

The Giant's Rib

devoted to increasing awareness and protection of
the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve

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The Giant's Rib presents

The Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series

The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre proudly announces the first presentation of the second Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series for 2008.

This series, named in honour of the former General Manager of the Hamilton Conservation Authority, is dedicated to promoting the Niagara Escarpment as an internationally-recognized World Biosphere Reserve, as well as being a truly unique topographic feature of our natural and cultural heritage.

Next Presentation: March 2, 2008

The Eramosa Karst - An Urban Karst Park in Hamilton with Marcus Buck

The Eramosa Karst is an outstanding example of karst located within the City of Hamilton in an area that is undergoing rapid urban expansion. It contains numerous diverse karst features: sinkholes, sinking streams, dry valleys, caves and springs. The scientific and educational value of this karst was first recognized by karst experts in 2000. At that time, the land was managed by the Ontario Realty Corporation and was slated for development. The former City of Stoney Creek put a development hold on the area pending scientific study. In April 2003, geoscientists completed an evaluation of the values of the karst and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) formally recognized its significance by designating the area as an earth science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). The Province of Ontario has since donated the "Core Area" of the Eramosa Karst ANSI to the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA), in October 2006. The HCA is currently constructing a trail network with interpretive panels throughout the property, as well as parking facilities and an interpretive kiosk at the main entrance. They plan to officially open the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area in 2008 as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations. Meanwhile, the City of Hamilton has begun the planning process for developing the surrounding lands, although not without opposition. A group of area residents have recently established the Friends of the Eramosa Karst with the goal of preserving the remaining Provincial lands within the ANSI. Regardless of what happens to the surrounding lands, the karst lands within the conservation area will become the first urban karst park in Ontario with environmental protection. This park will provide the public with a great opportunity to learn about karst. It also provides an excellent site for university-based research. The establishment of the park is an excellent example of proactive planning by politicians and agency staff with the support of geoscientists and the neighboring community.

Marcus Buck studied karst geology and geochemistry as a graduate student at McMaster University under the supervision of Dr. Derek Ford, a world-renown expert in karst. Mr. Buck has operated a consulting business since 1999, Karst Solutions, and specializes in environmental geoscience in karst lands. He has been an avid caver since his youth and is a recognized expert in the caves and karst of Ontario. As a consultant, he developed a comprehensive cave management plan for Parks Canada based on an inventory of 230 caves on the Bruce Peninsula. He has evaluated some of the key karst areas of Ontario as earth science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest for the Ministry of Natural Resources. He has also consulted for the private sector conducting hydrogeological investigations, including the evaluation of hazardous sites and environmental planning. Mr. Buck is a resident of Hamilton and played a key role in the establishment of the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area. He was the lead author of the MNR report that led to its designation as an ANSI, and he is currently participating in the development of the site as a conservation area. Mr. Buck has led more than 20 tours of the Eramosa Karst for agency staff, politicians and the public.

All presentations will be held at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre, Dundas Valley Conservation Area, 650 Governor's Road, Dundas. Park entrance fee is a \$2.00 per person, or a maximum \$5.00 per car. There is no admission fee for children under 12.

All presentations will be held Sunday afternoons of the noted date starting at 2:00 p.m.

There is no charge for the lectures, but donations are welcome and appreciated.

For further information: Kenneth Hall (kenjoan75@sympatico.ca), Stan Nowak (basil.cottage@sympatico.ca).

Everyone is welcome - we look forward to seeing you !!

The Giants Rib presents

Art and Photography of the Heritage of the Niagara Escarpment

**Celebrating 'the art' of the natural and cultural heritage of the Niagara Escarpment at the Dundas Valley Escarpment Centre featuring a new local artist every month
Saturdays and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Please Note: There is no exhibition for February.

Waterfalls along the Niagara Escarpment by Joseph Hollick

Lower Chedoke Falls

For those who attended the January 20th Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture by Eleanore Kosydar titled "In Praise 'inter'", you may have left inspired to get out and enjoy winter. I did and hopefully you may feel the urge as well to explore some of Hamilton's waterfalls in winter.

Lower Chedoke Falls is located on the east branch of the Chedoke Creek at the east end of the Chedoke Golf Course off the Chedoke Radial Trail. (Park in the golf course parking lot and follow the Radial Trail eastwards to the newly improved Bruce Trail.) The Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club, with material supplied by the City of Hamilton, completed improvements in autumn 2007 to this section of the Bruce Trail which includes a lookout towards

Lower Chedoke Falls. This section of the Chedoke Creek is quite brutal and therefore the Bruce Trail with its lookout is still a fair distance from the falls. The best time to view Lower Chedoke Falls from this location is in winter as the leaves are off the trees.

Lower Chedoke Falls has year round flow. Its height is 6m (20 ft.) and its crest width is 11m (36 ft.)

This photo of Lower Chedoke Falls was taken directly in front of the falls; however you would require high waterproof boots to follow the Chedoke Creek to this location.



Oh Deer! Where Are My Antlers?

By Joan Kott

Did you know that early-mid winter brings a big change to the male, (buck) white-tailed deer? In the early-mid winter, the male white-tailed deer shed their antlers. This simply means their antlers fall off!

Antlers are made of bone and grow from the skull. Antlers are not horns and are used by the male deer during breeding season, (rutting) and to defend their territory. Once the antlers have fallen off they are replaced by new antlers that start off as little “bumps or buttons” on the skull. It takes about 3-4 months for a new set of antlers to grow. During that time the new antlers are covered in a soft velvet coating which is skin filled with blood vessels. The male deer rubs off the velvet coating once the new antlers have grown and you will find signs of “deer-rubs” on trees and shrubs throughout white-tailed deer habitat in the late spring. The size of white-tailed deer antlers tell us how healthy the deer is. A full-grown adult buck’s age cannot be determined by the size of the antlers.

The next time you are out hiking along the Niagara Escarpment and in natural areas of white-tailed deer habitat, watch for antlers. It is not likely you will find any because antlers are recycled! Antlers contain calcium and other minerals which many small rodents need to survive especially in winter. Mice, squirrels and other small rodents chew on the antlers and they quickly disappear. Antlers are also very hard to find because of their colouring and the camouflage naturally provided in the white-tailed deer’s habitat.

Remember, keep your eyes open and watch for white-tailed deer antlers in January and February. This is the best season to find another of nature’s treasures in the great outdoors!

References: Hands-On Nature, Information and Activities for Exploring the Environment with Children, Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 1986

Joan Kott is a new member of the Board of the Giant’s Rib Discovery Centre and Chair of the Education Committee and will be a regular contributor to this newsletter.

Join the Friends of the Giant’s Rib

Your assistance would be welcome in helping the Giant’s Rib Discovery Centre to increase awareness and protection of the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve; or you may wish only to be kept informed of upcoming GRDC activities and events. We hope to hear from you.

For more information, please contact:

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