of Wellington County.  
<https://www.wellington.ca/en/discover/greenlegacyprogramme.aspx>

Thank you one and all for your assistance. When I signed on for 100 trees, I was not sure how long

they would take to be planted and of course when I committed to this in July, the weather for October/November was unpredictable as well.

As the saying goes, "many hands make light the work", and this certainly was the case, especially with Green Legacy's rep. Adam's direction. Perfect weather and two dozen hands attached to a dozen bodies made quick work of the project.

In years to come, when driving along Wellington Road 86, take a look towards the SE corner of the intersection in Ariss!




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## WHY OLD SHOES ARE NEVER A GOOD IDEA ON THE TRAIL

by Renee Machat

Trail maintenance work party leader Bill Mungall instructed us to bag all the garbage laying around a makeshift campsite we found at the start of the trail section we would be working on on Sunday, August 14, 2022. While doing so, my left shoe felt a little loose so I stepped back to tie things snug.

With evidence of the camp now gone, our next step was to spread out and rake debris from our intended path and make things look like a trail. Bill assigned me the special task of trimming tree roots strung across the trail which could be tripping hazards. So, while most everyone blazed ahead raking away, I plodded along snipping here, pulling a root there and generally smoothing things out. As I carefully surveyed the ground, I noticed my left shoe was feeling really loose this time but when I checked my laces, I saw that they were tied securely. I didn't know what to make of this; the shoes felt fine when I left home. (On the topic of footwear, given the potential hazards we might encounter while clearing a trail, such as stubbing a toe, I thought wearing my old steel-toed safety shoes would be a good idea. At least 20 years old, they had not had much mileage put on them, were still looking good and would be a better option than regular street shoes.)



Yet the looseness persisted. Another look at my left shoe and, to my disbelief, I saw that the heel was pulling away from the upper part. This explained the sloppiness I felt in the shoe but not why it was coming apart as I'd done nothing rough with the shoes since arriving on the trail. A few steps forward, more snipping, more pulling, now my right shoe was feeling loose. I glanced down and noticed this heel was also pulling away from the upper. Stepping forward carefully, it wasn't long before I developed a flap—much like an alligator jaw—at the front of my left shoe as the toe area of the shoe broke free. The right shoe followed suit. Not to be outdone, then the front portion of the left sole, where the foot bends, severed itself. It all became rather amusing as I thought what a great article this would make for the club newsletter. Pondering my situation, I didn't think it wise to proceed further. I sat down on a nearby log for a quick snack when newsletter coordinator and fellow trail-maker, Sandra Morrill, appeared. She had decided to call it a morning. I explained my predicament, adding I hoped Bill would be along shortly so he could document my shoes with his cell phone camera. "I have a camera," Sandra said, excitedly, as she whipped out her phone from her back pocket. We laughed at my suggested headline of "Work Party Leader Works Participants So Hard They Don't Have a Shoe Left to Stand On". After taking two shots of my shoes, Sandra headed back along our freshly-made, fine-looking trail to her car. I followed moments later, grateful that conditions were dry and that I still had some semblance of shoes to walk on.



Barely holding together, the shoes were actually not a hardship to walk in, on the trail. Upon hitting the pavement, however, I struggled to keep them on my feet since upper and sole were, literally, hanging on by a thread.

Among the listed tools and gear we were asked to bring to this work party was old clothes; old shoes, on second thought, are better left at home!



## STATUS OF LICENCE AGREEMENTS

By John Fisher

The Guelph Hiking Trail Club depends on formal license agreements with owners to maintain many of the Club's trails. This is just a brief update on the status of four license agreements that we are currently working on.

### 1) Third-Party Trail Agreements with the City of Guelph.

This agreement formalizes the working arrangements we have concerning the Rapids Side Trail, the Wellington Plaza River Trail, the trail through Marianne's Park, and the Speed River Trail from the Skate Park underneath the Hanlon, which includes the newly installed Imperial Road Side Trail. We are waiting for the city legal department for sign-off documents.

### 2) Renewal Agreement with Infrastructure Ontario (I.O.) for the O.R. Side Trail.

We have been in negotiations with I.O. and are close to finalizing this renewal document which expired this year.

### 3) New agreement with the Town of Milton to approve use of certain unopened road allowances with the Guelph Hiking Trail Club.

This initiative began as a result of the pandemic and the closure of the Scout Camp between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Lines Nassagaweya. The agreement has now been signed and we are considering our installation timing and priorities.

### 4) New agreement with Fusion Homes on the site of the new Guelph Innovation District.

This agreement has now been signed and includes existing trails on the property beyond our main trail. Expect to see new signage and blazes over the next several weeks.

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## EASTERN COTTONTAILS

By Byron Murray, Lead Instructor, The Outdoor School

"All the world will be your enemy, Prince of a Thousand Enemies and whenever they catch you, they will kill you. But first they must catch you, digger, listener, runner, Prince with the swift warning. Be cunning and full of tricks and your people will never be destroyed." Richard Adams from Watership Down



Left hind foot of an Eastern Cottontail Rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

While our native Eastern Cottontails (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) do not dig as the European Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) do in Richard Adams amazing book Watership Down, their foot structure is similar in many ways and it still allows them to run quickly from all of their potential predators.

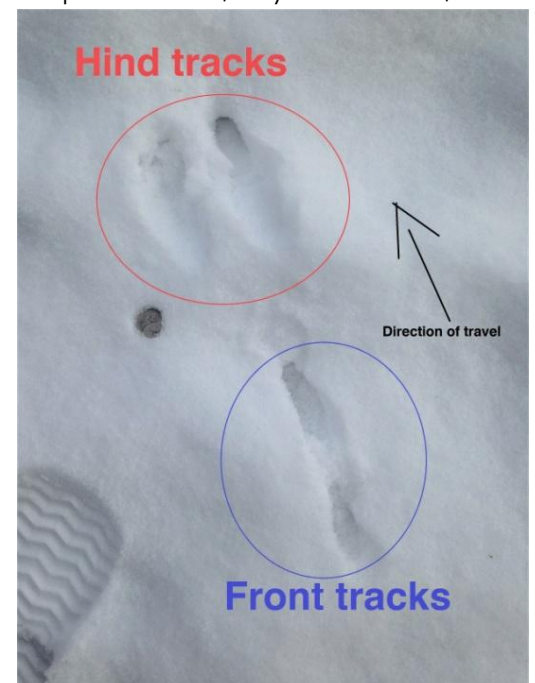
Over the past year I have been trying to study Eastern Cottontail Rabbit tracks with more intention. I keep seeing the tracks in the sand and soil all along GHTC maintained trails and have been trying to tease out a little more detail from the impressions in the dirt.

I have also wanted to write about some of the specific things I have been looking for when I come across Rabbit tracks. Lately for me, it has been about the individual toes of the Rabbit tracks and their positions on the feet. The toe positions can tell us a lot about which of the feet we may be looking at. Is it a left front or a right front? If we look close, and know what to look for, the toes will tell us. This isn't always necessary if come across a group of Rabbit tracks or even a lengthy trail, with all four limbs clearly laid out bounding down the path. Instead, knowing the individual clues to a specific foot, say a left front, can reveal some more details which may otherwise be invisible.

Let's look at a typical group of Rabbit tracks, in a bounding gait.

The gait in the photo, again, is a bounding gait, meaning that the hind feet (at the top of the image) are landing generally in line with each other beyond the front feet, and then pushing off simultaneously, or just about. Then using the force of the hind feet to propel the Rabbit forward, the animal is airborne for a moment until the front feet touch the ground. Then very quickly after the fronts have touched the ground, the front feet push off, and the Rabbit swings their hind feet on the outside of and beyond the fronts and again the Rabbit is airborne once more until the hinds touch the ground past where the front feet just were.

**Note:** This is only the first half of this article! With so much rich content we have posted it in full on our [website](#) under News & Info, Newsletters/Articles.



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### MAKE YOUR OWN WALKING STICK

By: Jonathan Dorn (reprinted from October 2012 issue)

Ease the load on your knees and shoulders by making a hiking stick. Sure, carrying a hiking stick makes me look like a rugged mountain man, but it also helps me in more pedestrian ways. By easing the load on my knees and shoulders, it helps me chew up big miles, plus I can tiptoe across loose rocks, slippery logs, and rushing streams without a wobble. Here's how to create your own personalized staff:

- Search your local forest for a downed branch that's stout, straight, and preferably blemish-free (no obvious cracks or big knotholes). The stick should reach your armpit and measure 1-2 ins. in diameter.
- Remove twigs with a pocketknife and strip the bark if you want. Round off sharp points or level knobs with a plane or file. Hold the stick as though you're hiking (your elbow should form a right angle) to figure out where your grip will be – 2-3 inches below the top.
- Customize the grip by cutting shallow grooves for your fingers like those on a steering wheel. Just above the grip area, drill a 1/4-inch hole for a wrist loop. Smooth the surface of the stick first with coarse, then fine, sandpaper. To remove residual sawdust, wipe the stick with a rag dipped in paint thinner.
- Decorate the stick with carvings, wood burnings, paintings, emblems or bear bells. If the wood is still green, place it in a warm, dry location to cure for at least 2 weeks, and rotate it often to prevent bowing.
- Apply two coats of wood stain, allowing each coat to dry overnight, to give the stick a darker, richer hue. Then apply three coats of clear urethane varnish to seal the wood and prevent rot.
- Allow each coat of varnish to dry overnight. Sand the stick lightly with very fine sandpaper or steel wool after each coat.
- Thread a 2-foot piece of rawhide lace or heavy cord through the hole. Adjust the length of the loop to fit your wrist, tie the ends in a big knot to secure the loop, then trim the ends as necessary.

Wood is a fickle creature, so remember that hiking sticks are born as much as they are made.

From Backpacker Magazine – <https://www.backpacker.com>

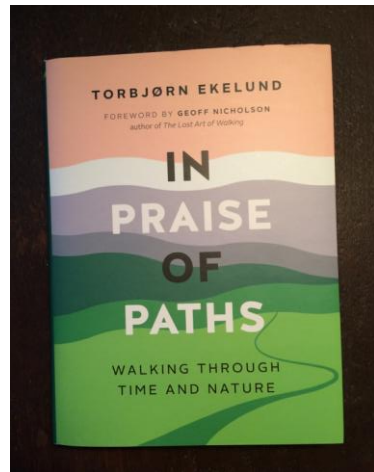
## 'IN PRAISE OF PATHS: WALKING THROUGH TIME AND NATURE', BY TORBJØRN EKELUND

Review by Pauline Head

This review originally appeared in the January issue of the Manitoulin Nature Club Newsletter.

Torbjørn Ekelund is co-founder of an on-line magazine, Harvest, about the environment and "our relationship with nature." With *In Praise of Paths*, he has written a personal, autobiographical book, reflecting on paths he has followed throughout his life. He mentions briefly some that are far from his native Norway, but the paths that Ekelund describes in detail are very close to his home. *In Praise of Paths* is about the history, nature - even the philosophy - of paths. Ekelund writes: "We think of a path as the way to something else, toward the future and whatever lies ahead. But a path also points backward, to the time and place we came from." This book is about encountering nature when we take the time to walk attentively through the forests and fields that surround us. It's a gentle book, pleasant to read, written from a stance of wonder and with a sense of humour.

When, recently, Ekelund had an experience of disorientation and slipped into unconsciousness, he was diagnosed with epilepsy. His driver's license was taken away. Against his expectations, he found this liberating. He began to walk to all the places he needed or wanted to go: "this is how the paths came back into my life." He set out to explore trails near to where he was and even to challenge himself by hiking off-trail through the Normarka forest near Oslo. Normarka is a boreal coniferous forest that "only exists in subarctic climates" and "stretches like a belt from North America via northern Europe and through Siberia." (Canada has one of the world's largest areas of boreal coniferous forest - two hundred and seventy million hectares - large enough to have a beneficial effect on our environment worldwide.) Walking these paths



close to home, Ekelund comes to realize that, "Paths and the landscape are inextricably bound .... We understand ourselves in relation to the landscape of our birth." This draws me to think about the paths I love to walk close to my two homes, like those at Misery Bay on Manitoulin and those that make up the Radial Line Trail from Guelph to Limehouse. *In Praise of Paths* is that kind of book: it draws you in and makes you reflect on your own experiences of the paths you have walked through your life.

Maybe, like Ekelund, we hold in our memories one special path against which we measure all others. He returns throughout the book to a sauntering description of a path he walked many times in his childhood: "Every path in my life has been measured against that one small path behind our cabin." This would be for him a path that "points backward." On that childhood path, he was attentive to the flow of the seasons: "In the summer, it was encircled by flowers and wild strawberries. By late summer, the flowers were replaced by yellow straw that drooped heavily with dew and dampened my pants. In September, the mushrooms came up. And in October, the leaves fell off the trees and covered the path - yellow and red leaves that stuck to your boots .... Then came the first frost. The landscape stiffened and the path crackled roughly under our boots."

To be human is to walk; it's in our nature. And to follow paths is to find ourselves in harmony with other creatures. Ekelund tells us that the arctic tern follows a flight path - a path in the sky formed by air currents - and travels twenty-five thousand miles a year, from the north Pole to the South and back again. Eels navigate by underwater paths to travel from Mexico to Norway and back. And wild reindeer and sheep are experts at making paths. In his chapter on observing animal tracks in the winter, Ekelund writes, "Nothing is better than freshly fallen snow if one is hoping to document movement. Even the tiniest creatures leave behind clear tracks on a soft snow layer...". The most recent Friends of Misery Bay newsletter gives us some guidelines for recognizing tracks in the snow. (Megan Bonenfant, "Trail Project Update," in *Turtle Tracks*, Fall/Winter 2021)

Ekelund values the practice of walking slowly, finding a tempo that gives you time to see, hear, feel and contemplate the nature that surrounds you: "Walking slowly is an understated art .... A person who walks slowly sees much, and a person who walks quickly sees little." On Norway's Hardanger Plateau, lichen feeds the wild reindeer, "crimson heather and slender cotton grass" create a "mosaic" on the earth, and ptarmigan fly up from "a thicket of willow shrubs." On an island's coastal path just south of Oslo, he "passed oat fields that were still green. Swallows caught insects in the soft afternoon sunlight, and from the leafy trees the chaffinches and robins twittered." And in the beech forest of Larvik, he gazed face to face at a roe deer, discovered the paths made by a beaver as it collected tree trunks for its lodge, watched the darting movements of a brown trout in a stream, and listened to a woodpecker's distant knocking. "The path is organic and biodegradable, conforms to the landscape, is a part of the very natural world it passes through."

If you enjoy this kind of nature writing – at once observational and reflective – you might want to follow up some of Ekelund's references. Three of his suggestions which I have loved reading are: Henry Thoreau's *Walden*, Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, and Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*.

*In Praise of Paths* is available through your local, independent bookstore.

## **NATURE CORNER – THINGS YOU MAY HAVE SEEN NEAR YOUR HOME OR OUT ON THE TRAIL**

### **WHITE-TAILED DEER AROUND THE GTA**

<https://hikingthegta.com/2022/10/15/white-tailed-deer/>



## **INVASIVE PHRAGMITES**

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/phragmites-fact-sheet>



## **RED NEWTS ARE TOXIC!**

<https://amphibianplanet.com/are-eastern-red-spotted-newts-poisonous/>





## SPEED RIVER PADDLING

116 Gordon Street - Guelph

	CANOE	KAYAK
1 <sup>ST</sup> HOUR	\$22	\$18
HALF DAY (2-5 HRS)	\$35	\$30


FOLLOW & SHARE PHOTOS @SPEEDRIVERPADDLING

## NEW HIKE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

We are delighted to introduce you to our new Hike Program Coordinator, Guru Singh. We thank Gayle Jeffery for her help in keeping things together for us over these last 2 years! Here is Guru's brief bio:

*"My name is Gurusish Singh (Guru) . I have been a resident of Guelph since 2015. I love our city due to its hiking trails, lakes and rivers.*

*By profession I am a software engineer and work as Scrum master at CitiBank and I also own a travel agency 'Trek Nirvana' where my focus is on Handcrafted Leisure Adventure Tours.*

*My passion is hiking and mountaineering. I have done many hikes and climbs in the Himalayas and Canadian Rockies and also climbed a few mountains. I volunteered as a Hike Leader with Bruce Trail Conservancy.*

*I am looking forward to helping GHTC as the Hike Program Coordinator and to get things rolling after the pandemic. See you soon!!"*

Please welcome Guru; he will be working with Gayle and our hike leaders to develop a schedule of hikes for November/December. We know he will be looking for your input on how best to rebuild our program.

In the meantime, planned hikes can be viewed on our website (<https://guelphhiking.com/Calendar-of-All-Events>). Check regularly as more hikes will be scheduled as we transition from Fall to Winter.

## SAFE WINTER HIKING

Sourced from and inspired by the Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine, Winter 2021/2022 Issue

Hiking the Guelph Hiking Trail Club trails in the winter can be a beautiful way to stay active and explore the local landscapes covered in a blanket of snow.

Winter hiking involves a bit of extra planning, but is well worth it. Here are a few important ways you can stay safe on the trails this winter.

- Plan for shorter days.
- Check weather conditions before heading out and be prepared for them to change.
- Choose a route that is familiar to you. When trails are covered in snow, it can be harder to find your way. Be extra attentive in looking for trail blazes.
- Choose a shorter distance than you would normally cover in summer conditions. Snow, ice and mud will slow your hiking speed.
- Wear and pack extra layers. Staying dry is key to staying warm in the winter and layers will help you do both.
- Avoid wearing cotton since it holds moisture. Opt for synthetics or wool. This goes for socks too.
- Keep your footing with sturdy waterproof boots, icers (removable traction devices for footwear) and poles.
- Pack a flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries.
- Fuel your body and stay hydrated. You'll need more food and water in the winter than you may think.

Remember: our volunteer section leaders do their best to maintain trails all year long, but in the winter some hazards may take longer to clear. You are responsible for your own safety.

Organized hikes are a great way to safely explore the trails, especially if you are new to winter hiking. Consider registering for one!

## HIKING GAMES

### “NAME IT”

1. While hiking, try to name as many plants, grass types, trees, flowers, bugs, birds, and wildlife species as you can.
2. You earn two points for every correct identification and lose one point for every incorrect one.
3. Whoever has the most points at the end of the hike is the winner.

NOTE: To avoid identification disputes it might help to use the ‘Seek’ app!

### “SCAVENGER HUNTS”

Scavenger hunts are one of the most fun things to do while walking. They’re also an excellent way to teach your kids about flora and fauna. For this hiking activity, you’ll need to make a list of things for your kids to try and find on the trail, such as types of leaves, wildflowers, paw prints or find one online that’s relevant to the region and season you’re hiking in.

### “TREASURE HUNT”

It takes a bit of preparation, but all kids love treasure hunts. The thought of a hidden treat will keep them motivated throughout the entire hike. If you’re hiking in your local park or forest, you might be able to go early, or the day before to lay a trail of clues. Or, you can enlist some help; get your teenage kids or spouse to run or cycle ahead and fix the clues for the younger kids. If you’re taking your guide or scout unit hiking, then give your young leaders a head start so that they can make things ready. Alternatively, you can sign up to a treasure hunt organised within a country park or nature reserve.

### WORD ASSOCIATION GAME

1. One person begins the game by saying a random word. (e.g. backpacking)
2. The next person says a word that links to the first word. (e.g. hiking)
3. The third person continues with a word associated with the second word. (e.g. exercise)
4. The fourth, fifth, sixth person, and so on, continue in the same way (you can rotate back through the group if there are only a few of you)
5. You cannot use a word that’s already been said
6. If a person is too slow, repeats a word, or says an unrelated word, they are out of the game



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## TRAIL USERS' CODE

- *Hike only along marked routes; do not take shortcuts.*
- *Obey all signage.*
- *Use the stiles; do not climb fences.*
- *Where dogs are permitted, manage their behaviour and safety.*
- *Walk around a farmer's cultivated field and leash your dog near livestock.*
- *Do not camp or build fires.*
- *Keep the trail clean by carrying out all litter (incl. stoop & scoop).*
- *Protect nature by leaving flowers, plants, trees, and wildlife as they are.*
- *Leave only footprints and take nothing but pictures.*
- *Share your gratitude*

## NEARBY TRAIL CLUBS:

- [Avon Trail](http://www.avontrail.ca) ([www.avontrail.ca](http://www.avontrail.ca))
- [Bruce Trail Conservancy](http://www.bruce-trail.org) ([www.bruce-trail.org](http://www.bruce-trail.org))
- [Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club](http://www.caledonbruce-trail.ca) ([www.caledonbruce-trail.ca](http://www.caledonbruce-trail.ca))
- [Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club](http://www.dufferinbruce-trailclub.org) ([www.dufferinbruce-trailclub.org](http://www.dufferinbruce-trailclub.org))
- [Elora Cataract Trailway](http://www.trailway.org) ([www.trailway.org](http://www.trailway.org))
- [GHTC](http://www.guelphhiking.com) ([www.guelphhiking.com](http://www.guelphhiking.com)) (listing of all Hike Ontario members)
- [Grand Valley Trails Association](http://www.gvta.on.ca) ([www.gvta.on.ca](http://www.gvta.on.ca))
- [Guelph to Goderich Trail](http://www.g2grailtrail.com) (aka G2G - [www.g2grailtrail.com](http://www.g2grailtrail.com))
- [Halton Outdoor Club](http://www.haltonoutdoorclub.ca) ([www.haltonoutdoorclub.ca](http://www.haltonoutdoorclub.ca))
- [Kissing Bridge Trailway](http://www.kissingbridgetrailway.ca) (Our section of the G2G [www.kissingbridgetrailway.ca](http://www.kissingbridgetrailway.ca))
- [Maitland Trail Association](http://www.maitlandtrail.ca) ([www.maitlandtrail.ca](http://www.maitlandtrail.ca))
- [Toronto Bruce Trail Club](http://www.torontobruce-trailclub.org) ([www.torontobruce-trailclub.org](http://www.torontobruce-trailclub.org))
- [Trans Canada Trail](http://www.tc-trail.ca) ([www.tc-trail.ca](http://www.tc-trail.ca))
- [Waterfront Trail](http://www.waterfronttrail.org) ([www.waterfronttrail.org](http://www.waterfronttrail.org))

## OTHER SITES RELATING TO HIKING:

- [Hike Ontario](http://www.hikeontario.com) (aka HO – [www.hikeontario.com](http://www.hikeontario.com))
- [Ontario Trails Council](http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca) (aka OTC - [www.ontariotrails.on.ca](http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca))
- [Ontario Trails Map](http://www.ontariotrailsmap.com/ontariotrails.html?town=Guelph) ([www.ontariotrailsmap.com/ontariotrails.html?town=Guelph](http://www.ontariotrailsmap.com/ontariotrails.html?town=Guelph))
- [Ontario Trails Naturally](http://www.ontariotrailsnaturally.com) (database of 1,300+ nature and hiking trails in Ontario)

## 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PASSPORT PROGRAM – ONLY A FEW WEEKS REMAIN!

There is still time to get your name listed on the GHTC Walk of Fame page by hiking the length of Speed River Trail and Radial Line Trail. Check out the News item on our website's main page.

Document hiking the trail sections as you complete them on the [50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Passport Hiking Log](#) hiking log and when all trails are completed email your log to [gthchiker@gmail.com](mailto:gthchiker@gmail.com).

Deadline is November 29 to be eligible for the prize draw for a high-value swag bag at the Annual General meeting on December 1. We have [7 entries](#) so far so your odds are good!

