

the TaTTLer

a newsletter of the

Thames Talbot Land Trust

Working together to leave a legacy of healthy landscapes

Newport Forest: A Perpetual Natural Legacy

On June 8, 2007 Omnibus Research Inc. donated the Newport Forest to TTLT. Our thanks go to Kee and Pat Dewdney for this extraordinary act of generosity which has created a perpetual natural legacy. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for September 22, 2007 at Newport Forest.

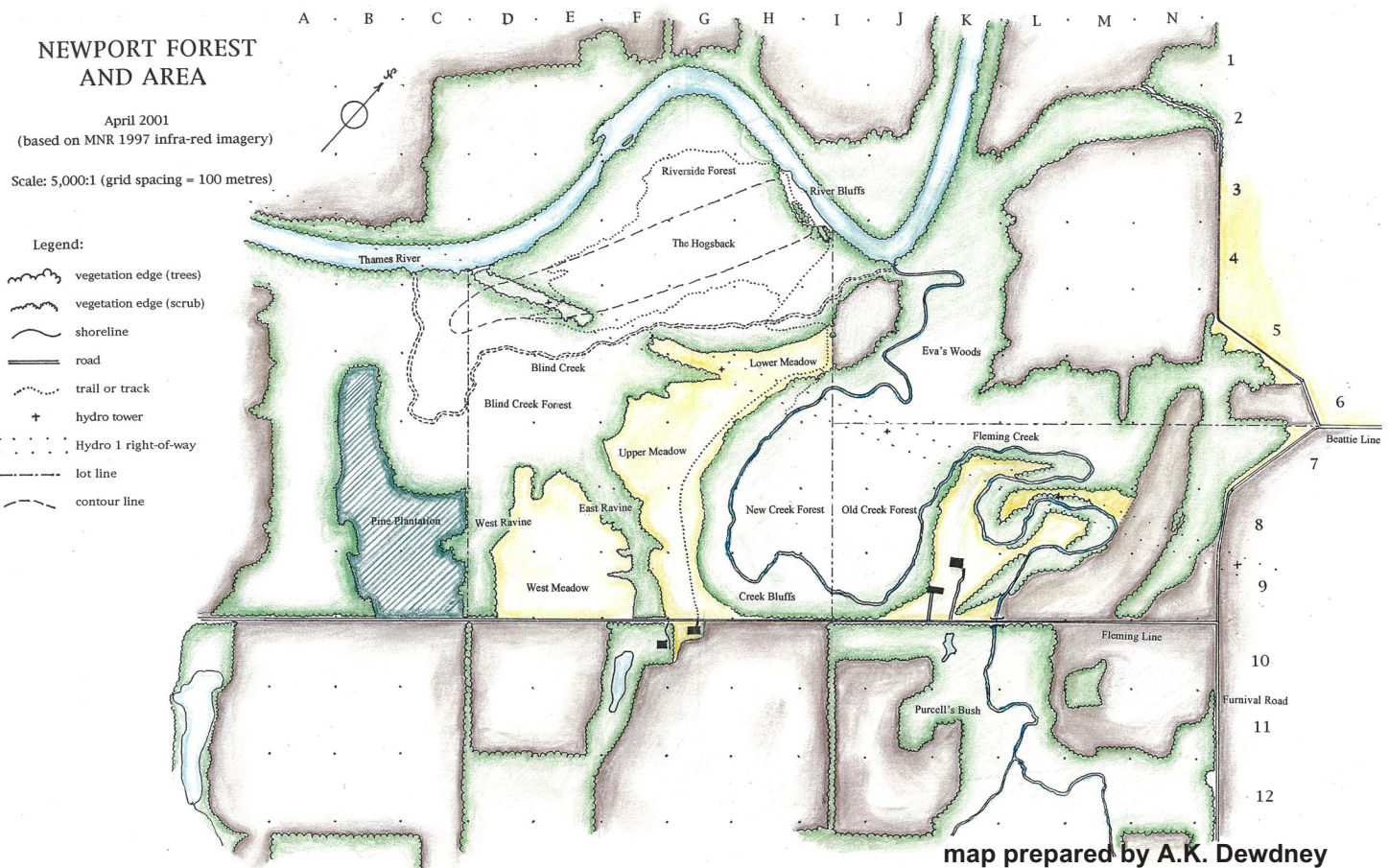
Newport Forest is a 110 acre (45 ha) area on the south side of the Thames River near Wardsville, Ontario within the Carolinian Life Zone. Historically, it is ecologically contiguous with the Skunk's Misery area on the north side of the Thames, barely one km distant over intervening agricultural land. The property consists mainly of lowland forest, with some upland forest (the Hogsback), meadow, ravine slopes and bluff forests, and floodplain. The highest point of land is the Hogsback (5 ha), a partially eroded Pleistocene river terrace. The lower part of Newport Forest is subject to periodic flooding and this influences plant and animal

life considerably. The soil is glacial clay with some underlying till and an upper horizon (about 10 dc) of clay loam.

The upland forest on the Hogsback consists of a Maple-Beech canopy with about 10 other woody species present including Red, White and Chinquapin Oak, Blue Ash and Blue Beech. The four lowland forests — Riverside Forest (8 ha), Blind Creek Forest (8 ha), West Ravine Forest, and New Floodplain Forest (also known as Fleming's Creek Ravine) — consist mainly of Box Elder, Black Walnut, Sycamore, Sugar and Black Maple, Black Willow, American Elm and Slippery Elm.

Blind Creek is an ephemeral wetland formed when Fleming's Creek cut new banks to the Thames and abandoned its former bed. The banks of Fleming's Creek and the west ravine are heavily wooded, prime sites for spring wildflowers.

... story continues on Page 7



Presidential Perspectives

Muriel Andrae

I'm privileged to provide the President's report from the April 2007 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and updates about activities this spring.

In May 2006 we received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$52,000 for two years, to purchase a digital projector and to finance a part-time Executive Director, Don Gordon, to help us with "capacity building". Don's work has been key to our progress on all fronts.

Your Board adopted a Donor Recognition policy in June 2006, to recognize both the levels of annual donations and of cumulative giving to the Land Trust. We are now recognizing people and organizations by the value of their gift within the Supporter's Circle or Colonel Talbot's Circle, and will continue to maintain records of these categories.

The Governance Committee (formerly called the Nominating Committee) reviewed the Land Trust's bylaws last winter and presented revisions to the membership at the AGM. The key revisions clarified the role of the Past President; established the Board quorum as a simple majority rather than 2/3, and clarified membership application and meeting rules. The revised bylaws were approved by the membership.

In July 2006 we held a Work Day at Newport Forest, which is Kee and Pat Dewdney's 110 acre property on the Thames River near Wardsville. In October the Dewdneys decided they would donate the property to the Trust in 2007, rather than leave it as a bequest. Transfer of the Conservation Easement and the fee simple title for Newport Forest were accomplished this spring. The dedication ceremony for this significant donation will be on September 22 2007.

Property issues dominated our Board meetings for the winter. In December we began negotiations to purchase Joany's Woods from the Estate of Thomas Doherty, and our conditional offer was accepted in January. The Joany's Woods campaign involved many people, particularly in leading four hikes for the public this May and June. A great deal of credit goes to Stan Caveney and Jane

Bowles for rapidly accumulating information on the property, so that within ten days of our conditional Offer to Purchase being accepted, Don could submit credible grant applications to private foundation and government agencies.

In 2006 the Board of Directors and Land Trust committees:

- Endorsed developing a Conservation Strategy with Nature Conservancy Canada for the Skunk's Misery region
- Organized a two day Seed Collection Certification Workshop for 16 registrants
- Organized and hosted a free public presentation at the Wolf Performance Hall, where Diana Beresford-Kroeger spoke on "A Medicine Walk with Trees" with 300 people in attendance
- Completed our second annual monitoring visit of the Conservation Easement on Eric and Marsha Eberhardt's property on Whirl Creek near Sebringville.
- Continued monthly monitoring of the Meadowlily Nature Preserve on the South Thames River, which was donated to the Trust by Carol and Rick Richardson in 2002.

These accomplishments were possible because a strong foundation had been built by our previous directors, including Bernie VanDenBelt, Mary Kerr, Terry Grawey, Bill DeYoung, Bonnie Bergsma, Christine Elliott and Bill Preiksaitis. The Ivey Natural Lands funding, obtained by the previous Board as the first donation to our Opportunities Fund, provides us with the funds to make a credible offer on properties. The Ontario Trillium grant and previous funding from Sonometrics and the Iveys, have financed Don Gordon so we can respond quickly to requests, have professional support for our committees and submit effective applications for grants.

At the April 2007 AGM the membership re-elected Jane Bowles and Stan Caveney as Directors of the Land Trust and two new Directors were elected: Shirley Dortmans and Fred Rovers. They join those who are continuing through their current two year term of office: Dave Crockett, Wayne Crowder, Michelle Kanter, Shelley Kaufman, Terry Keep, Quintin Lang, Margo Ritchie and myself. The Executive for 2007 includes Stan Caveney as Vice-President, Wayne Crowder as Treasurer and myself as President. Our committees meet every two to three months and all our committees would welcome more voices, more ideas and more hands. Stan leads the Land Securement; Jane leads the Property Management, Shelley leads the Fundraising and Marketing and myself with Governance.

Please encourage friends to become members or check our website. Join a committee or come to our events. Donate or pledge a monthly contribution. Together we're leaving a legacy.

TTLT Board of Directors 2007 / 2008

Directors

Muriel Andrae, President
Jane Bowles
Stan Caveney, Vice-President
David Crockett
Wayne Crowder, Treasurer
Shirley Dortmans
Michelle Kanter
Shelley Kaufman
Terry Keep
Quintin Lang
Margo Ritchie
Fred Rovers

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PO Box 25054
London, Ontario N6C 6A8

Executive Director

Don Gordon

Contributors to this issue

Muriel Andrae
Bonnie Bergsma
Jane Bowles
Stan Caveney
Bill DeYoung
Don Gordon
Shelley Kaufman

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London ON N6C 6A8

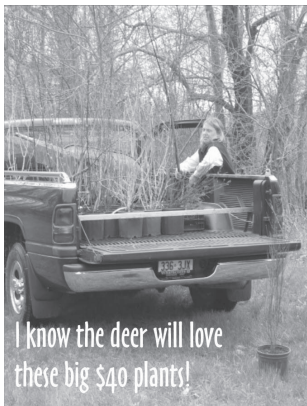
Meadow to Woodland: Part One

Jane Bowles

Meadowlily Nature Preserve is a 5.6 hectare parcel of land along the Thames River east of Highbury Avenue in London that was donated to the Thames Talbot Land Trust by Carol and Richard Richardson. It comprises upland forest containing a creek, floodplain woodland along the river shoreline, an open meadow on a river terrace (where the main east-west trail is located), and a small upland area of open grass (known as the Upper Meadow) that used to be a mowed lawn. The Meadowlily Nature Preserve is part of the Meadowlily Woods Environmentally Significant Area and the Thames River Valley Corridor.

A Management Plan for Meadowlily Nature Preserve was completed in 2005, and includes a plan for reforesting Upper Meadow. A tree cover here will increase the amount of forest on the property and to minimize edge effects between sections of the forest.

Our earlier attempt to plant small trees and saplings in 2003 failed because White-tailed Deer browsed them.



We decided to try a Direct Seeding into a prepared site that more closely mimics what happens in nature — high germination rate of many species and low survival in the long term. There are plenty of opportunities for volunteers to help.[see Bonnie Bergsma's article "Part Two"]. In anticipation of this and other similar projects in the future, several TTLT volunteers took a Seed Collecting course in September 2006 and are now Certified Seed Collectors. We will be out collecting fruit and seeds as they mature this summer.

Site preparation prior to direct seeding is important, especially in a site where there is a thick turf of grass roots and thatch that prevent all but the most aggressive seedling from becoming established. The first step was to get rid of the existing grasses without the use of herbicides. We decided to turn our reforestation project into an experiment that has the objective to measure the cost efficiency (time and money) and the effectiveness of weed management by comparing methods of non-chemical site preparations. The desired outcome

is an efficient and effective site preparation technique to facilitate woodland restoration projects.

A properly controlled and well-documented experiment should be helpful to TTLT as well as other conservation groups who are planning direct seeding on small sites. We decided on three treatments with two replicates of each in plots of about 6 m by 30 m plus a control zone to see what happens without site preparation. Treatment One: till the grass several times over the course of the summer to break up the roots and rhizomes and prevent the grasses from re-establishing. Treatment Two: lay down a black plastic cover that is secured against the wind to keep the grass in the dark and kill it over the summer leaving a bare area for planting. Treatment Three: cover the site with a mulch that consists of layers of paper (that will rot eventually, but will stop the grass growing through it the first year) with about 15 cm of compost on top, which becomes the planting medium. We will monitor and keep records to evaluate the successes and failures of the three treatments.

On May 22, 2007 the site was prepared with the aid of student volunteers from Dan Vanlieshout's Environmental Leadership Program at Catholic Central High School. The class arrived by bus at the Meadowlily Road entrance and were guided through the Nature Preserve to observe the diverse habitats of river riparian, flood plain, creek bed, poplars with their beaver runs, old field meadow, upland deciduous forest and the Upper Meadow.

After only a month into the project the sharp and sturdy rhizomes of Quack (Twitch) Grass (*Elymus repens*) pierced the paper mulch underneath the compost treatment. New shoots of the grass flourished with the compost, quickly spread and threatened to dominate the treatment zone. It seems that the only way to rescue this treatment is to start tilling. So two of our treatments will now be tilling, with and without a compost amendment. One good lesson has already been learned — use more layers of paper and move less compost!

Seed planting on all three plots will begin this fall. More seeds of a greater variety of tree, shrub and ground layer species can be added over the next several years. Wind, birds and other wildlife will help bring other seeds to the site, as they would if the site was left alone.



**Catholic Central High School
Environmental Leadership Program**

Joany's Woods: A Gem in our Crown

Stan Caveney

That the land trust movement is currently riding a conservation wave spread right across North America is indisputable. When one considers that southwestern Ontario has some of the most intensively-settled and fragmented natural landscapes on the continent, the re-awakening of a conservation ethic in our region is particularly welcome. Climate change and its predicted ill-effects on our local environment are on the minds of many people these days. There is a dire need to conserve and restore the few fragments of natural habitat that remain in our region, to both benefit our local environment and to provide better and protected habitat for its many threatened species. The land trust movement in Ontario is benefiting from a "think globally, plan bioregionally and act locally" conservation ethic.

Joany's Woods, a large tract of deciduous upland and swamp deciduous forest situated along the Ausable River Valley, promises to be a large and sparkling gem to add to our "conservation crown" of natural areas under long-term stewardship. With your continuing support this conservation crown will become increasingly studded with precious new conservation jewels. Our "Save Joany's Woods Campaign", the most ambitious and significant land-securement venture undertaken to date by TTLT, will guarantee that the property will be managed in perpetuity by the Trust as a nature preserve accessible to the public

As part of our local fund-raising efforts, regional nature clubs and the general public were invited to join our volunteer guides in tours of Joany's Woods during May and June. Participants in the early May tour were able to witness the spring ephemerals in bloom and the migrating songbirds, under an open forest canopy. Later in May a smaller number of hardy souls endured the rain



American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)



Wavyrayed Lampmussel (*Lampsilis fasciola*)



Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)



Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*)

and muddy trails to enjoy the active frogs, crayfish and newts. In June, visitors to the woods experienced a biodiverse Carolinian Forest in its freshly leafed-out majesty and dense understorey, with many birds now calling in their breeding territory, and surprisingly, few biting flies. So far we have had the pleasure of taking over 150 people on tours through the woods. Many other individuals, clubs and foundations have made substantial donations in support of our cause, site unseen.

As a consequence, our capital campaign to secure Joany's Woods has been an outstanding success. Our collaborative efforts have raised over \$400,000 towards the campaign goal of \$660,000 to secure and manage the property: \$475,000 to purchase the property, \$150,000 to set up a stewardship trust fund and the remainder to cover expenses associated with the land and ownership transfer. A seminal donation of \$94,000 from the McIlwraith Field Naturalists of London of bequest funds from the Spencer and Helen Inch estate set a positive tone to our campaign at an early stage.

All donations, large and small, are critical to our venture, because they indicate a ground-swell of public and institutional support for our specific campaign and for conservation in southern Ontario in general. The Joany's Woods Campaign has received \$25,000 from EJLB Foundation, \$15,000 from Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation, \$10,000 from the HIVA Environmental Fund and \$237,500 from Ontario Greenlands, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Our grass-roots campaign has now raised over \$30,000 in donations and pledges from more than 50 individuals. It is truly heart-warming to note that some of our supporters have made private contributions of up to \$5,000. The Land Trust is in the enviable position of being able to match all donations it receives with funds in the Ivey Natural Lands Legacy within the Opportunities Fund. Our ability to leverage all contributions towards the Joany's Woods campaign means that the woods will remain a protected natural area, open to the public for nature appreciation and hiking, in perpetuity.

Special thanks goes to the dedicated team of TTLT volunteers who have worked tirelessly to promote the merits of the Joany's Woods campaign, for example by acting as guides the on-site tours, distributing campaign brochures to friends and acquaintances, and explaining the campaign to landowners in the immediate area.

A public gathering to recognize our conservation achievements at Joany's Woods will take place on site at 11 am on Saturday September 8. So please mark your calendars now and plan to join us in celebrating this marvellous achievement.



Visitors on Joany's Woods Tour

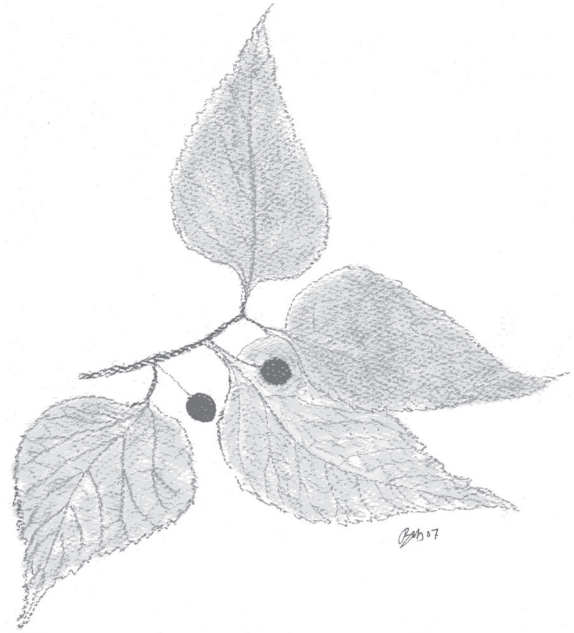
Meadow to Woodland: Part Two

Bonnie Bergsma

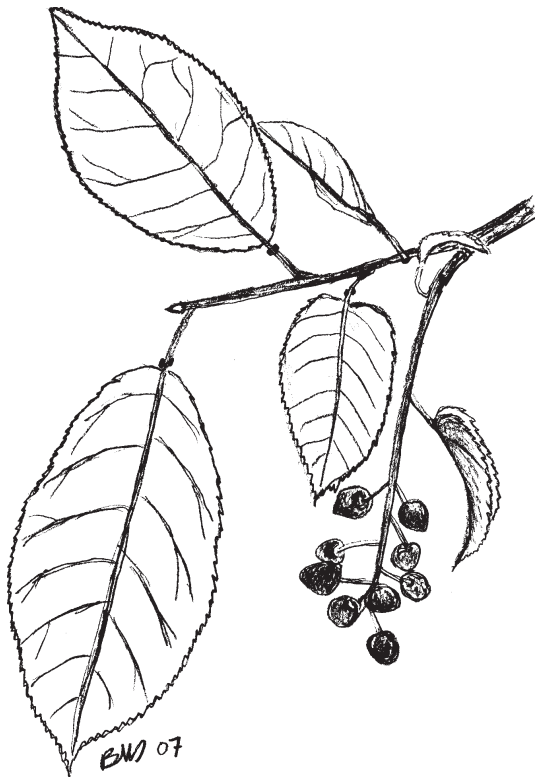
The upper meadow at the Meadowlily Nature Preserve is getting a makeover (see Part One by Jane Bowles about the site preparation). Once the site is fully prepared then seeds of native trees and shrubs appropriate to this site will be planted. Our first planting date is set for October 14. We will need many volunteers to plant the hundreds or thousands of seeds. But first we need to collect seeds. Collecting local source native seeds has already begun and more work is needed.

Different plants flower and set seeds at different times of the year. For instance, Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) flowers in mid-May, sets seed in early July but, it retains its globular fruits throughout the winter and does not drop its ripe seed until late winter to mid-spring. Sycamore seeds have been collected and set aside.

In the autumn of 2006 a Seed Collector Training Workshop (see TaTTLer November 2006, Issue 7) trained 16 seed collectors. Of these, Bonnie Bergsma and Bill DeYoung, Certified Seed Collectors, will lead and guide the seed collection excursions on July 15 and July 29. We will meet at the entrance to the Meadowlily Nature Preserve on Meadowlily Road at 9:30 a.m. and will be finished by 12:30 noon.



Hackberry
(*Celtis occidentalis*)



Choke Cherry
(*Prunus virginiana*)

On July 15 we will be looking for seeds of White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*) and Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* sp.). On July 19 we will be looking for seeds of Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) and Choke Cherry (*Prunus virginiana*). Ripe seeds of other plants (trees, shrubs, forbs and graminoids) will also be collected.

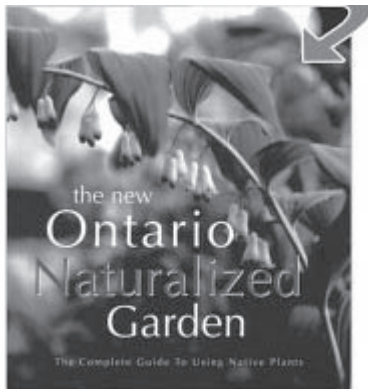
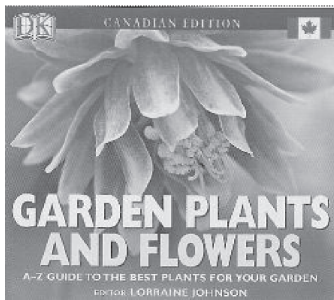
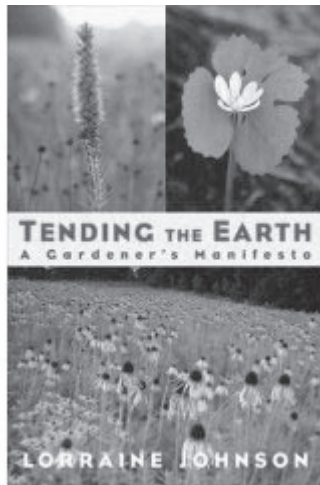
We will provide cloth bags to gather the seeds. Volunteers should be dressed for walking in the woods with long pants and long-sleeved shirts to protect against brambles, poison ivy and biting insects. Bring drinking water.

If you want to gather seeds on your own, Jane Bowles can process these at the University of Western Ontario Herbarium. The sample of seeds should include some leaves and a few twigs so that the seeds can be properly identified. To arrange for the storage of seeds eMail "arboretum@uwo.ca".

Funding for this woodland restoration project has been provided by Shell Environmental Fund, London Community Foundation, London Composts, City of London and Try Recycling. The project would not be possible without the many hours of time donated by our volunteers. Thank You!

Future seed collection dates will be posted to the web site. If you would like to be notified of these, please send an eMail message to "thamestalbot@ttl.ca".

A Window to the World



Please join us Friday November 2nd when, once again, a capacity crowd is expected at the Wolf Performance Hall. This year we welcome renowned writer Lorraine Johnson to our annual speaker series to share her insights and passion for the ecological and social context of the garden. This free event promotes inspiring ideas and values to TTLT members and the broader community.

Lorraine Johnson will present a slide talk show “The Backyard Garden—A Window to the World”. Lorraine will demonstrate the connections to be made between our own backyard gardens and broader environmental and social issues in the world. The evening is sure to blend ideas about native plants with visions of stewardship and community.

“Our landscapes are full to overflowing with unlikely opportunities for garden expansion.”

Ms. Johnson has authored many books about gardening and environmental issues. These titles include: *The New Ontario Naturalized Garden*; *100 Easy-to-Grow Native Plants*; and *Tending the Earth: A Gardener's Manifesto*. She is also the editor of the book *Garden Plants and Flowers: A-Z Guide to the Best Plants For Your Garden*. She is a regular contributor to *Canadian Gardening* magazine, *Green Living*, and *On Nature*. She is the editor of the Carolinian Canada newsletter.

Lorraine Johnson is past president of the North American Native Plant Society and a member of the board of directors of LEAF (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests). She is also a patron of the Toronto Botanical Garden in Toronto. Lorraine Johnson was born in Stratford, Ontario and works as both a writer and editor. She lives and gardens in Toronto.

Friday, November 2 2007, 7 p.m., Wolf Performance Hall, London Central Library, Lorraine Johnson: “The Backyard Garden—A Window to the World”

If you love the future, Trust in the land.

The Opportunities Fund of the Thames Talbot Land Trust was established through a founding gift of \$1 million from Beryl and Richard Ivey. Your planned gift of cash or securities to the Opportunities Fund will support the acquisition of natural lands to be protected in perpetuity.

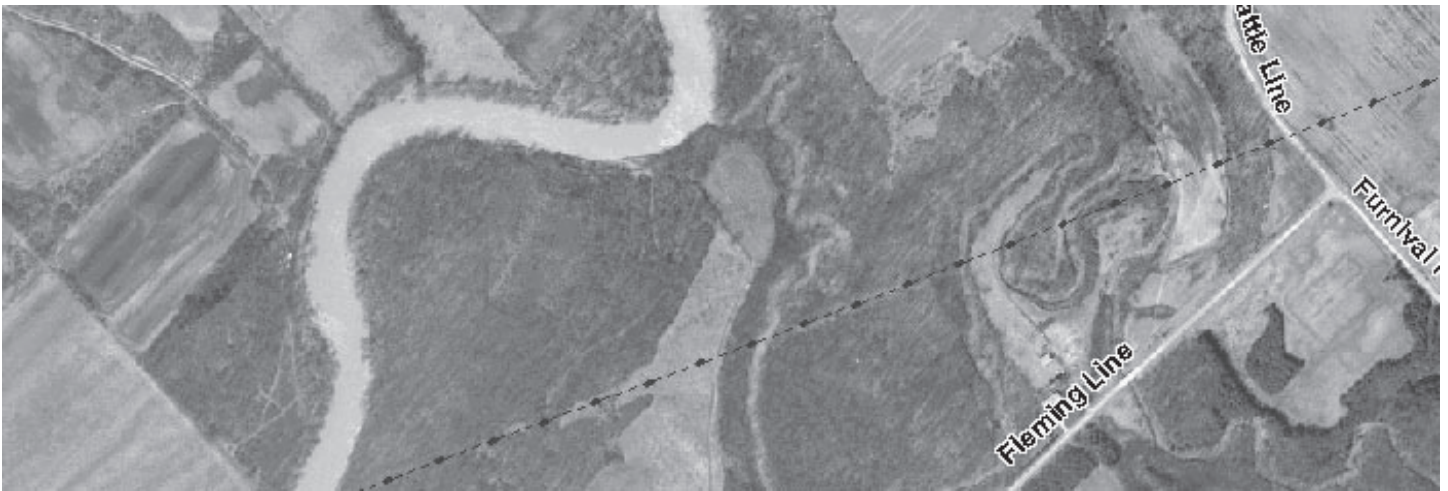
Nothing outlasts land.

The Thames Talbot Land Trust is a certified recipient of Ecological Gifts under the Income Tax Act and can accept gifts of natural, agricultural and cultural significance. To learn more about us, please call: **(519) 858-3442** or visit: **www.ttlit.ca**



Thames Talbot Land Trust

Working together to leave a legacy of healthy landscapes



On the Thames floodplain, between the river and the Riverside Forest, grow some unusual species including Cup Plant. The Upper and Lower Meadows, previously used for grazing cattle, will be allowed to succeed into forest except for small service areas. Already, the meadows include several interesting native plants such as Wingstem, Coneflowers, Blue-eyed grass, and many Aster species. The preliminary checklist of 181 plant species indicates that 75% are native. The meadows and adjacent scrub provide habitat for Savanna Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Bluebird, etc. The lowland forest and floodplain attract a wide variety of migrating and resident birds including the Red-bellied Woodpecker. A preliminary wildlife list includes a number of unusual molluscs, several herpetofaunal species including the Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle, and common mammals. Adjacent landowners and visitors have reported Southern Flying Squirrel, Badger, Eastern Cougar and Coyote within the past five years.

Newport Forest is part of a much larger forest complex (dissected by adjoining farmland) known as the Skunk's Misery Complex, consisting of about 4000 acres (1620 ha) of forest in various conditions, from near-pristine to selectively logged. Before the arrival of European settlers ca 1830, this area was fully forested except for small areas of prairie and wetlands. Among the early landowners of "Newport Forest" were Alex Cameron (1840) and Henry Powell (1877). During and since that period the land has always been mixed agriculture and woodlot. At one point, a house was built on the property in what is now known as the upper meadow, across from property still owned by Nina (Dill) Hurdle. The house was razed prior to 1950. Presumably about a third of the land was under agricultural production (plough scars are visible in an aerial photograph of 1978). About 1970, Lorne Thomas Newport of R.R.1, Wardsville acquired the property from his grandfather Newport and for the next several years pastured cattle on the old fields, adjacent to property owned by his brother Harvey Newport and his mother, Eva Newport. Selective logging was done in the 1970s, 1980s and a small area was logged again in the early 1990s.

More information may be found at: "www.csd.uwo.ca/~akd/conservation/Newport.html"

GreenWorld Radio

There is something new and exciting coming through London's airwaves...

CHRW 94.9FM announces GreenWorld Radio

The world is seeing green — but with so much confusion surrounding environmental issues, it's easy for people to remain confused about what it means to them...and what they can do to create positive change.

GreenWorld, a fresh weekly addition to CHRW's lineup, will examine environmental issues — and discuss how these issues affect us locally. Every Friday, from 11 a.m. to noon, listeners can tune in to 94.9 FM as one of a series of hosts brings his or her particular interest and expertise to the airwaves. Together with guests and listeners, GreenWorld will create lively debate about eco-issues — the politics, the business, the consumer issues, the health issues, and more.

The Hosts:

Steve Sauder is the marketing specialist with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Tiffany Roschkow is a "green" entrepreneur who runs Atmosphere Development and Girls' Night In. She is also a coordinator for GreenDrinks London.

Don Gordon has worked as a fundraiser for conservation and environmental organizations for more than 15 years and is also the Executive Director of the Thames Talbot Land Trust.

Leslie Garrett is an award-winning journalist and author who writes on environmental and social justice issues. Her book *The Virtuous Consumer: Your Essential Shopping Guide to a Better, Kinder, Healthier World* hits the shelves mid-July.

CHRW 94.9 is London's community radio station owned by the University Students Council at UWO. CHRW broadcasts from One London Place and can be heard throughout London and the surrounding Counties as well as on the internet.

Membership in TTLT

Charitable receipts are issued for all contributions
(#86745 7475 RR0001)

Membership Donations

Youth/Student (under 18):	\$25
Individual Member (18 and older):	\$50
Affiliate/Group/Corporate:	\$100

Supporters' Circle

Advocate	\$240 (\$20/month)
Protector	\$480 (\$40/month)

Donations

Donation amount: \$ _____

Membership information

Name _____
Address _____
City/Postal Code _____
Telephone (____) _____
eMail _____

Payment Options

- Cheque payable to Thames Talbot Land Trust, or
- Direct bank debit (automatic monthly payments)

I(We) authorize the Thames Talbot Land Trust to process a debit, in paper, electronic or other form in the amount of \$ _____ on my(our) account on the first day of each month beginning 1, _____, 200____.

I(We) acknowledge that I(we) have read, understood and accepted all the provisions set out in the Terms and Conditions <www.ttlc.ca>

I(We) enclose a cheque made payable to Thames Talbot Land Trust marked "VOID"

Signature(s) of Donor(s):

Date: _____

Please mail the completed application form and cheque to:

Thames Talbot Land Trust
PO Box 25054, London ON N6C 6A8

Privacy Policy

Thames Talbot Land Trust respects your privacy and will not share your personal information. From time to time we may contact you with information about the Land Trust and its activities which we believe are of interest to our members and supporters. For more information about our privacy policy visit www.ttlc.ca

TTLT Calendar

Mark these dates in your calendar

July 15 — Seed Collection, Meadowli Nature Preserve, 9:30 a.m. to noon

July 29 — Seed Collection, Meadowli Nature Preserve, 9:30 a.m. to noon

August 7 — TTLT Board of Directors Meeting, 7 p.m.

August 16 -- Volunteer Recognition BBQ

August 21 — Land Securement Committee, Grosvenor Lodge, 7 p.m.

Committees seek Volunteers
You could be part of the solution
Contact "thamestalbot@ttl.ca" or
Call 519 858-3442

September 8 — Joany's Woods Campaign Celebration, Joany's Woods, Sylvan, 11 a.m.

September 11 — Property Management Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.

September 22 — Newport Forest Nature Preserve Dedication Ceremony, Wardsville, 2 p.m.

October 14 — Meadowlily Nature Preserve Planting Day, 9:30 a.m. to noon

October 18-20 — Canadian Land Trust Gathering, Ottawa

November 2 -- Lorraine Johnson, Wolf Hall, London Central Library, 7 p.m.