

Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association

"Connecting with respect"

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In this Issue:

A2A's 2012 Annual General Meeting — President's Message: Old to New
Sustaining What We Value: Project Update
Lost Bay Nature Reserve Bioblitz Results
Partner Profile: Save the River
Lost Bay Nature Reserve Appeal

Official Notice: A2A's 2012 Annual General Meeting

All A2A members and the general public are invited to attend and participate.

The meeting will be held on Sat. February 25th starting at 9am at the Rockport Community Hall, Rockport, Ontario

The day starts with a Speakers Forum featuring Phil Chadwick, a.k.a. Phil the Forecaster, discussing Algonquin Park, Tom Thompsom's art and the weather story it tells. Plus, 'How Can We Reduce Road Mortalities?'

Refreshments will be served. Memberships available at the Door.

More information & directions will be posted on our website soon...

OLD TO NEW!

A2A has embarked on a new direction, which in fact harkens back to some of the original thinking behind the A2A initiative: serving as a connecting link for researchers and conservation groups on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border.

Two of our newest board members, *Bryarly McEachern* and *Jacqueline Nunes*, have worked tremendously hard to establish a database that will connect organizations on both sides of the U.S. and Canadian borders and allow them to learn of each other's research and projects.

In April, we will be holding the first of a series of workshops bringing researchers and conservation practitioners together to look at the relationship between research that has been done, is in progress or is planned, in order to inform the way conservation is practised in the A2A region. If you know of an organization that should be included, please email Bryarly at bryarly@gmail.com and she will make sure it has been contacted.

Over time it is anticipated that we will post all A2A research from the database on our website as we acquire permission to do so.

Emily Conger — President



Sustaining What We Value: Project Update

by Elizabeth Sprang, Science & Information Data Support Officer, MNR

Last year, A2A was involved in a collaborative landscape planning project called “Sustaining What We Value”. The project brought together a diverse group of representatives from the Frontenac and Leeds and Grenville area to identify a system of important natural areas in our region.

This network of wetlands, woodlands and habitats (a natural heritage system) provides our communities with many services such as clean air, water, flood prevention, pollination, and recreation opportunities. The project produced a package of maps and tools that can be used to support a number of strategic conservation initiatives. These could include: identifying good places for stewardship projects, candidate areas for purchasing conservation land, or informing planning and policy decisions. The results of the project are currently being shared with municipalities, conservation authorities and other groups across the region. By working together and using these common tools, we can do more to achieve the goal of sustaining what we value in this unique region.

For more information, please see: www.sustainingwhatwevalue.ca

Lost Bay Nature Reserve 2011 Bioblitz Results

In your A2A Spring Newsletter you were invited to participate in the 13th Great Canadian BioBlitz of the Kingston Field Naturalists at Lost Bay Nature Reserve on Gananoque Lake, a property of Ontario Nature, right in the heart of the A2A region. A BioBlitz had been held on the “old” (108 acre) original Lost Bay property in 2005. The 2011 Blitz concentrated on the adjacent “new” (145 acre) property. This nature reserve has a variety of habitats including forest, wetland and open area. It has rocky slopes, wet ravines, shoreline and ponds providing for good species diversity. As usual, this event was open to the public and included species listing, guided walks and the traditional BBQ.

The importance of the BioBlitz is in recording species over a 24 hour period to determine a site’s biodiversity at a particular point in time. With repeated monitoring, the effects of environmental changes, including climate change and invasive species’ presence may be determined over time.

Continued from Page 2...

During the Bioblitz, amateur, professional and young naturalists help with spotting and identifying species and educating the public and each other about the diversity of the location. Vertebrates, invertebrates, flowering plants and spore-bearing plants and fungi are recorded.

Results: In 2011 Mink and Cerulean Warblers, as well as a number of special species were spotted. The conservation status rank of ten species was S3 (vulnerable in Ontario), and two species were ranked S2 (imperiled in Ontario). The ten vulnerable species are: Snapping Turtle, Northern Map Turtle, Eastern Ribbon Snake, Gray Rat Snake, Milk Snake, Grass Pickerel, Giant Swallowtail Butterfly, Lilypad Clubtail Dragonfly, Butternut and Broad Beech Fern. The S2 species were Juniper Hairstreak Butterfly and Arrow-head Spiketail Dragonfly.

GRASS PICKEREL



The 2005

BioBlitz on the neighbouring property showed fewer species (465), compared to 2011 with 544 species, more unusual species and more species of concern. Of the 544 species there were 102 Vertebrates (including 11 mammals, 64 birds, 8 reptiles, 10 amphibians and 9 fish), 111 Invertebrates (from Ants to True Bugs in 13 groups), 318 Flowering Plants (81 families including 10 fern families), 13 Fungi and other Spore-bearing Plants (including lichens and mosses).

To see the full report and a listing of species identified, please consult the KFN website at kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/bluebill/bb-sep11.pdf You may also want to watch the KFN website for information about participating in the 2012 Bioblitz.

With thanks to Gaye Beckwith, KFN

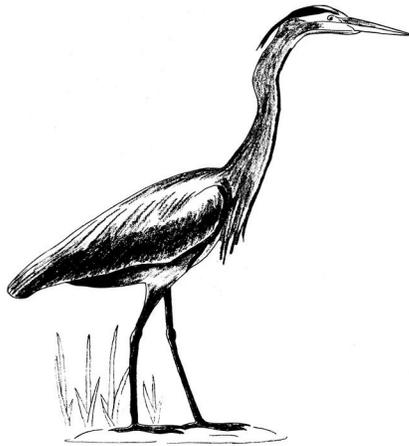
Each issue we feature an organization which promotes connected habitat in the A2A region.

Partner Profile: Save the River *by Emily Conger*

For more than 30 years, Save The River has been the leading environmental advocate working to protect and preserve the Upper St. Lawrence River. It now has the status of the Upper St. Lawrence RIVERKEEPER.

Save The River is a grassroots advocate, working with thousands of year-round and seasonal members, on both the U.S. and Canadian sides of the River, to ensure that the St. Lawrence River and Thousand Islands are protected for future generations. Our advocacy positions - from acting as a watchdog on St. Lawrence Seaway issues to fighting for environmentally sound water levels regulation - are based on independent science and community outreach.

For years Save The River has worked to protect the ecological integrity of the St. Lawrence River, successfully opposing proposed dredging operations and winter navigation. It has increased awareness of the dangers of invasive species brought into the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence system in bilge water of large “salties”, fighting tirelessly for better regulations of shipping traffic, particularly cleaning up ship ballast tanks to stop further aquatic invasive species introductions. Save the River also continues to work for more natural water levels on the river, which will benefit native species of wildlife. A2A has worked alongside Save The River on many of these issues.



*To learn more please visit
www.savetheriver.org*

Save The River
Upper St. Lawrence RIVERKEEPER®

*You have an opportunity to help save an important ecosystem
right in your own backyard.*

*An invitation to preserve The Crank and add the Summerfield Tract to the
Lost Bay Nature Reserve. www.tiwl.ca.*

Conservation Partners Launch Campaign to Purchase Properties

A2A members will recall from our Watershed Projects how important the Gananoque River and its many lakes are to allowing north-south wildlife movement. Both properties described here are rich in biodiversity and are links in a landscape of connected habitat. I hope you'll consider helping to purchase them. See how to contribute below.

The "Crank" is a stunning 150 acre property where the Gananoque River narrows through rock walls, forming cliffs of pink granite that make one feel at once overpowered by, yet intimate with nature. A2A has partnered with the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (TIWLT), the Gananoque River Waterways Association, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Network, the Leeds-Grenville Stewardship Council, the Charleston Lake Association and the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority to ensure it stays that way forever. The partners are attempting to raise \$168,000 in a public campaign to purchase the "Crank" and a second property, the Summerfield Tract.

The "Crank" features a wide diversity of habitats, including exposed rock shorelines, marsh shoreline and wetland, bare rock ridges, and mature mixed upland and lowland deciduous forests. Once purchased, the property would be owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC).

The Summerfield Tract is a 223 acre property located next to Ontario Nature's Lost Bay Nature Reserve. A2A Secretary and motivating force behind the acquisition of the Lost Bay Reserve, Cameron Smith, stated that *"When secured, it will nearly double the size of that Reserve"*. An expanded Reserve would protect provincially significant wetlands along the shoreline at the bottom of Lost Bay on the Gananoque River, home to endangered Northern Map Turtles and many other species at risk. The property would be owned and managed by Ontario Nature.

The NCC and Ontario Nature are able to match private donations with funds from an innovative conservation program designed in partnership with the Canadian federal government, through which all but \$168,000 of the total cost of the two properties of \$765,000 has been raised. But the final \$168,000 must be raised in order to secure the government funding. With advance pledges and commitments, the partners have managed to raise over half of that amount to date. They still need to raise \$80,000 before the campaign closes on December 31st, 2011.

TIWLT President, Dann Michols, noted that these properties total about 400 acres. *"If 400 people contribute \$200 each, we will meet our target and have sufficient funds to cover some of our stewardship costs into the future"*. You are invited to contribute to this campaign by contacting him at the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (dann@tiwlt.ca) for details. Tax receipts will be issued. Arrangements have been made for American donors to receive American tax receipts.

Emily Conger, A2A President of A2A, stated that *"maintaining habitat connectivity is critical for wildlife survival"*. The development of once untouched areas has caused the fragmentation of habitats, splitting and isolating populations. The resulting patches are less likely to have the resources necessary to support healthy, biodiverse populations. In such situations, wildlife is at greater risk of local extinction by disturbances such as extreme weather events and disease. Purchasing the "Crank" and the Summerfield Tract will make a great contribution to preventing more fragmentation in the A2A region.