



TRAIL TALK

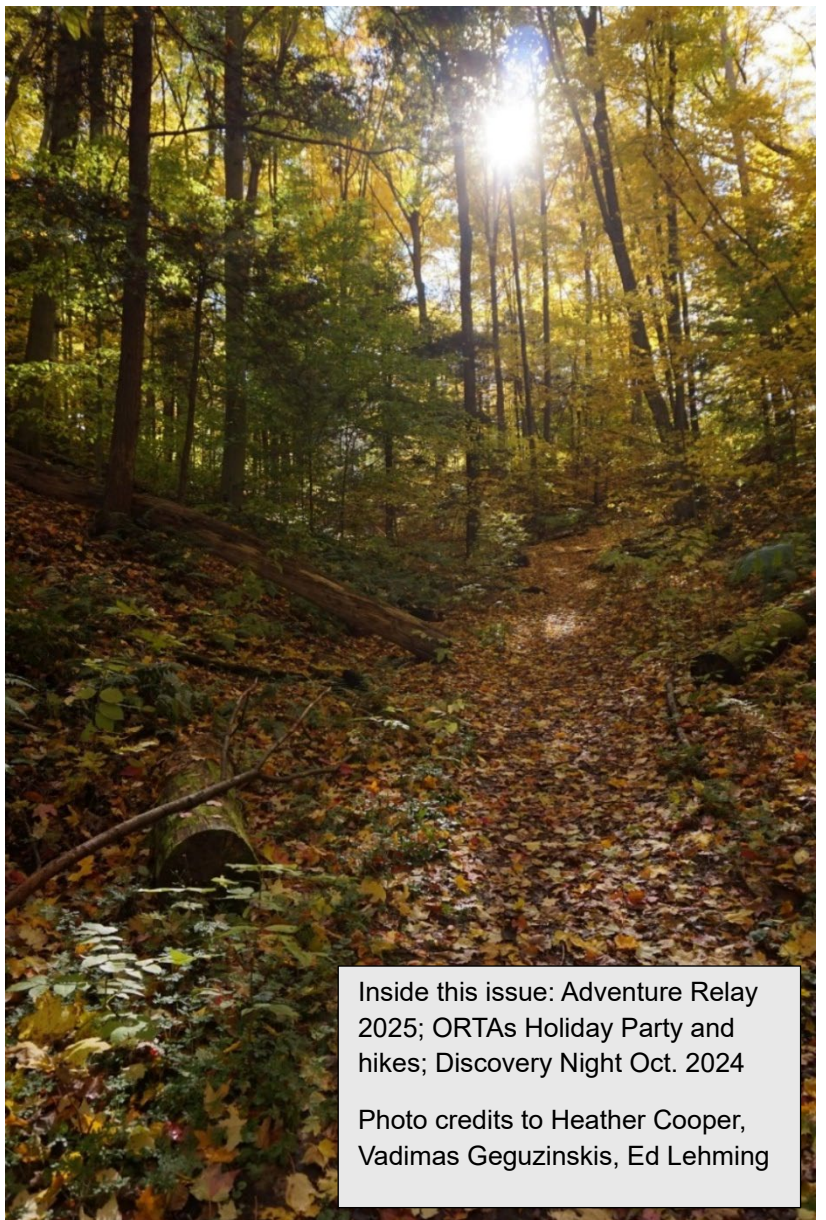
Oak Ridges Trail Association Quarterly

ISSN 1481-5982



Let's hike!

Fall 2024



Inside this issue: Adventure Relay 2025; ORTAs Holiday Party and hikes; Discovery Night Oct. 2024

Photo credits to Heather Cooper, Vadimas Geguzinskis, Ed Lehming

Adventure Relay 2025! – Jeremy Reesor

After a five-year hiatus, we are excited to announce that plans are underway for a relaunch of the Adventure Relay in 2025! We are targeting our typical early-June race date. As this is a large undertaking to relaunch the race, it would be sincerely appreciated if experienced checkpoint captains, committee members, and volunteers would be willing to support the race again, either on race day or by showing the ropes to new volunteers. Stay tuned for further information regarding finalized date and other details, as well as a solicitation for volunteer interest! Any questions or comments can be sent to relay@oakridgestrail.org.



ORTA Board member, Jeremy Reesor enjoyed participating with his family team “Reese Lightning” and is excited to help bring the event back in 2025.



Message from the President

Thank you for being a member and supporting the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA).

I'm excited to be in my new role and assist in providing leadership to move ORTA forward.

Hiking with ORTA has helped me reduce my risk of diabetes and improve my cardiovascular endurance and overall strength. ORTA, indeed, has been my pathway to a more active lifestyle. The most significant benefit has been the number of new friendships - you are great! We have an outstanding hike program with certified leaders providing various hikes across the Moraine.



Our Oak Ridges Trail is top of mind and is our primary responsibility as a trail association. ORTA would benefit from volunteer help to ensure our Trail is in the best condition over the coming months. Some end-to-end hikers experienced wayfinding (blazing) challenges in the east this past summer, and we would like to improve on that. Please forward feedback or issues regarding the Trail to trails@oakridgestrail.org. Our chapter chairs have been asked to review the [Trail Maintenance documentation on our website](#). We also encourage our members to review these documents.

Do you enjoy receiving and reading our Trail Talk newsletter? I agreed to volunteer to help with this issue. It has been an excellent opportunity to learn and assist me in promoting this volunteer role to others. If you want to discuss how you can help with our Trail Talk Newsletter, please see the post further along on how to contact us. We would appreciate having a volunteer for the next issue.

Gaye Mas, our Volunteer Coordinator, called for volunteers in early August and 13 members came forward to offer help. We now have three members actively assisting with website updates, two volunteers to assist with social media, new Chapter Chairs for the east chapters, a new guidebook coordinator, an offer to be a guest speaker for Discovery Night, trail maintenance, assisting with the Weekly Trekker email, posting in various municipal event calendars, etc. Amazing! Thank you so much.

Additionally, I would like members to consider taking a leadership role with the ORTA Board. The [Board Director position description](#) is on our website and we will call for nominations in the New Year. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Enjoy the Fall and the beauty of the forest.

Best regards, Karen Graham

Hike News and Information—Derek Cowbourne

Hikes

2024 has seen 216 hikes scheduled to the end of September. Last year the number was 150 and we've already exceeded the total for all of 2023, which was 213. My thanks to our hike leaders for making this happen and to all of you who are enjoying the range of locations, speeds, and distances that are on offer.

New Hike Leaders

My congratulations to ORTA members David Atkins and Jenn Alexander who have just completed a Certified Hike Leader course run by Hike Ontario. Please show your welcome by registering for their hikes.

Hike Ontario will be running additional on-line courses on [October 2 & 9](#) and [October 21 & 28](#). If you are interested in taking one of these courses, please let me know and go to the link to register for the course of your choice.

Photo credit: Sheila King



Shop Online *my* **WBU** store



Connect With Us
@WBUBarrie
@WBUNewmarket

We Have Two Locations to Assist You

WBU Barrie 515 Bryne Drive, Unit B, Barrie, ON (705) 726-7600 www.wbu.com/barrie	WBU Newmarket 16655 Yonge Street, Unit 2, Newmarket, ON (905) 868-9696 www.wbu.com/newmarket
--	--

BIRD FOOD • FEEDERS • GARDEN ACCENTS • UNIQUE GIFTS • OPTICS



Hike News and Information—Derek Cowbourn continued

Updated Waiver for ORTA Hike Registration

At its September 19 meeting the ORTA Board approved an updated Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk. The update makes the COVID-related item more generic and strengthens the statement of hike leaders' ability to deny participation by hikers who are ill equipped or in obvious poor health. Look for the [revised waiver on the ORTA website](#) and the hike registration page.

Winter Hiking Tips

With fall upon us, winter is not far away. It's a time to enjoy the trails when they are generally quieter, the bugs are gone, and it's easier to spot deer and other wildlife. While experienced hikers find preparing and dressing for winter second nature, here are a few easy-to-remember suggestions for those less experienced to help you make the most of the season.

- **Wear appropriate footwear!** Hiking boots, good icers, and hiking poles will help keep you safe during chilly and icy hikes.
- **Dress in layers but start cool!** Don't wear everything at the start, or you'll be taking off a layer after the first hill. It's surprising how warm you can get after a short time. You can always put on a layer if you don't warm up.
- **Pack some snacks and be sure to bring water and perhaps a warm drink as well.**
- **Enjoy yourself!** Breathe in nature and enjoy the gorgeous scenery of our trails. If you have questions or are in doubt, just ask. Hike leaders and fellow hikers are always happy to share their experiences and ideas, but don't be surprised if there's no single right answer!

Save-the-Date for Discovery Nights!

Our [Discovery Nights](#) are open to everyone! Join us to hear from guest speakers on a variety of topics.

Please mark your calendar and join us on Oct. 24 (not Oct. 31), Nov. 28, Jan. 30, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, April 24 and May 29.

Wilma Millage is our Discovery Night Coordinator and can be reached at [past-pres@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:pres@oakridgestrail.org).

Comfortable **Hiking Holidays**
Hike an adventure. Rest in comfort.

AMALFI COAST

Two departures: April 21 to May 3, 2025
and October 13 to 25, 2025

- ♥ Sorrento, Positano, Amalfi & 3 days on Capri!
 - ♥ Stunning hikes & sapphire blue waters
 - ♥ Oh, the food in Italy! Hand-picked restaurants for just for you
 - ♥ 4-star accommodations
 - ♥ All the details worked out by us
- ♥ Led by our own Canadian-Italian hike leader, intimately familiar with the hikes & the best gelato spots



www.letshike.com

TICO #50023501 & #50023502

How Are Your Trails? – Brian Millage, ORTA Regional Chair

Your ORTA maintenance crews worked hard in spring and early summer to ensure trails were clear of debris, visible blazes and brush trimmed back for easy passage and to keep nasty ticks away from passing hikers. We use loppers, battery string trimmers and chainsaws where needed, and gas self-powered mowers for meadow areas. All was good through July, even though meadows needed an extra cut this season - then the heat and high humidity promoted jungle-like growth in early August. Suddenly, or so it seemed, walls of shoulder-high goldenrod met us, Queen Anne's lace and beautiful but bushy asters. One trail was almost closed off by 3-metre-tall phragmites reeds - a nasty invasive species. After three weeks, the areas most affected were cleared, thanks to some dedicated trail volunteers.



and better trails. Contact us if you can "adopt" a section or want to join the trail rover group.

Photo credit: Brian Millage. The rover crew does maintenance in multiple chapters along the ORTA trails.

Please follow us:

<https://www.oakridgestrail.org>

[Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#)

Many of our trail volunteers, or trail captains, monitor and help with a favourite local section of the ORTA trail. Several others are rovers - willing to go wherever needed. One member who lives in Mississauga covers the entire Caledon chapter, only calling in the rovers a few times a year when extra equipment and hands are needed. This chapter, in addition to chapters east of Scugog, needs more trail volunteers. More hands would make for lighter workloads

experience The East Coast Trail with Brown Rabbit Walkabout

Hike 250 kms of beautiful coastal trails on the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland with our help.

We provide transportation from & to St. John's Airport, to and from trail heads, and three meals a day with accommodations.

For prices and information contact Isa.



Phone: 1-709- 334-2208
Email: brownrabbitcabins@gmail.com

Fax: 1-709- 334-3601
www.brownrabbit.nl.ca

Join us for Discovery Night on October 24th

'My memories of Romania' will be presented by Oak Ridges Trail Association member Daniela Bezede.

Discover some of the most stunning mountain landscapes and the history of Transylvania's



major medieval cities. Learn about authentic cuisine and the unique traditions of my native country. You will hear about Transylvania's vampires, scary castles and Dracula's castle. A region worth being explored and discovered.

York Regional Forest 100th Anniversary

Thank you to York Region for inviting us to participate in their 100th Anniversary events on Sept. 7. The Hollidge Tract was the first tract opened 100 years ago to make up the [York Regional Forest system](#).

Special thank you to our volunteer hike leader, Anna Sunn for leading the 'Learn to Hike' session at the Hollidge Tract.



Trail re-route/closure updates

Important reminder to please check the ORTA website for [trail updates](#) before heading out onto the Oak Ridges Trail.

Mary Lake and Seneca College Trails – ORTA Map 2

Due to the temporary closure of these trails (see below), here is the **recommended alternate route**:

Travelling east from Jane Street go south on Jane to the entrance into Mary Lake. Follow the main trail east until you reach the Pine Farms side trail. Go north on the Pine Farms side trail to the 16th. Go east on the 16th to Dufferin where you again join the main trail. Reverse this for hikers going west. The 16th is hilly, but the speed limit is 40km/hr.

Hike Ontario Summit

The annual [Hike Ontario](#) Summit was hosted by the Guelph Trail Club on Sept. 28. The Summit celebrated Hike Ontario's Golden Anniversary; included the annual general meeting; sessions on Ticks in Ontario, The University of Guelph Arboretum, Safety and Risk Management on the trail, demonstrations of the latest hiking gear, environmental restoration and stewardship along the trail, new strategic plan for Hike Ontario, Volunteerism 101, trail mapping and navigation apps, youth engagement in hiking and in your club.

The Oak Ridges Trail Association is one of many hike organizations that make up the membership of Hike Ontario. We pay an annual membership fee to Hike Ontario and are enrolled in their insurance program.



Use code **OAK RIDGE** and for each tour booked on your club for 2025 we will donate \$25 to the Oak Ridges Trail Association.

Take the path less travelled.

Grasslands National Park, Saskatchewan
Courtesy: Benjamin Hutter Photography

	DOUBLE	SINGLE
NEW: Hike Saskatchewan 10 Days: June 20, 2025	\$5,295	\$6,395
P.E.I. Hiking 8 Days: July 15, 2025	\$4,795	\$5,695
Newfoundland Coast-to-Coast 10 Days: July 25, 2025	\$7,595	\$8,595
Banff Hiking 8 Days: August 8, 2025	\$6,895	\$7,495

PRICE INCLUDES: Roundtrip airfare from Toronto, Connections Program, motorcoach transportation, accommodation, meals and highlights as listed on website, all entry fees and passes, local guides and Tour Director. Prices are in Canadian dollars, are per person and include HST.

DeLuxeHiking
Ready for Adventure

1-888-716-5523
deluxe hiking.com

hico.ca
Registration
500009376
500009377

Official brand of
DeNure Tours:
71 Mount Hope St.
Lindsay, ON K9V 5N5



ORTA Hike Rendezvous 2024 – Brian & Wilma Millage

Once again, the hikers of ORTA assembled for a late-season rendezvous on the trails of Uxbridge. Three hikes covered the slow/moderate, moderate, and moderate/fast hiking groups, thanks to leaders Wilma and Brian Millage, John Weston, Russ Burton, and Bob Comfort. Each group explored different sections of local trails on a two-hour hike, then assembled for a potluck lunch at the Goodwood Community Centre, where Scott Heaslip had set the stage for the festivities.



It never ceases to amaze me how well this format works, as ORTA members bring their favorite recipes to share—appetizers, main dishes, and desserts—and Scott already had the coffee and drinks ready for the thirsty crowd. Judging by the steady conversation level between bites, everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to meet hiking friends again. Thanks to everyone who helped make this another ORTA-fantastic day.



We hope you can join us again for our 21st Wedding Anniversary Hike on Monday, December 2, and the ORTA Christmas party potluck lunch at the Goodwood Community Centre. You might even want to volunteer to help set up the hall if you can't hike that day.

Keep on trekking, Brian and Wilma

Photo credit (top of page): Brian Millage of the Rendezvous Secord Forest hike.

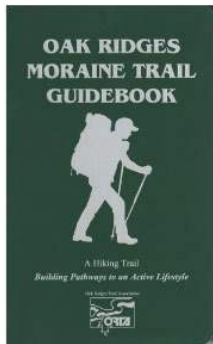
Photo credit (bottom of page): Janice Wainright of the Rendezvous Wilder & Walker Woods hike.

Guidebooks

Cathy Souch is our new Guidebook co-ordinator.

Thank you, Cathy, for taking on this important role. It will be a rewarding experience for our members and the public to have someone as engaged as you are with ORTA. Cathy has been an ORTA member for well over 23 years now so you may have met already on a hike or two. She also was on Harold Sellers last End to End before he left for the west coast of Canada.

Please keep an eye out for in-person guidebook sales and updates. To contact Cathy, please email guidebook@oakridgestrail.org.



Purchase a guidebook for \$25 in-person at Discovery Night.

Meet Your New Hike Leader

Martin Roy is a welcome addition to the hike leader team.

He regularly leads the Wednesday moderate-fast hikes. Martin has led groups on the following trails: Richmond Hill – Jefferson Forest & Bond Lake; Caledon – Forks of the Credit; Whitchurch-Stouffville York Regional Forest - Eldred, King, Hollidge and Drysdale Tracts; Mulmur – Bruce Trail (Boyne Valley Provincial Park); Bolton – Humber Valley Heritage Trail and Kortright Conservation Area; Caledon – Palgrave Forest.

Thank you, Martin!



Brooklin Harvest Festival



Thank you to Mike & Joanne Baker, Co-chapter Chairs of the Scugog Chapter, for organizing a booth to promote ORTA at the Brooklin Harvest Festival.

Additionally, thank you to ORTA members Cathy, Nikki, Nancy and Scott for volunteering their time.

The group had MANY great conversations with people to bring more awareness to the trail and ORTA.



SUSQUEHANNOCK LODGE and TRAIL CENTRE Hiking in the Highlands of North Central Pennsylvania



Canadian Thanksgiving 2024 - Full

NEW YEAR'S Dec. 28 or 29 - Jan 1, 2025
Enjoy New Year's on the trails and by the fireplace.

**2025 - Easter, Canada Day, Labour Day,
Canadian Thanksgiving, New Years.**

The Lodge is located in Potter County, Pennsylvania, 2.5 hours south of Buffalo. There is no agriculture or industry in the area, just great trails. Daily hikes of 12 to 17km are led through hardwood forest, many beside mountain streams. Our lodge provides comfortable accommodation & excellent meals for \$90.00 semi-private, \$95.00 private-double occupancy, \$120.00 private-single occupancy, USD per day per person.

Greg Vincent's Legacy continues of Relaxed Hiking Holiday Weekends. For more information, please contact Jeanette Vincent at 519-588-5916 or vincentjeanette1604@gmail.com

**For reservations call Carol Szymanik at 1-814-435-2163
Or susquelgcarol@penn.com susquehannock-lodge.com**

ORTA Holiday Party and hikes

Monday, December 2, 2024 - mark that date on your calendar! Join us for our holiday party and hikes!

Join us in the Uxbridge area on a hike of your choice, followed by a potluck lunch at the Goodwood Community Centre, 268 Highway 47, Goodwood.

Not able to hike that morning? You are still welcome to share good cheer during the holiday and the potluck lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We will provide the coffee and tea, and you bring your favourite dish, just enough for you and a few friends - snacks, main dish, desserts - to let the holiday feast begin. We'll also provide some visual treats - pix of past hikes, friends on the trail and images to bring back memories of all you like about hiking with ORTA.

Remember to lug a mug for drinks and bring camping plates and cutlery to lessen our environmental footprint. A volunteer TOONIE contribution will help cover the hall rental.

HIKES - There will be two guided hikes: slow-moderate or moderate-fast.

Hike #1 Brian & Wilma's 21st Wedding Anniversary Hike (please pre-register in WildApricot)

Important - Meet at Goodwood Community Centre 9 a.m. - 268 Durham Regional Hwy 47, Goodwood



If this is your first time participating in our wedding anniversary hike, welcome and please read the directions carefully as there is limited roadside parking at the hike location, North Walker Woods, on the 6th concession. We hope you will first come to the Goodwood Community Centre at 9 a.m. on Hwy 47/Bloomington Rd. and carpool to the hike trailhead for the 9:30 a.m. start.

HIKE 9:30 am: The hike will be on sandy forest trails. If we get early snow, icers may be recommended. We will hike to the wedding location, share some treats, and walk a few more trails before returning to the Goodwood Community Centre for the annual ORTA Christmas Party and Potluck Lunch.

Hike #2 Uxbridge – Brock Tract with Russ Burton at 9 a.m. Members can view the details and pre-register through their [WildApricot login](#).

Volunteer opportunity – Newsletter Coordinator

We need you!

This volunteer position involves coordinating the collection of newsletter articles and photographs on a quarterly basis (four times per year).

If you're interested in taking it a step further and helping with the newsletter layout, that's great! If not, we can find another volunteer to assist with that part.

We can provide a license for Microsoft Office 365 software and are open to ideas on newsletter layout.

Time commitment: Approximately 4 hours per month.

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Gaye Mas, at gayemas@rogers.com.

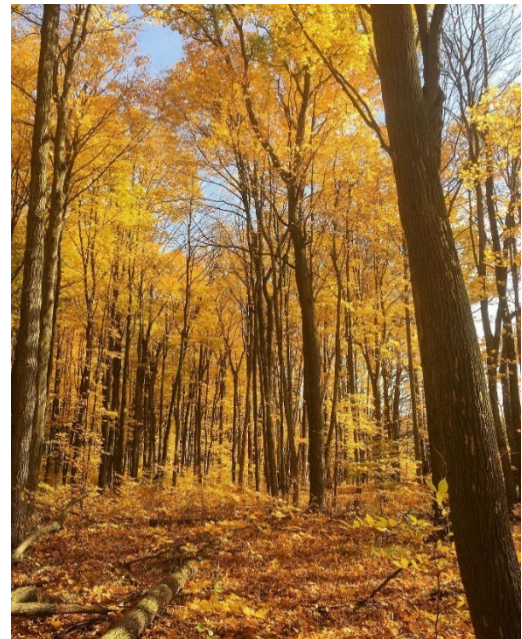


Photo credit: Cathy Brown (Jefferson Forest)



ORTA shirts

Thank you to everyone that pre-ordered an ORTA shirt.

We have [short and long-sleeved shirts available for purchase](#).



Please contact publicity@oakridgestrail.org regarding the available inventory for purchase.

Photographers – please share your photos!

We would appreciate your photos of the ORTA Trail and group hikes. Please send to publicity@oakridgestrail.org.

Thank you to our paid advertisers. We appreciate your support.

Oak Ridges Trail Association
Mail address: P.O. Box 28544
Aurora, ON L4G 6S6
editor@oakridgestrail.org

Lake Superior

Guided Sea Kayak Trips
> Pukaskwa, Slaters, Sibley, Superior Park

36 ft Voyageur Canoe Tours
> Musical & Pukaskwa & Group of Seven

Paddle Canada Certified Instruction
> Sea kayak, Canoe & SUP

Hike: Pukaskwa & Lake Superior Park

ROCK ISLAND LODGE Lodge based day adventures
Photography & Arts Workshops
Spring Fishing

1-800-203-9092
naturallysuperior.com
rockislandlodge.ca