

LONG POINT BASIN
LAND TRUST
VIEWPOINT
SPRING 2021

25
YEARS



*Looking Back with Pride;
Looking Forward with Confidence
Our 25th Anniversary*

A quarter century ago, on August 27, 1996, five forward-thinking conservationists incorporated Long Point Basin Land Trust. Their vision was for an organization that would conserve ecosystems by owning, conserving and restoring land, and promote science and education.

This year we celebrate this milestone by telling some of those stories, while we also prepare our organization to meet the demands of the future.

Some of the achievements of our first 25 years:

- * Being instrumental in the purchase of the 400 acre Lake Erie Farms property in South Walsingham
- * Extensive work on preserving and raising awareness of Carolinian reptiles
- * Securing the Jackson-Gunn Old Growth Forest, our first Nature preserve, in 2004
- * Steadily acquiring more lands, home to many Species at Risk
- * First publication of ViewPoint in 2008
- * Stewarding our properties including removing invasive species and tree planting

- * Outreach through such programs as Explore the Outdoors
- * Purchase of our 10th reserve, the 193 acre (78 ha) Trout Creek Nature Reserve

While we commemorate the past, we are acutely aware of challenges such as improving outreach, adequately stewarding our growing reserve network, and securing the future of the organization, even as we take advantage of acquisition opportunities. To this end, we have just completed a strategic planning process, achieved with the help of many of our partners who offered valuable advice. This was done to focus our efforts over the next five years and to ensure the land trust will be a more effective, efficient and stronger organization.

There is more to celebrate! We have just completed our spring campaign, **acquiring two new nature reserves.**

Details are in this issue of **ViewPoint**.

A Short History of 25 years of Conservation

“Tall oaks from little acorns grow.”

That ancient saying is doubly true for the Long Point Basin Land Trust: for as we do plant acorns to grow tall oaks, it also describes our organization's growth over the past 25 years.

How did the nut come to be planted?

It was felt by some that, when someone donates a treasured natural property for conservation, that the ecological integrity of the land should be paramount. Bitter experience showed that this had not always been the case; sometimes lands donated for conservation were promptly logged contrary to the donor's intention.

Five naturalists associated with the Norfolk Field Naturalists – **Peter Carson, Dr. Arthur Langford, Alan Robinson, Ken McMullen, and Bernard Harlow** – felt that there was a place for such an organization: After much discussion, The Long Point Basin Land Trust was incorporated in 1996. The operating area chosen was defined by watersheds, from Kettle Creek on the west up to the Grand River on the east.

The stated purpose of the Land Trust is, in a “nutshell”:

- * To promote the conservation and preservation of the landscape, habitat, ecology, wildlife, and cultural heritage,
- * To establish, maintain, develop, and manage ecological systems,
- * To promote scientific research and education, and
- * To acquire land and receive donations to do these things.

Early years activities included assisting The Nature Conservancy of Canada with the acquisition of the Konrad and the 400-acre Lake Erie Farms properties;

assisting research at the Turkey Point Picetum with Dr. Al Gordon; and beginning habitat restoration efforts.

A milestone was the campaign to acquire the spectacular Jackson-Gunn Old Growth Forest, which became our first Nature Reserve in December 2004. This was followed by the hiring of our first staff, launch of the website and ViewPoint newsletter, and purchase of the Arthur Langford Nature Reserve in 2008.

On the education and outreach front, the Conserving Carolinian Reptiles project was launched. This included construction of reptile habitat, reptile surveys and population monitoring, as well as publication of two biodiversity handbooks, “*Gardening with Native Plants*” and “*Conserving Carolinian Reptiles*”.

Our holdings of natural areas grew with the donation of the Delhi Wetland and addition of the Shirley and George Pond property in 2011; and the lakefront Strongman-Guiler Conservation Legacy the next year. Our forward momentum continued with the generous legacies of Marshall Malcolm Nature reserve and the Stead Family Scientific Reserve, and purchase of The Al (Pic) and Pat Robinson Nature Reserve in 2016.

More land for nature has followed – Spring Arbour Farm in January 2018, and the extensive Trout Creek Nature Reserve the next year, bringing our protected areas to 671 acres.

The Explore the Outdoors program has made a wide range of activities available to the public, starting in 2019 with hands-on programs; then pivoting to virtual presentations during the pandemic.

As we move into our second twenty-five years, we are committed to working with new focus towards acquisition, outreach, sustainability of the organization, and stewardship – and we are planting acorns!

25 YEARS

Arthur Langford exploring Jackson – Gunn Old Growth Forest. *Photo: Christine Vaughan*



Al Robinson and Jim Harlow receiving the recognition plaques for the greatest Yellow Birch, American Beech and Sugar Maple at Jackson – Gunn Old Growth Forest. *Photo: Gregor Beck*



Peter Carson thanking supporters at the unveiling of the Trout Creek Nature Reserve. *Photo: Cynthia Tosswill*



Ken McMullen thanking supporters at the formal dedication of the Arthur Langford Nature Reserve. *Photo: Gregor Beck*

Celebrating Our 25th Anniversary – With the Acquisition of Two New Nature Reserves!

We are delighted that our 25th anniversary year is starting out strong: we are thrilled to announce that our acquisition campaign to protect two significant woodlands in Norfolk County has been successful. The securement of the Hemlock Slough Forest and Sand Dune Ridge properties adds to LPBLT's existing network of protected natural areas another 45.9 hectares (113.4 acres) of unique and rare habitats in southwestern Ontario.

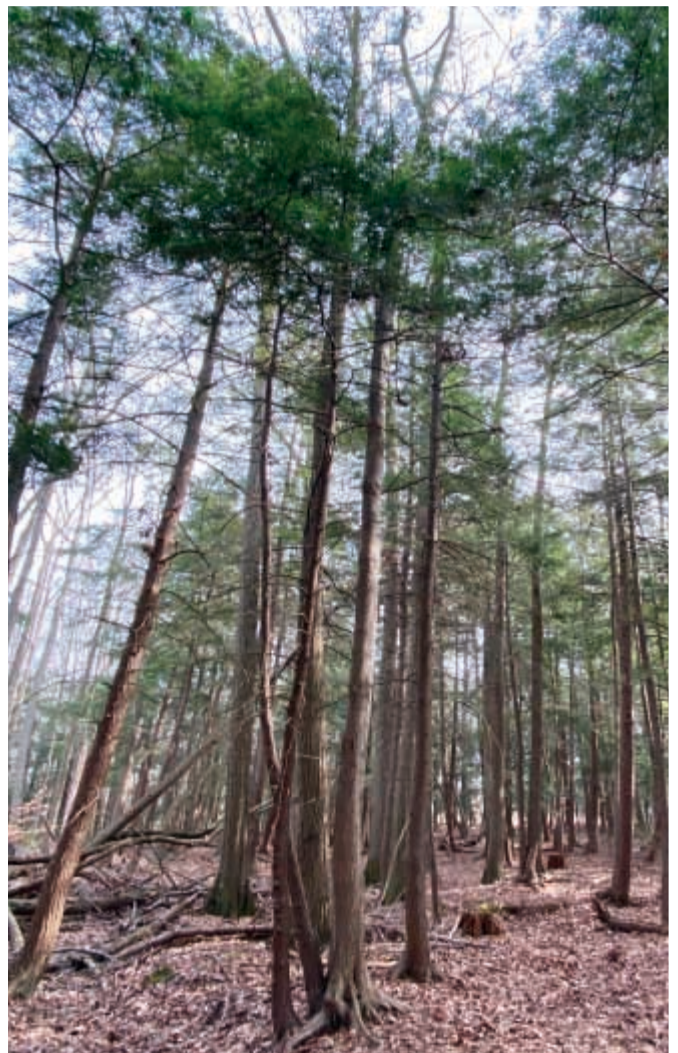
The Hammond Hemlock Slough Forest has been donated by Wallace C. Hammond in memory of George Hammond Jr. (1862-1938) who acquired the woodlot around the turn of the century, Lieutenant H. Lloyd Hammond (1895-1918) who gave his life in the First World War and Flying Officer Douglas W. Hammond (1921-1944) who gave his life in the Second World War. This woodlot will be managed as a lasting memorial to the Hammond Family of Woodhouse Township. Dominated by a super canopy of large, old oaks, and interspersed with a series of wetlands and sloughs, it is an important site for migrating and nesting birds near the north shore of Lake Erie. Sloughs are typically found locally on the Haldimand Clay Plain; the heavy impervious soils trap water in pools that allow for a variety of vegetation communities to develop in and around them. This is the largest property donated to LPBLT, and had the advantageous bonus of allowing us to leverage and access a significant amount of funding to protect a second property as part of a larger securement project. LPBLT would like to extend a very heartfelt thank you to Wallace Hammond as well as the Hammond and Landon families for honouring LPBLT with this gift and the honour of protecting this property in perpetuity as a lasting family legacy.

The second property allowed for an opportunity to protect and maintain connections to a considerable area of intact habitat with connectivity and natural linkages between large forest blocks to the west, south and north. The site contains mature wetland forest

populated with classic Carolinian species like Bitternut and Shagbark Hickory, and Tulip Tree as well as harbours vernal pools that support breeding Jefferson Salamanders. It is traversed with a high sand dune; the associated habitats, such as sand barrens, are rare (reduced by over 90% in southern Ontario) and are critical habitat for species of conservation concern such as Fern-leaved Yellow False-foxtail, Virginia Goat's-rue and Davis's Shieldback. Parts of the dune system have been restored with Black Oak, White Pine, a diverse mix of prairie grasses, Hoary Puccoon, and Butterfly Weed; however, to continue providing optimal habitat conditions for flora and fauna species it will need to be actively managed using controlled disturbances.

LPBLT operates in the heart of the Lake Erie Lowland ecoregion, which has recently been identified by the Nature Conservancy of Canada as a Crisis Ecoregion. This is due to it being ranked very high for biodiversity with many species at risk that only occur in this region of Canada while also being ranked very high for threats to conservation due to the limited natural cover remaining with few large intact blocks of natural habitat. Creating our eleventh and twelfth nature reserves, the two sites will add more diversity not only to LPBLT's protected acres but to the protected areas network within Ontario and Canada – landscapes which range from Lake Erie bluffs, to oak savanna, forested ravines, swamp forests, grasslands, old growth forest, and wetlands.

These properties were secured with the support of the Government of Ontario and Ontario Land Trust Alliance, through the Greenlands Conservation Partnership. Generous contributions from Pano Cap, the James N. Allan Family Foundation, Echo Foundation, and the Norfolk Field Naturalists along with numerous individual supporters, was critical to the success of the acquisition and protection of the two sites. Thank you for being a part of our community!



Top left: Aeolian sand dune ridge running east-west across the Sand Dune Ridge property with natural sand barrens and some ecological restoration work.

Top right: Swamp Forest with water in spring and early summer that provides important habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

Bottom left: Small forested pools with sphagnum hummocks framed by Cinnamon and Royal Ferns.

Bottom right: Older growth super-canopy forest at The Hammond Hemlock Slough Reserve.

Photos: Mary Gartshore

[The Greenlands Conservation Partnership](#) will see up to a total of \$50 million invested over four years, the \$20 million the Ontario government is investing, with another \$30 million invested from non-provincial sources, such as individual donations and foundation support through the NCC and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, and other levels of government. The funding secures land to conserve ecologically important natural areas and protect wetlands, grasslands and forests that help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Tulip Tree

Liriodendron tulipifera

These are some of the words used to describe the Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*).

Perhaps because it is uncommon, being at the northern edge of its range in Southern Ontario's Carolinian zone, many consider it a special tree.

And it *is* a special tree!

One of the largest hardwood trees in eastern North America, it has been known to reach heights of 190 feet (58m). It is a fast grower and shade intolerant, but can become a supercanopy giant, and live for as long as 500 years.

The distinctive leaves are a unusual four-lobed shape which identify the tree easily – if you can see them. Mature forest-grown trees may rise 60 feet (18m) to the first branches.

Being a member of the Magnolia family, it is not surprising that the tree bears yellow-green cup-shaped flowers which are striped like a tulip. These first appear when the tree reaches 15 to 20 years of age. The fertilized flowers produce a cluster of winged seeds which are dispersed by the wind.

The wood of the Tulip Tree is light- coloured and soft. It was used historically in the Eastern United States as the source for many dugout canoes, thus the tree was sometimes called canoewood in the

Appalachian Region. Other names attached to the tree include Tulip Poplar, Yellow Poplar, Whitewood, and Fiddle Tree – some saw that instrument echoed in the shape of the leaves.

There are at least 28 species of moths using Tulip Trees as a food source; chief among these is the spectacular Tuliptree silkmoth (*Callosamia angulifera*) whose larva feeds on tulip tree leaves. Also munching away is the caterpillar of the camouflaged Tulip-Tree Beauty (*Epimecis hortaria*).

The Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly also uses the tulip tree as a host for its eggs.

The next time you spot those unique leaves on a specimen tree planted on a town street, or growing naturally in a mixed hardwood forest, take a moment to appreciate one of our biological delights.

The leaf of the Tulip tree was chosen as part of the logo of the Long Point Basin Land Trust because of its symbolic connection to the Carolinian Region where we focus our conservation efforts.



Caterpillars of Tulip-tree Silk Moth.

Female Tulip-tree Silk Moth (*Callosamia angulifera*).

Photos: Mary Gartshore

**Unique.
Rare.
Distinctive.**

Ecological Restoration Work in Trout Creek Nature Reserve.

TROUT CREEK is a 193-acre nature reserve acquired by Long Point Basin Land Trust in 2019 from the Miller family of Barrie, Ontario. Murray and Leslie Miller and family generously donated a partial gift of this property as part of the acquisition.

The original habitat on this property was dominated by Black and Hill's Oak and was over-planted with commercial conifer stock as early as the 1940s. Most of the planted conifers have been harvested in the past, but a few scattered stands of non-native conifers such as Scots Pine remain. Many oaks, including large trees, still occur in this nature reserve. When commercial timber harvest takes place, regeneration of Red Maple creates a humid environment in the forest called mesophication. Red Maples block sunlight, make deep, peat-like humus in the root zone and seed profusely. This process reduces diversity and complexity of the forest structure such that oak species, ground flora, and drier savanna species disappear. Furthermore, Red Maple supports less than half the moth species that oaks support, and therefore fewer songbirds. Songbirds require caterpillars to feed their young during the summer breeding season. Fire plays an important part in retaining oak dominated ecosystems. Red Maple is sensitive to fire

because it is unable to regenerate from below the root collar when charred by fire. For now, we are using techniques other than fire to increase oak dominance.

To restore a diverse oak woodland – oak savanna habitat, non-native conifers are being harvested in winter to minimize disturbance. We are using a targeted herbicide treatment to reduce the Red Maple population. We are also removing invasive plants such as European Euonymus, Tartarian Honeysuckle, and Black Locust. This will allow oak savanna species such as New Jersey Tea, Carolina Rose, Arrow-leaved Violet, Round-headed Bushclover, Big Bluestem, Butterflyweed and Rock Rose to increase. Suppressed young oaks will be able to grow again. Through this management more habitat will be created for Eastern Whip-poor-will, Eastern Hognose Snake and other oak-dependent species. Some pines will be left as snags to benefit woodpeckers and other hole-nesting species. The old growth White Pines along the Trout Creek ravine will remain as part of the original forest. Management to restore natural features takes place in winter to minimize negative impacts on wildlife and groundcover.

References

The fire-oak literature of eastern North America: synthesis and guidelines.

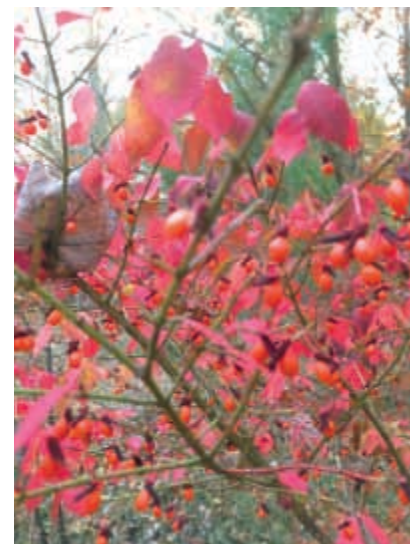
<https://doi.org/10.2737/NRS-GTR-35>



Trees are cut, limbed and cut to length in a single operation. Soil disturbance is minimized by using pine limbs as a travel corridor.

Exotic invasive shrubs like this European Burning Bush are removed to increase natural vegetation.

Photos: Mary Gartshore



Help Us Grow

The past quarter century saw the Long Point Basin Land Trust grow from just an idea, to a growing force in conservation in the Long Point Basin – protecting and stewarding twelve nature reserves protecting over 784 acres of ecologically significant land.

We have relied on our generous supporters and donors every step of the way.
Whether long-term or recent, we are grateful to all.

As we continue to seek new opportunities for conserving land and nature,
we ask that you help us on this exciting journey.

Support us by donating any amount through our website,
leaving a legacy through estate planning, or donating land.

**Protect Your Land.
Preserve Your Legacy.**

LONG POINT BASIN
LAND TRUST

P.O. Box 468
Port Rowan, ON
N0E 1M0
(519) 586-8309
general@longpointlandtrust.ca

LPBLT Supporters

25 YEARS

We would like to thank the many individuals who have generously supported LPBLT's acquisition of nature reserves, on-going stewardship efforts, and outreach programs.

We would also like to thank the following foundations and agencies for their support of our conservation projects:

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario