



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY
IROQUOIA CLUB

Winter 2025

"Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever."



Image: Kathrin König

Happy New Year Hikers!

Welcome to the first 2025 edition of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club Newsletter!

As the new year begins, so does the planning for new adventures. Are you waiting to get out on a new section of trail? Is there a club badge you're working towards this year? Maybe this is the year you want to get more involved in conservation projects along the Bruce Trail or become better acquainted with the different species of native flora and fauna. Have you tried Merlin yet, or dabbled in the world of iNaturalist? Each season has its own joys and challenges. The trails may be covered in snow or ice in the winter but, bare branches make this a great time for birding.

There are so many ways to enjoy the Bruce Trail and, whichever activity you decide on, we hope you take a moment to stop, take a deep breath and listen to the sounds around you. Here's to creating new memories in familiar or new places.

Here's what you'll find in this edition of our newsletter:

- [Fighting invasive species](#) - Restoring a healthy ecosystem
- [A job well done](#) - Accolades for volunteer accomplishments
- [Join our team](#) - Current volunteer opportunities
- [Become a citizen scientist](#) - Nature at your fingertips with iNaturalist
- [Trail Maintenance Updates](#) - Clean-up on aisle pond!
- [First Day Hike 2025](#) - An annual tradition come rain, sleet, snow, or shine
- [Call for nominations](#) - IBTC Awards submissions

Happy trails!
The Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club

It's recommended to [View this email in your browser](#)

Taking Steps Forward to go 'Back'

It has been a tough year for the ‘Invaders’. Having marched their way successfully through southern Ontario’s diverse ecosystems over many, many years, the BTC has been busy mounting its offense along the trail and associated lands. It is not news that natural habitats are increasingly under threat from invasive plant species or that these non-native plants outcompete indigenous flora, disrupt ecosystems and have economic and environmental impacts. Identifying and dealing with wide range of invasives however requires a long-term vision for returning the lands to their natural state with a multi-pronged approach encompassing education, eradication and restoration.

The IBTC and a committed group of its leaders have also been working on developing a longer-term vision and strategic plan that will ensure that our Ribbon of Wilderness is one that is as close to possible to one reflective of its indigenous state. This involves not only preserving what we have but re-creating what we have lost over the years. Restoration projects are key to this reclamation work – as is a vision focussed not only on conservation but rather one that goes beyond conserving what we still have to include a natural future more reflective of the bio-diversity of the past.

BTC is also increasing resources in restoration. 2024 has been a particularly active year for IBTC whether ISSP’s (Invasive Species Pull Parties) targeting Garlic Mustard, the removal of Japanese Knotwood on the Bruce Trail in Ancaster or collaborations with the Halton Conservation Authority in a multi-year phased program to eradicate several invasive vines (including Dog Strangling and Multi Flora Vines), the battle is truly in full swing. Long term programs informed by BTC Ecologists and Restoration Project Specialists are being implemented across BTC properties such as planting an assortment of wildflowers at the Fishers Pond prairie this spring and the development of an Indigenous Healing Garden at Smoky Hollow.

In addition, the Land Ambassador framework was modified in 2024 to increase their contributions to restoring and conserving the natural health of properties in BTC's care. Ambassadors also contributed to various education and awareness initiatives like the iNaturalist project. And as you lace up your boots for your next Bruce Trail adventure, see if you too, can join the offensive. Recognizing some of the invasive plant species as you step through the wilderness would be a solid step forward, such that over time, we can go 'back'. After all, Garlic Mustard is not a sauce!

The above offers just a small summary of the many projects that have been undertaken by our professionals, volunteers, community leaders and our everyday Bruce Trail hikers. If you'd like to be a conservation volunteer, contact the Club's Director of Land Stewards: archercynthiab@gmail.com.

As we enter the New Year, consider the Dish with One Spoon Wampum belt covenant, reflected in the Great Dish Treaty common rules: Only take what you need; Always leave something in the Dish for others; And keep the Dish clean (don't harm what it offers).

Written by: Tanneke H.



Phragmites fighters at Fisher Pond remove invasive reeds. Pictured here are trail ambassadors and BTC staff.



Grimsby venture scout group removing Garlic Mustard



Garlic mustard is a common invasive in the Iroquoia Section, particularly along the trail. Please make use of the booth brush stations to help reduce spread.

Submitted by Cynthia Archer - Director of Land Stewardship

Maintaining Safe Trails for All

There were two very exciting award announcements at the Bruce Trail AGM in November.

The **Susan Oleskevich Award** is named after a former Trail Director of the Toronto club, the Caldeon Hills club, and the BTC.

The recipient of this award must have been involved in the physical work of trail maintenance and development. They must have a long-standing commitment to trail work. And they must be an outstanding trail worker. The award went to IBTC's very own Don Cangiano who, for almost 3 decades, has dedicated his time to keeping the trail safe for everyone!

The **Philip & Jean Gosling Award** is awarded annually to the Bruce Trail Club completing the year's most significant trail project which improves or protects the environment.

Thank you to Art Johnson and team who, due to their incredible work at Smokey Hollow, won the award for the Iroquoia Club this year. Their work included replacing and improving the stairs on the main trail, restoration of the treadway and the construction of retaining walls. Smokey Hollow is one of the busiest spots along the Iroquoia section. We are grateful for our TD&M volunteers who dedicate their time to ensure the trail remains safe for all to use while minimizing environmental impact.

Thank you to everyone for all your hard work!



Photo credit: Kathrin König

Current Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteers Needed

As we prepare for another busy year, we wanted to share these exciting volunteer opportunities with you. These amazing opportunities will allow you to take your passion for the Bruce Trail to the next level!

Our Bruce Trail volunteers enjoy:

- Meeting like-minded people
- Helping the club by sharing their skills and talents
- Contributing to our mission of preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.

There's a place for you at the Iroquoia Club!

Current Open Positions

Board Member – Fundraising Director

The Fundraising Director supports IBTC objectives by developing and maintaining advertisement relationships, coordinating opportunities for revenue generation (merchandise sales, silent auctions, etc.), and developing fundraising events or opportunities.

Board Member – Director at Large

A Director/Member at Large becomes fully informed on organizational matters and participates in the Club Board's deliberations and decisions in matters of policy, finance, programs, and advocacy. The DAL is expected to assume a specific Board role after 1 year.

Interested in applying? Please apply for these roles by submitting a BTC volunteer application and indicating your specific interest on the application. Visit: [Apply Online To Volunteer | Bruce Trail Conservancy](#) to apply today! Applications for these roles are due by February 3, 2025.

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[Click here for more details!](#)

iNaturalist

[iNaturalist](#) has quickly become a favourite app for the backyard scientist but, did you know that anytime you log your findings, you are also contributing to biodiversity science? Each of your entries helps scientists and resource managers understand when and where organisms occur. Did you find a cool bug or 'weird' looking plant on your hike that you can't identify? iNaturalist uses crowdsource identification connecting you with experts who can identify your find!

But wait, there's more to iNaturalist than just uploading photos! Jason is a Land Steward who also helps the club with applying GPS skills to identify boundaries for Bruce Trail Managed Lands in the Iroquoia Section. While doing this, he submits lots of iNaturalist observations for the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Check out Jason's article on another cool feature of iNaturalist [here](#).

You can join the Bruce Trail project on iNaturalist to contribute to logging the various organisms found along the Bruce Trail. To date, there have been over 59,000 observations submitted by 241 project contributors.

Fisher's Pond Clean-up

A TD&M volunteer's job is never done!

Iroquoia TD&M volunteers came together to complete the removal of a large volume of material that had previously been gathered from along the trail. Some ten hardy volunteers worked through the early December cold to remove garbage from the BTC property and properly dispose of it.

In total, some 16 pails of glass weighing roughly 110 lbs, 3 large truck tires at 100 lbs each and about 1,000 lbs of rusted metal and fencing were removed. Many thanks to all for a job well done!





Submitted by: Peter Rumble: TD&M Director

First Day Hike 2025

The Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club's First Day Hike was well attended with hikers braving some questionable weather to start. Hikers enjoyed tea, hot chocolate, cookies and a great deal of camaraderie. We were joined by BTC's CEO Michael McDonald, and were thrilled to be able to present the BTC with a donation from funds raised throughout 2024.

This contribution would not be possible without your participation and support in our fundraising efforts; whether that be participating in an organized paid hike event, making a donation, purchasing a badge, using a trail angel, etc. We thank you for making this possible!

A handful of First Day Hike 2025 badges are still available for purchase [here](#) if you weren't able to attend our event.

We hope to see you at this event next year!



IBTC President Al Dundas (r) and BTC CEO Michael McDonald (l)



IBTC Awards Nominations

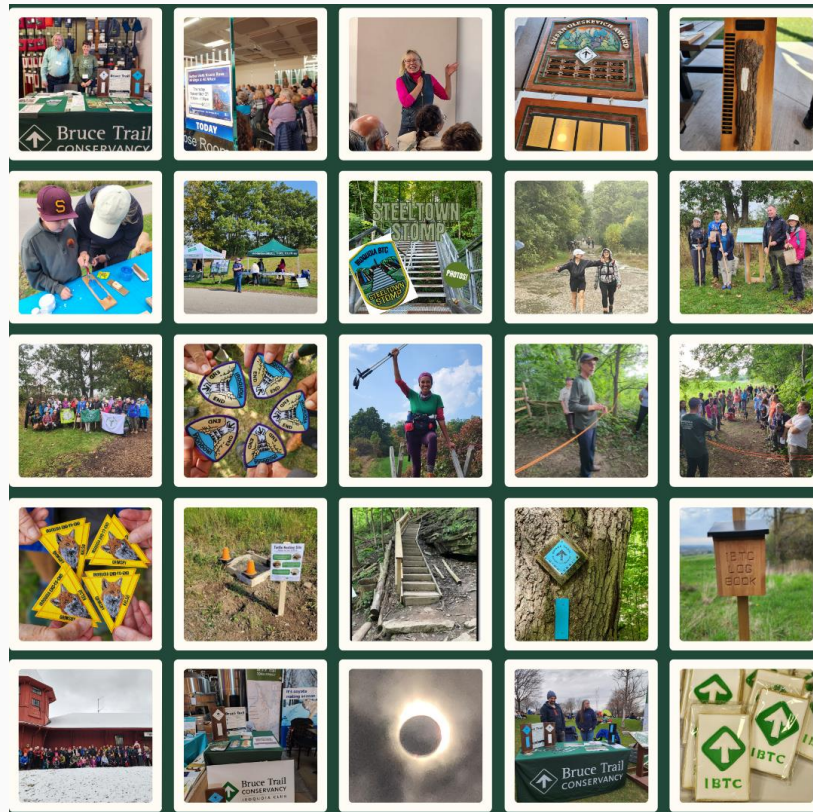
It is that time of the year again where we invite all IBTC Members to submit their nominations for IBTC Volunteer Awards. Additional information and instructions on submitting your nomination can be found [here](#).

We encourage you to submit your nominations by the mid February at the latest. Award recipients will be recognized at the May 2025 Annual General Meeting.

Your Ad Here!

As one of the largest Bruce Trail Conservancy Clubs, we have a circulation of approximately 4000 subscribers. The eNotes newsletter is distributed quarterly by email.

Please contact Jessica Clark Barrow, Director of Fundraising at jessicacbarrow@gmail.com to secure your space in our next publication



Share your hike photos and experiences with us

We want to hear from you!

Instagram page: [iroquoiabrucetrailclub](https://www.instagram.com/iroquoiabrucetrailclub) and

Facebook page: [Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club](https://www.facebook.com/IroquoiaBruceTrailClub).

E-Mail: info@iroquoia.on.ca

Let's do our part to respect and protect nature by staying on the marked trails and leaving plants, trees and wildlife untouched for others to discover and admire. Please leave the trails, forests, meadows and wetlands as you find them.

Sign up for the Iroquoia E-notes.

Iroquoia E-notes are for members and non-members. Our E-notes are sent out by email to your inbox regularly. Signing up is easy; go to the Club webpage www.iroquoia.on.ca, scroll to the bottom and you will see where you can sign up on the left hand side.



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