



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation

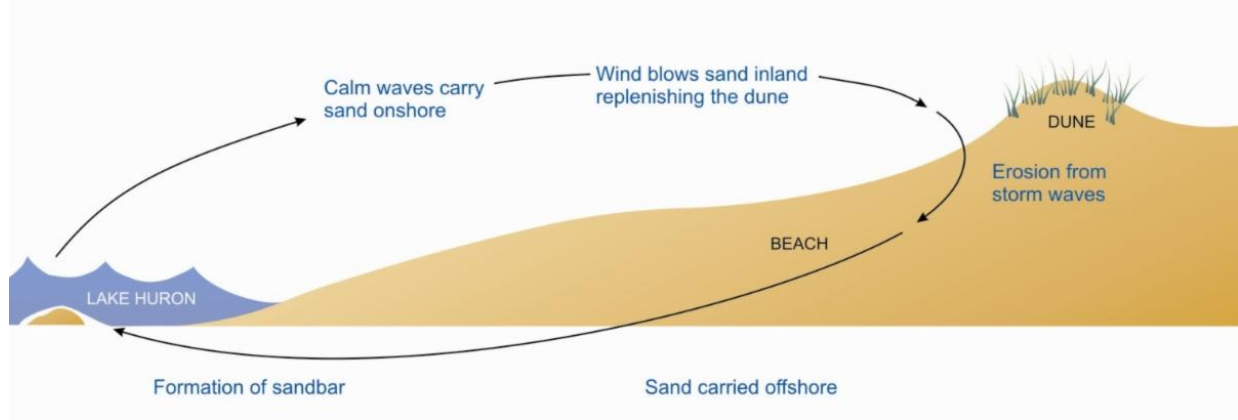


Hutten & Co. Land and Shore Donation: \$2,500 to Support the Green Ribbon Champion Project

Great Lake beaches and dunes are considered one of the **rarest and most fragile ecosystems in Canada**. The beach and dune ecosystem accounts for approximately **2-3%** of Lake Huron's shoreline, yet **supports a wide range of diverse plant and animal species**.

Healthy dunes help create our beloved sandy beaches that attract thousands of people to coastal towns every summer. Having a stable dune ecosystem is extremely economical for small coastal communities and mature dunes are **valued at \$3,000 CAD/linear meter based on the services it provides**.

Beaches are dependent on dunes for their supply of sand because sand is borrowed from dunes at times of low tide to protect from erosion. See the image below to better understand how beaches and dunes work together to supply sand:



Human activities along the Lake Huron shoreline, such as the use of motorized vehicles, has harmed beach and dune ecosystems. Green Ribbon Champion is our coastal stewardship and education program that aims to **preserve, protect, and enhance coastal ecosystems through education and restoration.**

Hutten & Co

LAND and SHORE

Hutten & Co. Land and Shore understands the importance of beach and dune health. They have chosen to generously donate \$2,500 to the Green Ribbon Champion project. Here is a word from owner, Mark Hutten.

"At Hutten & Co. Land and Shore, we believe in natural beauty, and design refreshing outdoor spaces to make the most of it! Our spaces revolve around the stunning places near Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, and we are thrilled to support the Coastal Centre with their efforts in preserving and promoting healthy, sustainable shores. Together we can protect and share this beautiful resource we're proud to call home!"

-Mark Hutten owner of Hutten & Co. Land and Shore.

This donation will be used for important restoration work conducted by the Green Ribbon Champion program. In 2020, 70 incredible volunteers restored 18 sites along Lake Huron. This involved planting 1600 Native Marram Grass, removal of invasive species such as the Spotted Knapweed and the Sweet White Clover, and installation of dune fencing. We will continue restoration work in 2021 with the help of generous donors like Hutten & Co. Land and Shore!



Beaches and Dunes

A Critical Habitat for Species at Risk on Lake Huron

Protecting species at risk and their habitat is essential to protecting the **biodiversity** of Lake Huron. The dune ecosystem on the Lake Huron shoreline serves as a safe haven for the Monarch Butterfly, Piping Plover, and Pitchers Thistle. **Dune ecosystems house the global population of Pitchers Thistle along the Great Lake basin.** These same dunes provide a critical habitat for the Piping Plover and the Monarch Butterfly. Additionally, these **species at risk rely on dune ecosystems as important stopping grounds on their migratory journeys and provide connectivity for other wildlife.** When coastal dune ecosystems are put at risk, **we are not giving these species a fighting chance.**



This is what **YOU** can do to help dune ecosystems that provide critical habitats for species along Lake Huron:

- Avoid removing or damaging dune vegetation. Roots prevent sand erosion and hold the dune in place during times of strong weather or erosion
- When accessing beaches, use an already established pathway
- Do not use motorized vehicles on beaches. It can instantly destroy an ecosystem that took years to develop.
- Limit beach grooming to once a season if it is necessary.
- Donate your time or resources to the Green Ribbon Champion program

Click the button below to learn more about the importance of Lake Huron's dune ecosystem.

Learn More About Dune and Beach Health on Lake Huron

Make a donation to "dune conservation" by following the link below. If Covid-19 restrictions allow, you can also volunteer for our 2021 Green Ribbon Champion program by choosing "dune restoration and invasive species management" on our registration form!

Donate to
GRC

Volunteer
Registration

Species at Risk on Lake Huron

Monarch Butterfly, Piping Plover, and Pitchers Thistle

Monarch Butterfly

In recent years North American Monarch populations have been in steep decline. The Monarch Butterfly is used as an international symbol of conservation and nature; but **degradation of overwintering habitat, climate change, use of herbicides/insecticides, and invasive plant species have put this species at risk.**

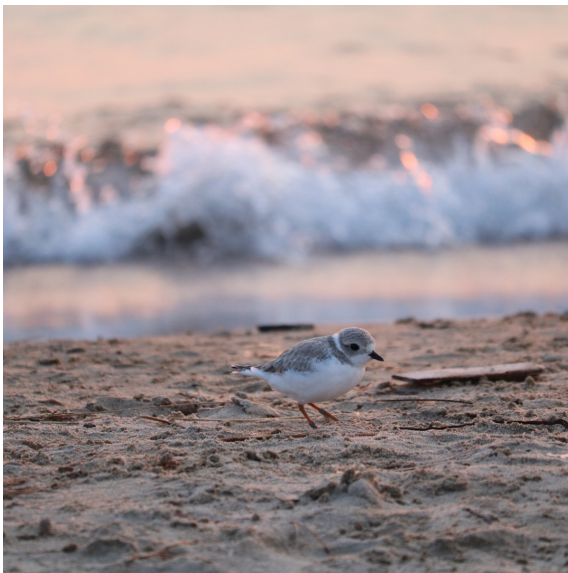


Monarchs access to Milkweed has also dramatically impacted the survival rate of the species. Milkweed is non-resistant to the herbicides and insecticides used on crop fields, lawns, and gardens. Monarchs feed solely on Milkweed in the larvae and caterpillar stages; it is also the only plants where Monarchs can lay their eggs successfully.

This is what **YOU** can do to help the Monarch Butterfly:

- Plant native Milkweed ([how to grow Milkweed for Monarchs](#))
- Avoid using insecticides and herbicides on your lawns and gardens,
- Report Monarch sightings (including eggs, larvae, and caterpillars), as well as milkweed sightings, on the [Mission Monarch Website](#).

Learn More About the Monarch Butterfly



Piping Plover

Ah yes, the Piping Plover. The Great Lakes sand dunes and beach ecosystems provide a critical habitat for the famous Piping Plover. **The removal of vegetation, beach development, and recreational activities are forcing Piping Plovers away from their homes.** Plovers rely on Lake Huron's sand dunes to hatch their young, forage for food, and as a stop over location during their yearly migration to Florida. Piping Plovers become

scared very easily. Any disturbance can cause them to abandon their habitats.

This is what **YOU** can do to help the Piping Plover:

- Do not use motorized vehicles on beaches, this can immediately destroy Plover habitat that takes years to establish,
- If you see a Piping Plover keep your distance. Plovers can easily be

scared away from their nests,

- Keep dogs on a leash,
- Avoid raking natural beach debris that Plovers use to make nests,
- Take all garbage and food with you are your beach visit. This attracts predators that could eat Plover eggs and chicks.

Learn More About the Piping
Plover

Pitchers Thistle

Pitchers Thistle grows in windblown sandy habitats, which makes the Lake Huron's coastal sand dune ecosystem a perfect growing place this plant. The Pitchers Thistle has a special relationship to windy lake habitats. When the plant is disturbed by wind it buries into the ground which helps establish a root system. Its roots are part of the native vegetation that grows in dune ecosystems. Having an established root system on dunes limits sand erosion and helps dunes stabilize into the ground.



This is what **YOU** can do to help the Pitchers Thistle:

- Do not landscape over Pitcher Thistle habitat,
- Do not use ATV's on beaches ,
- Look out for and remove invasive dune species,
- Plant pollinating flowers,
- Volunteer for The Coastal Centre as a Green Ribbon Champion.

Learn More About the Pitchers
Thistle

Coast Watchers

As with most environmental programs during the Covid-19 pandemic, our Coast Watchers Citizen Science monitoring program had to adapt. In-person training was successfully transferred to an online format, and in some cases monitoring was temporarily stopped to adhere to public beach closures and comply with Ontario regulations. Even so, we were able to collect important data about Lake Huron.

We want to send a huge thank-you to the 94 dedicated volunteers who have become the eyes and ears of Lake Huron's coast, even during these tough

times. With their help we are able to monitor and track atmospheric conditions, wildlife events, algae events, and garbage and plastic wash-ups among others! We receive photos to help visualize what is changing along the shore and now we want to share some of them with you!

Below you'll find a "before" and "after" photo of Coast Watcher 128's staircase in May 2020, and again in October 2020-- that's 6 months apart! High water levels over the last two years have been putting our coastal infrastructure to test.



Wildlife reports included bird species such as spotted sandpipers (*Actitis macularius*), Red-necked Grebes (*Podiceps grisegena*). Coast Watcher 190 had some company while monitoring from a mature Common Watersnake (*Nerodia sipedon*) pictured below. If you are interested in learning more about these excellent swimmers click [here](#). Fossilized stone corals were another interesting find captured by Coast Watcher 165 on the shores of Lake Huron (pictured below).



What goes up, must come down! Balloons released by accident or intentionally pose a threat to wildlife and the quality of land and water. They are mistaken as food and cause entanglement. Many coast watchers found balloon garbage along the Lake Huron shoreline in addition to the usual suspects (photos below). Some ways one can help include shoreline clean-ups, disposing of used balloons properly, and finding fun alternative ways to celebrate without balloons!



This program would not be possible without the generous financial support from Bruce Power and our donors. We thank-you for making this program possible, and look forward to what 2021 will bring!



Call for Volunteers!

The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation is always looking for helping hands with our Coast Watchers Citizen Science Program! Simply choose your favourite area on Lake Huron's coast to monitor **once per week** from **May until October**.

As a citizen scientist you will contribute observations and scientific measurements to our 16-year data set! Changes such as how many plastic wash-ups we had across the coast, when the peak lake temperature occurred in the nearshore waters.

You can make a difference in monitoring Lake Huron's shoreline! No experience necessary, training will occur in early April through online sessions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you would like to become a Coast Watcher let us know by e-mailing [here](#). More information about the program including past annual reports can be found at this [link](#).



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation is a registered charity founded in 1998 with the goals of protecting and restoring Lake Huron's coastal environment. We are the voice for Lake Huron.

DONATE TODAY!



www.lakehuron.ca