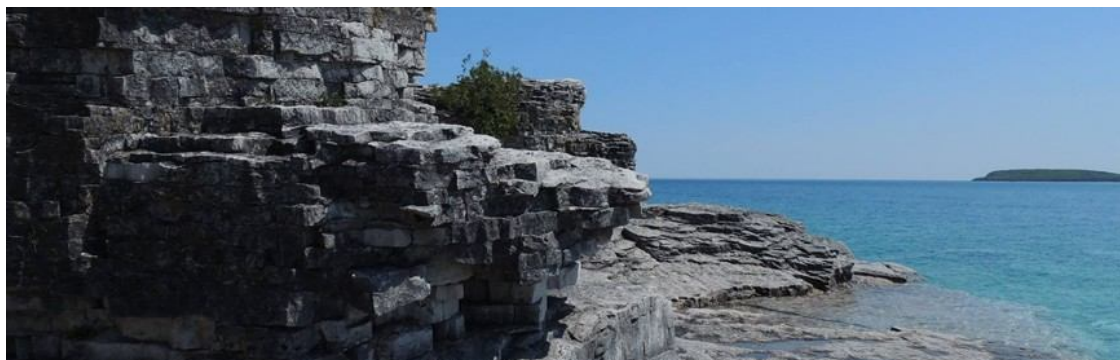


Stan Nowak, Editor
January / February 2015

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Biosphere Reserve turns 25 in 2015!



This year the **Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve** turns 25! Since 1990, Ontario's Niagara Escarpment has had this designation, part of a program developed by the UN to help recognize significant natural and cultural features of our planet which have been afforded measures of protection in an effort to manage human activities in these areas.



The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) created the Man and the Biosphere program in 1971 and, since then, 16 biosphere reserves have been established in Canada. The Niagara Escarpment is one of the most unique in the world because of how long and narrow it is, how many different municipalities it runs through as well as its natural significance. One of the factors involved in maintaining the designation is how we, as Ontarians, protect it. Currently some protection comes through Provincial Legislation and Land-use Plan and Regulation (Niagara Escarpment Commission); Two National Parks; 129 Provincial and Municipal Parks; Provincial Greenbelt – Foodland Conservation Plan; 8 watershed-based Conservation Authorities, The Bruce Trail Conservancy, and private landowners.

whatever way suits you best. Buy a membership pass to a Conservation Authority or your local Bruce Trail Club, support your local conservation or environmental foundation or simply go for a hike and pay the user fee which helps the park or

organization to keep these places open for our enjoyment. Volunteer for a local escarpment group, enjoy food or drink grown in our Greenbelt or simply attend an Escarpment event, hike, workshop or clean-up this year. Most of all, get out and enjoy the many wonders of the Niagara Escarpment and bring a friend. Introduce someone new to the Escarpment and the many groups which support its preservation.

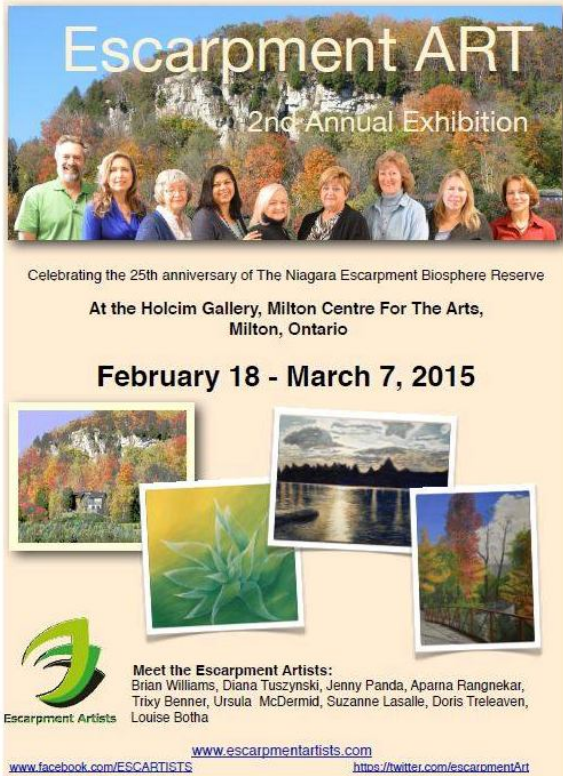


Keep an eye out on our website and social media for upcoming events and opportunities and say "Happy 25th!" to the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve!

From the blog of Chris Hamilton at giantsrib.ca



Rib Happenings



Escarpment ART
2nd Annual Exhibition

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of The Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve

At the Holcim Gallery, Milton Centre For The Arts,
Milton, Ontario

February 18 - March 7, 2015

Meet the Escarpment Artists:
Brian Williams, Diana Tuszynski, Jenny Panda, Aparna Rangnekar,
Trixy Benner, Ursula McDermid, Suzanne Lasalle, Doris Treleven,
Louise Botha

www.escarpmentartists.com
www.facebook.com/ESCARTISTS <https://twitter.com/escarpmentArt>

Mark your calendar!

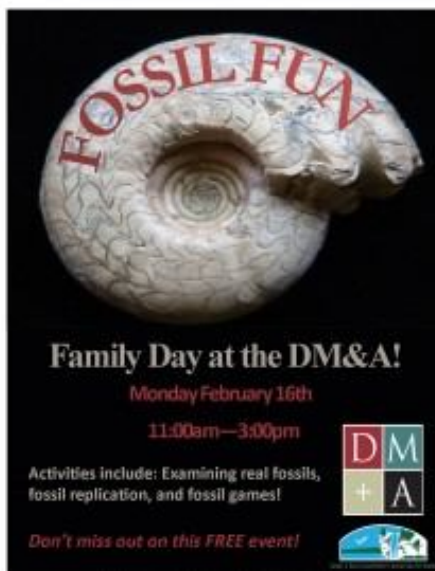
The Escarpment Artists are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO Biosphere Reserve with their 2nd Annual Exhibition at Milton Centre for the Arts (MCA) in the Holcim Gallery February 18th - March 7th 2015!

The Escarpment Artists are nine Green Artists from Halton who create works of art in various media, are inspired by the Niagara Escarpment and passionate about its conservation.

www.escarpmentartists.com

Family Day Fossil Fun at the BM&A!

Special thanks to the Dundas Museum and Archives for hosting! Extra special thanks to our volunteers, **Jennifer McPherson** and **Carl Simon** for taking the time to make this day a success! More than 300 people came through this day!



Art and Photography of the Heritage of the Niagara Escarpment

For the Month of February 2015:

The Photographic Works of Stephanie Rochon



Born and raised in Dundas, Ontario, **Stephanie Rochon** is always looking for new and unique perspectives of the sights she has grown up with. As an avid photographer and runner, the trails and the seasons inspire her creativity and stamina.

Each of her photos is like a fingerprint, capturing the unique identity of a moment in time. Stephanie can often be found on the trails stopping in her tracks when halted by a great photo opportunity that others have passed without noticing.

Stephanie is a self-taught photographer, and credits her 9 year-old son for contributing very inventive ideas for some of her shots. She is hoping her passion will spur his curiosity to explore beyond the edges of what is in front of him.



Owlhinge Photography

www.owlhinge.squarespace.com

Celebrating 'the art' of the natural and cultural heritage of the Niagara Escarpment regularly featuring a local artist at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre, Dundas Valley Conservation Area, 650 Governors Road in Dundas. Saturdays and Sundays only from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Park Entrance is \$9.00 per car, but walk in and bike in is free.

Your parking fee supports the Dundas Valley Conservation Area and can be used towards visiting any other Hamilton conservation area that same day. There is no admission fee to view the exhibit, but donations are gratefully accepted.

Please check our website www.gantsrib.ca in the coming weeks for a complete schedule for all the artists for this season.

For more information: Stephen Landers info@landerscreativecollections.com

Waterfalls along the Niagara Escarpment

by Joe Hollick

Great Falls is also known by at least five alternate names: Waterdown Falls, Grindstone Falls, Smokey Hollow Falls, Palmers Falls, or just The Falls as per numerous vintage postcards depicting this waterfall. It is located in the Waterdown section of Hamilton on the Grindstone Creek in an area that used to be known as Smokey Hollow during the 1800's. Its coordinates are 43.3305 N / 79.8872 W



Great Falls is a Terraced Ribbon Falls with a height of 10 metres (33 ft.) and a crest width of 5 metres (16 ft.). It has water flowing year round.

A unique feature of Great Falls is a cave that exists behind the falls. A recent photo, shown left, of Great Falls taken in winter shows the waterfall as a mixture of ice and water, however if you look to the left side of the picture, you can see an opening leading to an Ice Cave behind the falls. The second photo below shows this amazing Ice Cave.

The Bruce Trail passes by Great Falls, however if you are driving, the directions are as follows: From Hwy. 403, take Waterdown Road exit and go north towards Waterdown.

As you enter Waterdown, the roadway turns 90 degrees to the left and immediately after this, turn left into the Smokey Hollow Resource Management Area parking lot.

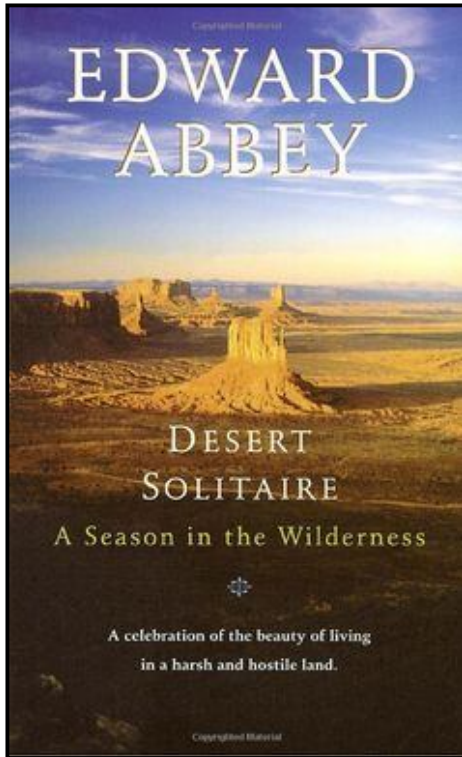
This waterfall is next to the parking lot.



Happy Waterfalling!

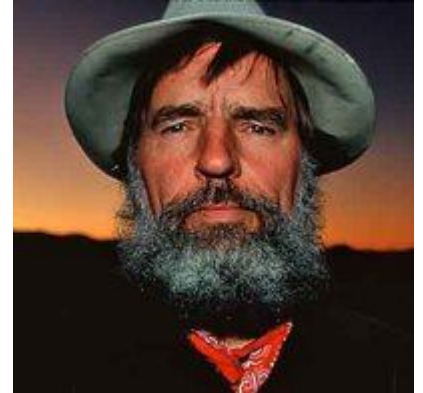
The Literal Rib

A Book Review by Stan Nowak



Volunteering does have its privileges at times, like the time in 2005 when I received this book as a gift of appreciation for a clean-up project around Cootes Paradise. Before then, I had never heard of Edward Abbey or of 'Desert Solitaire'.

Edward Abbey (1927 – 1989) was an American author and essayist noted for his advocacy of environmental issues, criticism of public land policies, and anarchist political views. His best-known works include the novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang* and the non-fiction work *Desert Solitaire*.



In 1956 and 1957, Abbey worked as a seasonal ranger for the United States National Park Service at Arches National Monument (now a national park), near the town of Moab, Utah. Abbey held the position from April to September each year, during which time he maintained trails, greeted visitors, and collected campground fees. He lived in a house trailer and a *ramada* (a shelter with a roof but no walls, or only partially enclosed) that he built himself. During his stay at Arches, Abbey accumulated a large volume of notes and sketches which later formed the basis for *Desert Solitaire*.

If one has read Thoreau's *Walden*, one will notice a similar narrative style in *Desert Solitaire* that compresses two years of observations and experiences into a singular

account that follows the timeline of a single cycle of the seasons.

In this process, many of the events and characters described are often fictionalized in many key respects, and the account is not entirely true to the author's actual experiences, highlighting the importance of the philosophical and aesthetic qualities of the writing rather than its strict adherence to an autobiographical genre.

Edward Abbey's account of two summers spent in southeastern Utah's canyonlands is one of the most enduring works of contemporary American nature writing. *Desert Solitaire* lives on because it is a work that reflects profound love of nature and a bitter abhorrence of all that would desecrate it.

When *Desert Solitaire* was first published in 1968, it became the focus of a nationwide cult. Rude and sensitive. Thought-provoking and mystical. Angry and loving. Both Abbey and this book are all of these and more. He vividly captures the essence of his life during his seasons as a park ranger in southeastern Utah. This is a rare view of a quest to experience nature in its purest form -- the silence, the struggle, the overwhelming beauty. But this is also the gripping, anguished cry of a man of character who challenges the growing exploitation of the wilderness by oil and mining interests, as well as by the tourist industry. Abbey's observations and challenges remain as relevant now as the day he wrote this book in 1968. Today, *Desert Solitaire* asks if any of our incalculable natural treasures can be saved before the bulldozers strike again.



Perhaps the author's own words from his speeches to environmentalists in Montana and Colorado in 1976 say it all:

It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it's still here. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, climb the mountains, bag the peaks, run the rivers, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, the lovely, mysterious, and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and your head firmly attached to the body, the body active and alive, and I promise you this much; I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies, over those desk-bound men and women with their hearts in a safe deposit box, and their eyes hypnotized by desk calculators. I promise you this; You will outlive the bastards.

I cannot recommend this book, one of my personal all-time favourites, highly enough! You'll find it on my bookshelf beside Thoreau's *Walden*!

Giant's Rib Photo of the Month



How beautiful is this?

This shot from the Giant's Rib's Facebook page at an unknown location could be anywhere and everywhere on the Niagara Escarpment where Winter casts her blanket of snow throughout Nature's annual slumber and creates wonderful images like the one this photo captures!

www.facebook.com/GiantsRib

Come Join the Giant's Rib Discovery Centre!



**Do you love the
Escarpment too ?**

The Discovery Centre Needs Your Help!

Are you interested in the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve? Do you want to learn more about it and contribute to its protection?

Volunteering with the Giant's Rib is one way you can do that. We have positions available for volunteers on weekends at the Centre, and Director openings as well. We're growing and expanding, so if you're excited about the Niagara Escarpment, this is the place to be.

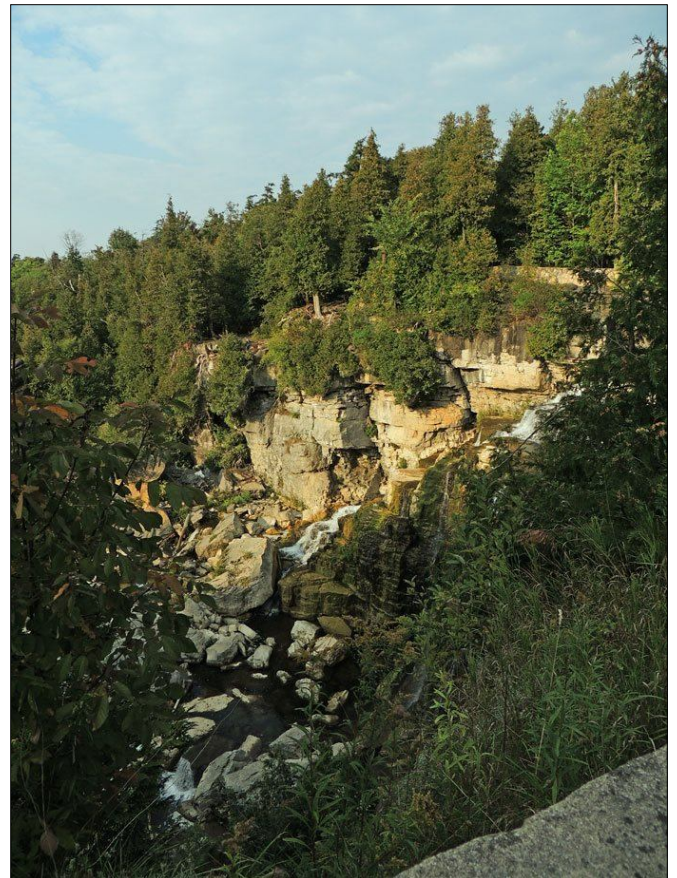
Please visit www.giantsrib.ca to learn about available positions.

About the GRDC

The Giant's Rib Discovery Centre tells the story of the Niagara Escarpment through interpretation at the Centre on weekends and through our public outreach programs. These include a weekend Arts and Photography Series featuring a local artist each month, guided interpretive hikes, the Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series, and we offer a Grade 4 curriculum-based Rocks and Minerals unit to elementary schools free of charge.

We require interpretive volunteers to work half-days on weekends at the Centre (located within the Dundas Valley Conservation Area at 650 Governor's Road in Dundas) and co-ordinators to manage public programs and support our annual fundraiser in June.

For detailed descriptions, please visit www.giantsrib.ca



**If you are interested in any of these positions,
or if you have a specific skill set you feel may assist us,
please contact Chris Hamilton at chamilton@giantsrib.ca**



Your Giant's Rib Discovery Centre's Board of Directors for 2014 - 15

Executive Officers

Chris Hamilton, President **Ken Hall**, Past President
Warren Beacham, Treasurer

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Chris Hamilton	Outreach Co-ordinator A / V Presentation Co-ordinator
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Stephen Landers	Co-ordinator, Art and Photography of the Heritage of the Niagara Escarpment
Ernie Kuechmeister	Co-ordinator, Recognition Program
Jennifer McPherson	Marketing and Fund-raising
Kyle McLoughlin	Co-ordinator, Field Trips
Jiemin (Tracey) Zheng	Volunteer Co-ordinator
Stan Nowak	Newsletter Editor
Sylvia Zsidi	Co-ordinator, Bruce Duncan Memorial Lecture Series

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unless you really need to.***

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with other friends via e-mail.***