



Friends of the Sanctuary Newsletter



www.friendsofthesanctuary.org

Working today to conserve for tomorrow

Volume 2023, Issue 1

January 2023

A note from the President

Ross Miller

We are well into winter. Seasons seem to fly by. Any season is great to enjoy the Sanctuary and seen the changes from season to season.

Kids Nature Zone on September 24th was a great success. It was a beautiful day and well attended. Lots of fun and learning was had by all.

We were very busy This past autumn with our blue heron trail revitalisation. We are making excellent progress. You should checkout our Facebook page for pictures of the progress being made. Thanks to all who have volunteered to put in some hard work, believe me it is, and time. Thanks to the SLPC staff who have been there with us working on the trail. I cannot express how much FOS appreciates the vision and direction of board member Rick Blanchard on this project.

We are well into our winter program which started January 7th, 2023 and runs till the end of March.

We have again had some changes on our Board of Directors. Lyane St-George has decided to step down from the board. Her contributions to FOS over her years with us are greatly appreciated. I would also like to welcome John Lester to the Board. You may have seen John's photography around SDG.

I would like to remind all our members that our board meetings are open to you. We welcome you to attend. Our meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Visitor Centre. Start time is 18:30.

We look forward to seeing you on trails.

The Perfect Gift Idea

If you are looking for the perfect gift for that Nature/outdoors lover, then consider a membership in the Friends of the Sanctuary.

Becoming a member supports the FOS in its efforts to preserve the Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary as well as enabling many of the programs and activities offered by the Friends.

As a member you also receive discounts on ski and snowshoe rentals during our winter program.

Gift Certificates

Gift Certificates are an excellent alternative gift idea for that hard to buy for nature lover. They can be used to purchase FOS merchandise, a membership, or activity fees.

They are available for any amount and easy to obtain by contacting treasurer@friendsofthesanctuary.org



What's been happening at the Sanctuary.....

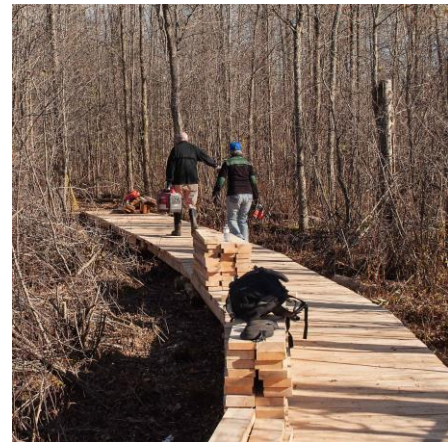
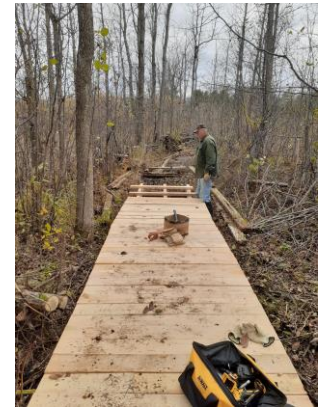
Heron Trail Revitalization

Work on the project re-started on October 17th and continued feverishly by volunteers and SLPC staff until it was wrapped up for the winter on November 16th. After hundreds of hours of heavy labour spent dismantling the old boardwalk, hauling away the scrap, carrying in new material, cutting, fitting and hammering stringers and boardwalk, and not to mention managing the project and volunteer workforce, we were pleased to call an end for this season, proud to note that the trail cribs, stringers, and decking completed thus far almost reach the main water crossing.

When work resumes in the spring, the project will still need approximately another 15 sets of three stringers to complete the section crossing the water and then a few more for a short section on the other side. Just a couple more weeks next spring should do it. Once this is completed, there will still remain a lot labour and materials for railings, edging, and a viewing platform, but most of that work can safely be completed from the new deck surface.

Our Project Manager, Rick Blanchard, feels it may not be too far-fetched to hope the new trail could be opened by summer of 2023.

He expressed his sincere thanks to all the volunteers including Friends of the Sanctuary, and our other supporters who came out several times to lend a hand. The SLPC also deserves a lot of credit for their workers and especially Mike Pratt, Operations Assistant Manager. The project isn't nearly done, but happily we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.



What's been happening....continued

Kids Nature Zone

Marie Schuler

On September 24th we had a beautiful day shared with 100 children and their families at Kids Nature Zone. Children could take part in learning activities about animals getting ready for winter; hibernation, migration and adaptation. This free event had booths about Monarchs migrating, identifying animal tracks, making a birdfeeder, and going on a story walk, where one could read a story spread out along the Red Wing Trail. Refreshments were available. Congratulations to Mason (aged 6) and Rosie (aged 10) who were the winners of gift bags full of posters and games.



Highway Clean-up

Enjoying the beautiful fall weather, 8 volunteers cleaned up County Road 2, the 2 km in front of the sanctuary on October 22, collecting 12 or 14 bags of garbage from the roadside. Thanks to Ross, Sam, Carol, Kathleen, John, Jane, Phil and Rachel.



Christmas Craft Day

November 26th and 27th were Christmas Craft Days at the Sanctuary with dozens of children enjoyed designing their own unique Christmas ornaments and bird feeders. Sunday, we welcomed adults who stencilled an outdoor sign and dressed it up with a greenery arrangement. Lots of fun was had by all. Thanks to all the volunteers!



Winter Program 2023

We are well into our program, where we rent out cross-country skis and snowshoes so that people can enjoy the trails at the Sanctuary all year round. When there is a significant snowfall, the ski trails will be groomed and track set. Of course, if you have your own equipment, or want to walk, the trails are open and free of charge to everyone. Just a reminder that dogs are not permitted in the Sanctuary, though you can walk them on-leash on the Waterfront trail (bike path).

The Visitors 'Centre is open from noon to 4 every Saturday and Sunday from January until the end of March to rent skis and to warm up. We scheduled 3 Moonlight Ski/Snowshoe Events on Saturday evenings January 7th, February 4th and March 4th starting at 7:00. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate for January 7th. On February 4th, we were able to have our moonlight ski. Despite concern about the bitter cold in the days before, weather cooperated. We had 11 plus skiers and snowshoers come out and enjoy the evening and our new fire pit. Your next chance to enjoy this will be March 4th. Fingers crossed for good weather and snow. This is a chance to try an escorted ski in the moonlight, out to the ski shack and return to relax by a fire. If you have never been in the forest during a full moon, this is a truly magical experience you won't want to miss.

We will also be running special events on Family Day, Monday, February 20th and March Break, March 13-17th. Watch our Facebook page for updated information about these family-oriented events.

If the weather cooperates, we will plan some Learn-To- Ski days on some weekdays and weekends early in the season.

For those who love the Sanctuary and use it year-round, consider becoming a Friend. For a small fee you can help us maintain trails and run programs like this. Check out our Facebook page or our website for details. We also accept donations.

Nature at the Sanctuary

Hans van der Zweep

I set out today to check life and activity in the `Sanctuary` as I fully expected there would be a lot of preparations for winter going on. Everyone knows there is no day that `mother nature` has a day off! I headed up the `Blue Heron` trail where I knew there was construction going on and was amazed at the progress that has been made! The planking is at the water`s edge! Can hardly wait to get to the other side after so many years of `closed`! This revitalization of our trail system should prove very valuable in terms of taking walkers off the ski trails!

As it was a bright sunny 10 C I also walked the Redwing trail and found many chick-a-dees looking for handouts, often accompanied by white breasted nuthatches and Dark-eyed Juncos and then there were sparrows! White throated, white-crowned, song sparrows and a few swamp sparrows and best of all about a half dozen Fox sparrows! These large reddish sparrows were definitely on their way south! Along the board walk there were mallards, green winged teal and wood duck interspersed with Canada geese and 3 Great Egrets each sitting on a muskrat mound. Of course, there was other wildlife as well as evidenced by the appearance of chipmunks and several squirrel species along the trails and even a few late dragon flies!

Yours in our Autumnal Nature

Hans van der Zweep

Honouring a loved one...

Did you know that you can donate to the Friends in general, or for specific program like trail work, in memory of a loved one? "In Memory of" names are placed on the donation pillars at the Visitors Centre. For a donation of \$100 or more, you can have a 4X6 plaque with a name, dates, a message, or poem placed along the railing of the boardwalk.

"Where we have walked with a friend, a trail of memories remains."

Remembering a Friend...

Joan Wibberley

The Friends of the Sanctuary lost a valued member of our group to illness on November 27th, 2022. Her name was Joan Wibberley and she was a dream come true in a fledgling volunteer association. She committed to and was truly involved in all aspects of our group the moment she joined in 1996. She became a volunteer member, active from then on until her last few years.

Her career choices of Elementary Teacher and motherhood (She and hubby Jim had 4 children and they were all avid campers.) made her a perfect fit for the UCMBS because she could relate so well to the children and adults that visited our park. She taught them nature crafts, the art of being in nature and how to find nature's treasures in sky, water and forest in our beautiful Sanctuary surroundings.

Our beginning projects in 1996, included getting charitable status standing as a group and opening up ski trails and building a cabin in the woods. A committee was formed with Joan and several other ski enthusiasts. Joan was off and running with her tireless efforts getting the St Lawrence Parks more involved and rousing local community support. Soon, this dream became a wildly successful reality.

Winter is The Friends time to shine at the Sanctuary and for the next few years we were serving up winter programming for all ages. Again, Joan shone in this area as her teaching skills helped us set up craft classes, get volunteer staff, schedule regular programming and generally helping us set up a canteen and store that is still running today along with the skiing, crafts and other programs.

Every year until the last several years when we changed the venue, we held Christmas parties at the Sanctuary building for all members of FOS where Joan had such a good time arranging entertainment and lunch and she made us join in on the silliest games. but with her lead, we all had the great fun and lots of laughter.

Two things very dear to her heart were the Annual Nature and Wildlife Day and the Memory Lane project. She also was a founding member of the Memory Lane project, a memorial area around a little pond in a ring of trees planted there where memorial benches are placed with names of members who have passed on them.

Joan's contributions to the Friends and to the Sanctuary will be honoured and memorialised with a plaque on one of the viewing platforms on the boardwalk where we can remember her wonderful love of life, her sharing energy and her commitment to good works. We thank you Joan for all you gave to us and especially your spirit and love.



Joan and Jim at the Wine & Cheese



Joan & Friends receiving a donation to Get on Board
From Trans Canada



Joan being recognized by Guy Lauzon and Jim Brownell
On the opening of Memory Lane Trail

Kids Nature Zone

Go on a Snowflake Hunt!

Snowflakes come in an infinite number of shapes and sizes. No two snowflakes are alike. Each snowflake actually has its own distinctive shape. What they do share in common shape-wise are hexagonal, which means they have six sides. Why is this? This is because a snow crystal begins with the formation of a small hexagonal plate, and then, as the crystal grows larger during its journey to the surface of the earth, branches sprout from the six corners. The chart here (<http://www.snowcrystals.com/guide/guide/html>) lists 35 snowflake types, as seen under a magnifying lens.

How to capture snowflakes: one way to examine flakes is to catch them on black construction paper or felted board and look at them outdoors under a magnifying glass. You don't need anything fancy. Just a small magnifier about 5X will do. Try to catch the flakes as they fall. If they hit the ground, their shape will likely be destroyed. Here are a few snowflake activities to try at home:

1. Easy Large 3D Paper Bag Snowflakes ❄️ DIY ... – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtXIVsr8TBc>
(this craft requires 7 brown lunch bags, a glue stick and scissors)
2. Coffee Filter Snowflakes: <https://www.printablesfairy.com/coffee-filter-snowflakes/> (supplies for this craft include: coffee filter, markers, water and scissors)
3. Preserve a snow crystal in resin and you can share it with friends and family – your very own personal snowflake fossil. You will need a few inexpensive supplies:

A tube or two of thin liquid superglue—not the gel type
Some glass microscope slides and cover slips
A small paintbrush, the smaller the better.
A piece of dark cardboard or dark cloth.

Take all these items outside so they get cold, but away from falling snow—for example in an unheated garage. When snow is falling, let some crystals land on the cardboard and have a look at what nature is providing. When you see an outstanding crystal, gently pick it up with the paintbrush (it's easier than it sounds) and place it on a clean glass slide. Carefully add a good-sized drop of cold superglue right on top of the crystal, and place a cover slip on top of that.

You may trap an air bubble or two along with your snow crystal; that's okay.

All this has to be done outside in the cold. You have to be careful that heat from your hands doesn't melt the crystal, and even just breathing on your snowflake can be detrimental. If you find that the crystals are melting no matter what you do, then you may just have to wait for a colder day. Handling snowflakes is generally easier in colder conditions; it can be downright frustrating when the temperature is just below freezing.

Finally, let the glue harden while it remains at sub-freezing temperatures, which may take up to a week. If the weather is going to stay cold, you can leave your slides outside in a sheltered spot. If not, pop them in your kitchen freezer.

Once the glue hardens, the slides can be brought to room temperature. Your fossilized snowflakes, like insects trapped in amber, should last indefinitely.

Memberships

During the year, we have had many new members join our organization. We have also received many donations from individuals who appreciate the many activities and events offered by the Friends. Thank you so much for your support and interest in our mission at the bird sanctuary.

Memberships help fund the volunteer initiatives that we take on, including the winter program, March break activities, and other nature events held throughout the year.

If you would like to become a member or renew a past membership, then please fill out a membership form online at www.friendsofthesanctuary.org or in person at the Visitor Centre on weekends.

Members get a reduced price on equipment rentals and receive our newsletter in their inbox!

Memberships expire on March 31st each year and can be purchased/renewed in person at the visitor center, e-transferred to treasurer@friendsofthesanctuary.org or mailed to us by cash or cheque at 5589 Parlow Rd., Iroquois, ON K0E 1K0

The membership rates for the 2022-2023 season are listed below. Members will receive a membership card and a charitable tax receipt. Please remember for family memberships to include all the names and whether child, teen, or adult.

Youth.....	\$10.00
Senior.....	\$10.00
Individual.....	\$15.00
Family.....	\$25.00
Corporate.....	\$100.00

FOS on the WEB and Facebook

To find information about us please visit our web page at <https://www.friendsofthesanctuary.org>

You can also keep up with us on Facebook. Just search **Friends of the Sanctuary** to find us. You will find notices about our current activities and updates on trail conditions among other things.

Please like us on our Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Sanctuary-414036970680/77>

Search for **Friends of the Sanctuary**

Contact Us:

The Friends of the Sanctuary
c/o The Treasurer
5589 Parlow Rd.
Iroquois, Ontario
Canada
K0E 1K0

President: Ross Miller

president@friendsofthesanctuary.org

Membership: membership@friendsofthesanctuary.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Sanctuary-414036970680/>

Web Page: <http://www.friendsofthesanctuary.org>

Newsletter: info@friendsofthesanctuary.org

Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Visitor Centre: 613-537-2024