

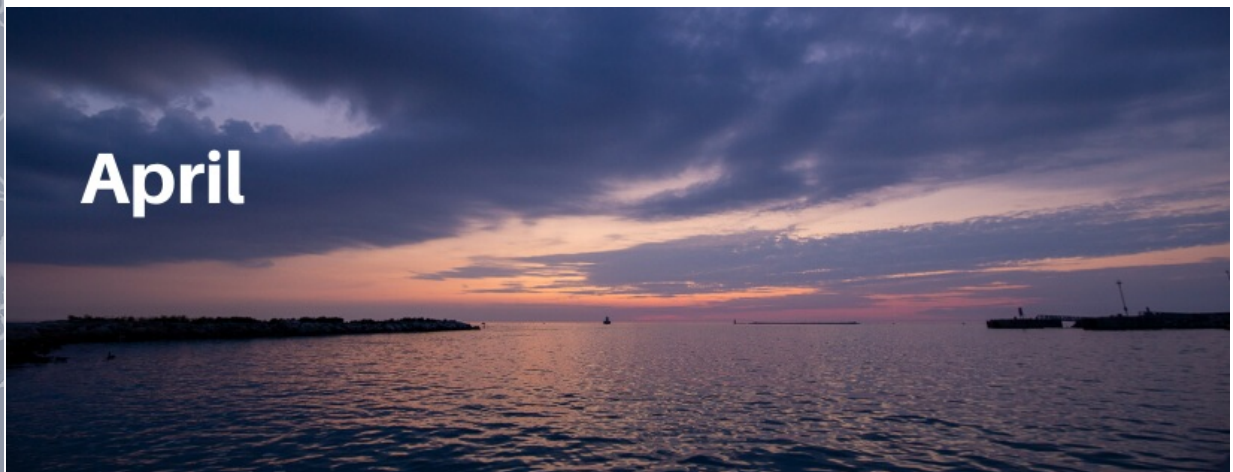


The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation

'THE VOICE FOR LAKE HURON'

"For whatever we lose, it's always our self
we find in the sea."

- E.E. Cummings



DONATE TODAY!

Our office is now closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The best way to reach staff
at the Coastal Centre for the time being is through e-mail at:
coastalcentre@lakehuron.ca

POSTPONED: 'Is the Coast Clear?' Lake Huron Conference

We know this is a time of uncertainty for us all and it's important we all take steps to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and our wider communities safe. For this reason, we have made the difficult but necessary decision to postpone the conference to **September 2-3, 2020**.

'Is the Coast Clear?' Lake Huron Conference is solely organized by the Coastal Centre, a registered charity that provides shoreline communities, municipalities, cottage owners, and youth science-based tools and resources to responsibly restore, protect and enjoy Lake Huron and its coastal ecosystems. 'Is the Coast Clear?' is the single most important fundraiser for the Coastal Centre. The funds we raise from the Conference are critical to our organization's ability to continue programs that ensure a brighter future for our coastal communities. These programs provide meaningful opportunities for people along Lake Huron's coastline to work side-by-side to protect and restore fragile coastal ecosystems and waters that we all rely on and enjoy.



And so we ask that if you are able, you choose to attend the conference on September 2-3. If you are not able to attend these new dates, please consider making a donation to the Coastal Centre to . Charitable receipts will be issued for donations.

We have one more big ask of you:

Our silent auction contributors are artists and curators who run small businesses and our favourite Ontario attractions. Now more than ever these businesses can use your support. When looking for a gift for a loved one or your next night out once this things passes, we ask that you choose to support these community-minded companies:

- [Paul The Maker](#)
- [Wuerth's Shoes](#)
- [Vortex Canada](#)
- [Art Gallery on Ontario](#)
- [Unalune](#)
- [Ripley's Aquarium of Canada](#)
- [Left Field Brewery](#)
- [Backwood Design Co.](#)

- [Grey Owl Paddles](#)
- [The Hive Georgian Bay](#)
- [Niagara Parks](#)
- [Jenna Bowler-Cooke](#)
- [Hockey Hall of Fame](#)
- [Filtrol](#)
- [Southampton Tennis Club](#)

We'd also like to take another opportunity to thank our sponsors. When news broke of the necessary decision to postpone, each company's sole concern was for the well-being of our community. We are so grateful for their ongoing support at this unprecedented time.

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DES DÉCHETS
NUCLÉAIRES

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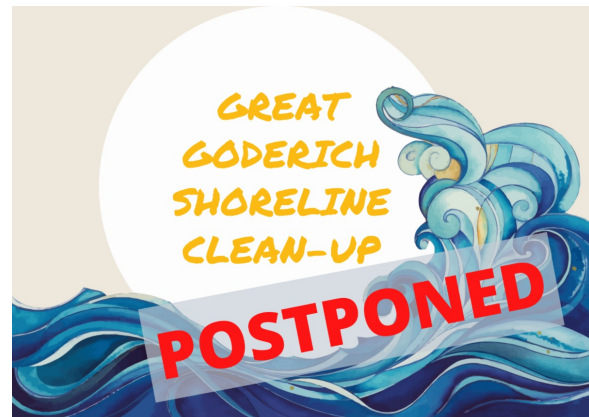
BRONZE



POSTPONED: Great Goderich Shoreline Clean-up

As one of our biggest, longest running events of the year, because of the current situation and protocols to social distance, we will be postponing the event until later this summer (Date TBD).

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our generous sponsors, C.R. Plastic Products, the Goderich Print Shop, the Rotary Club of Goderich, the Goderich Port Authority, John Hindmarsh Environmental Trust Fund, Dr. Jim and Barbara Hollingworth, Zehrs Goderich, and the Canadian Power and Sail Squadron.



To find out more about this clean-up, and all of our annual clean-ups, please check out our website at www.lakehuron.ca/cleanups

There's Still Time to Become a Coast Watcher!

COVID-19 Update: If the proper precautions are taken, Coast Watchers citizen scientists will be able to safely enjoy time outdoors while contributing valuable coastal data. All training will now occur online. We hope that taking some time outside near the Lake listening to sounds of soothing waves can help alleviate some of the stress you may be feeling at this time. We ask that volunteers comply with the health and safety measures as required by our government to keep safe:

- Limit human contact by monitoring alone or with a member of your household,
- Wash your hands with soap when you leave and return home,

- If you've been exposed to the virus or are not feeling well, please stay home.



Entering its 15th monitoring season, the Coast Watchers Citizen Science Program is looking for volunteers to monitor a section of Lake Huron's coast once per week from May until October.

As a citizen scientist, you will contribute many valuable observations and scientific measurements to our long term data set which allows our coastal biologists to analyse changes over time. Changes include when the first algae bloom is recorded, how many plastic-washups we had across the coast, and when the peak lake temperature occurred in the nearshore waters.

You can make a difference in monitoring Lake Huron's shoreline! No experience necessary. **Online training is available. E-mail coastwatchers@lakehuron.ca.**

Perks of being a Coast Watcher volunteer include access to our coastal science webinars, discounts to many Coastal Centre events such as the upcoming 'Is the Coast Clear' Conference, and more! More information about the program including past annual reports can be found at www.lakehuron.ca/coastwatchers.

The 'HIPPO' in the Room

Let's begin our journey with an overview of the threats to biodiversity along the Lake Huron coast. Threats to both animal and plant biodiversity can be described through the acronym 'HIPPO'.



Habitat Loss - Habitat loss, alteration and fragmentation directly affect the species that rely on the habitat that is being changed. Shoreline and urban development, agriculture and various recreational activities in ecologically sensitive parts of the lakeshore has caused, and continues to cause, loss of habitat along Lake Huron. Lake Huron coastal ecosystems, including coastal meadow marshes, dune grasslands, bluff and alvars are among the rarest

environments in Ontario, with an abundance of rare and 'at risk' species.

Invasive species. Invasive species are harmful non-native species whose introduction or spread threatens our local environment, the economy and society, including human health. Invasive species originate from other continents, adjacent countries or from other ecosystems within Canada. We're all familiar with Lake Huron aquatic invaders like Zebra Mussels and their cousin the Quagga Mussel. On the land, invasive plants like Common Reed and Garlic Mustard can alter ecosystems, overtaking or affecting the growth of native plants. In our forests, Garlic Mustard is outcompeting Ontario's provincial flower – the Trillium. Along our shorelines, Common Reed, or also known as Phragmites, is choking out native shoreline vegetation. Many of these species have no natural predator or way of controlling their growth, making them dominate the landscape and the waters of our lake.

Pollution – Loss of forest and wetland ecosystems that help to filter surface water pollutants from over fertilization, improper use

of pesticides, and soil erosion, leads to impairments in the quality of our lake water. In many cases, our rivers and streams are not sufficiently buffered by vegetation to filter many of the pollutants being drained off our land. The more we clear our remaining natural areas, the easier we make it for pollutants to reach our beaches. Lake Huron, being the largest of these waterways, should have the widest vegetated buffer zone along the shoreline. In too many locations and in too many examples, it is the narrowest.



Population Growth – As Ontario's population grows (currently at 14 million), more and more of that population are attracted to beaches during summer, and some even becoming permanent residency. Bruce County, for example has 1/3 of its population residing along the shoreline in the communities of Kincardine and Saugeen Shores. Some of the most sensitive coastal habitats that we have (e.g. wetlands, dunes, alvars, bluffs) can simply not handle the intensity of use. We have not managed our shorelines very well to be able to accommodate more people while at the same time protecting coastal habitats and the ecosystem services that they provide. But more and more of our communities are realizing the wisdom of becoming resilient and adopting better management practices.



Over-consumption or unsustainable use. Over-consumption is what our society has been doing for the past several decades. Our over-use of plastic and other oil-based products have led to the current reliance on our carbon based economy. Over extraction of our resources and the harvest of species at a rate higher than can be sustained by the natural reproduction of the population has become common. Along Lake Huron, for example, poaching of

species like the Spotted Turtle for the pet trade has led to them being listed as endangered. It's an illegal practice, but it still happens. Stories in our local newspapers as recent as 2018 have documented turtle smugglers across the Ontario / Michigan border. In fact, as of 2020, all 7 of Lake Huron's turtles are considered species at risk.

Knowing the threats to biodiversity is half the battle in protecting the ecological integrity of our coast. Through wise investment in coastal conservation measures, these threats can be managed. Let your politicians, public servants, friends and neighbours know how important the quality of our coastal ecosystems is, and why we need action on this issue. Biodiversity conservation will help improve water quality, protect rare and at risk species, and make our coast more resilient to a changing climate.

[Originally authored by Geoff Peach April 2010, and has been updated by Coastal Centre staff (Pat Donnelly and Samantha Ventura) and Cheryl Peach]

Springtime is Bird Migration Season!

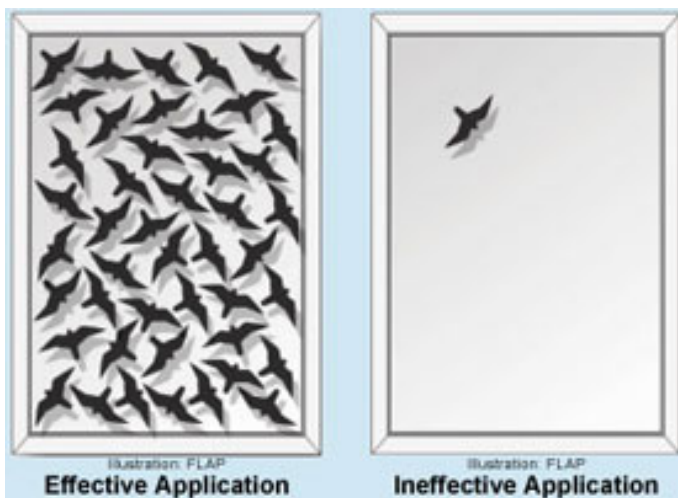
The Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory conducts an annual migration monitoring project at Cabot Head, and if 2020 is anything like the past few years we have quite the exciting couple of months coming up for birders. In the [2018 report](#) researchers observed 160 species use the Bruce Peninsula between the end of May and the beginning

of June. The most common species being the Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Redstart, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. During the peak of the season up to 130 birds and 79 species could be seen in a single day. "Waterfowl migration through the Great Lakes region typically peaks in March and April" and "May is usually the busiest and certainly most diverse month for spring migration" are some key months from the report to mark on your calendar.



Why is this such a hot spot for birds?

This is the time of year when migratory birds are returning north from their southern winter vacations. The shores of Lake Huron are a part of a flyway corridor for many bird species, as they use the wind build up over lakes to ease their flight and rely on coastal ecosystems for habitat, protection and food. Most birds time their migration to reach their favourite food source, right as it is beginning to bloom so they can have first access to the food, lowering the likelihood of competition. These birds also use the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin island as a natural highway to cross Lake Huron without having to fly directly over many kilometers of open water. [Misery Bay](#) is a major refueling point for the birds as they cross. Many bird species end their migration along the Lake Huron shore and begin nesting season. They rely on the coastal features to roost and settle in for breeding season.



Threats to migratory birds:

According to the report by the Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory, the numbers reported low stopover rates at Cabot Head. The 2018 season was the fifth lowest season since migration monitoring started in 2002. The cause of this could be related to the snowstorm in late April, or the high-water levels shrinking the available roosting space. With such a massive undertaking ahead of them, migratory birds are very

vulnerable to dramatic weather, which is becoming more common in our changing climate. Furthermore, the warming climate can often confuse migratory birds or force the plants to bloom too early, making them less optimal to feed on by the time the birds arrive. Other threats to migratory birds include exhaustion, starvation, disease, and collisions. You can help with these things by having bird feeders stocked year-round with nutritious food, prepping your birdbath and putting collision-prevention stickers on your window. (<https://www.thespruce.com/threats-to-migrating-birds-386307>).

For more information about migratory birds refer to the Bruce Peninsula Bird observatory website <http://bpbo.ca/>

Giant's Tomb and Kitchikewana

Across from [Awenda Provincial Park](#) sits [Giant's Tomb Island](#). Giant's Tomb located in Southern Georgian Bay has no permanent residents and measures approximately 5 km long and 2 km wide. Giant's Tomb is both geologically and biologically unique. Formed of glacial till, it is within the transitional area between the Precambrian bedrock of the

Canadian Shield and the sedimentary bedrock of Southern Ontario. The area is bounded to the north of the island by an active cobble beach. This diverse geology, along with the climate, leads to a connected diversity of vegetative types. (<https://www.gblt.org>)



Photograph of Giant's Tomb taken from Sawlog Bay on March 8, 2020.

Wyandot legend tells of a great warrior named Kitchikewana, who was large enough to guard the whole of Georgian Bay. He was a God to the Wendat Huron Nation of Georgian Bay. Kitchikewana fell in love with a princess named Wanakita. Heart-broken and enraged when Wanakita shied away from his marriage proposal, Kitchikewana grabbed a massive ball of earth and tossed it into the Great Lakes, thus creating the 30,000 Islands. According to the legend, the indentations made by his fingers formed the 5 bays of Georgian Bay (Midland Bay, Penetanguishene Bay, Hog Bay, Sturgeon Bay, and Matchedash Bay), while Giant's Tomb Island is the spot where Kitchikewana finally laid down to make his eternal rest. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgian_Bay)



In summer months, Giant's Tomb is a popular day-trip destination for boaters in the Southern Georgian Bay region. Visitors anchor or raft boats to enjoy a swim in the clear, shallow lake waters while lounging on the beautiful sandy beaches. The coastline of Giant's Tomb is lined with unique coastal plants and is home to many wildlife reptile species and shoreline birds. The coastal plants below were photographed on Giant's Tomb Island in July 2019.



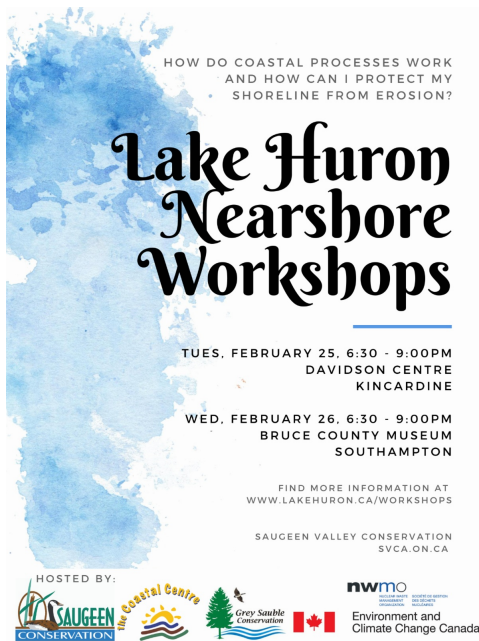
Beach Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*)



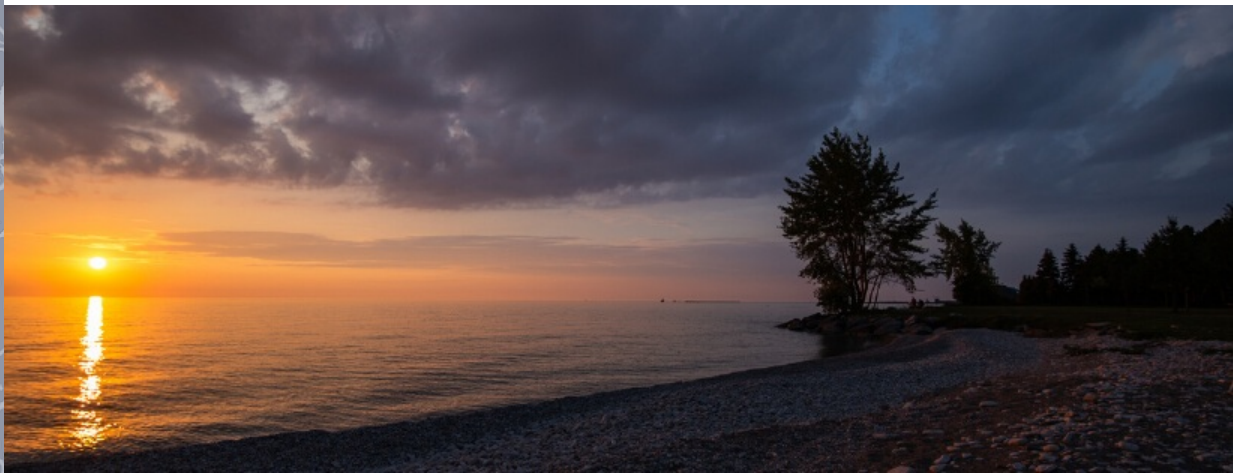
Field Wormwood (*Artemisia campestris*)

Giant's Tomb Island is only one of the many hidden gems on Lake Huron's Georgian Bay.

Workshop Recording Now Available



You can access the event recording through Saugeen Conservation's YouTube Channel [HERE](#)



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation supports environmental efforts along the Canadian coastline of Lake Huron. We foster communication and partnerships between environmental agencies and organizations, working towards a sustainable and resilient coast. We provide education, resources, and information on lake-wide issues and our programs reflect the inter-connectivity between land and water.

DONATE TODAY!

Follow our social media for updates about our upcoming events and some interesting quick facts about Lake Huron and its coastal ecosystems!

