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*SER Ontario News*  
Newsletter of the Ontario Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration  
No. 4(4): March 1998

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#### Chapter Update

TWO of *SER-Ontario* objectives for 1998 have recently been achieved! First, you can now visit us on the Web at <http://www.trentu.ca/ser> for up-to-date information on our Chapter. Second, you should have received a copy of the 1998 Resource Directory with this newsletter.

The Resource Directory is an updated and expanded listing of sources of native plant materials, important information for buyers of native plant materials, a listing of consultants and practitioners that provide ecological restoration services, a listing of educational opportunities to help you find the training you need and, our annual listing of *SER-Ontario* members. We hope that the 1998 Resource Directory will bring together people, services, and current information on ecological restoration in Ontario.

Several members were instrumental in putting pieces of [the directory](#) together. Thanks to Jim Dougan and Teresa Bosco for their assistance with the Consultants and Education sections of the directory. Steve Smith and several other SER members helped BarbBoysen with the important information for buyers of native plant materials. Marion Norman continues to keep track of our members. And, I had some help from a couple colleagues with the growers section and the desk-top publishing. Finally, I wish to thank our advertisers, many of whom are *SER-Ontario* members, for supporting the production of the directory. Let us know how we can improve the directory by completing the comment card on the last page.

We are pleased to welcome new executive members, Margot Urswic and Al Unwin (*SER-Ontario Welcomes New Members*) in this newsletter. Margot has been instrumental in getting us on the Web and has done a wonderful job of designing our new Web Page. Al was one of the lucky few from Ontario who attended the latest SER International Conference in Florida, and he shares this experience with us in this newsletter.

The Executive's next focus will be the organization of a [joint national conference on ecological restoration/land reclamation](#) with the Canadian Land Reclamation (CLRA) in Toronto September 28-30, 1998. Please contact Kevin Trimble or Steve Smith if you are interested in helping with this task.

With Margot and Marion's help we hope to send those members with e-mail addresses their next newsletter edition electronically! If we don't have an e-mail address listed for you in the Members section of the 1998 Resource Directory, and you do have an e-mail address, please let us know by sending an e-mail to [ser\\_ont@trentu.ca](mailto:ser_ont@trentu.ca). Also, if you have recently moved, please send your address change to Marion Norman at the following address:

Society for Ecological Restoration - Ontario Chapter  
c/o Environmental and Resource Studies Program  
Trent University  
Peterborough, ON K9J 7B8  
Tel/Fax: 705-748-1634

Happy Spring!

*Silvia Strobl*  
Chair

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#### SER Ontario Spring Field Event

Cawthra Woods Field Day: Saturday May 9, 1998

CAWTHRA WOODS is a 21 hectare deciduous forest owned by the City of Mississauga. Located on the southeast corner of the Queen Elisabeth Way and Cawthra Road in the heart of Mississauga, it epitomizes the challenges of managing and restoring natural woodlots within cities.

The event will include a warmup at Cawthra House, the Cawthra family estate home set in the forest, provided by the City of Mississauga. A brief review of the site history will be presented by City staff and local naturalists. Eric Boysen of Wildlife Habitat Canada will address the gathering on the management of deciduous forests to promote old-growth structure and functions. A field walk will follow to examine spring flora, vernal pools and areas of restoration concern in the woodlot.

Meet at 9:00 am at Cawthra House, located on Cawthra Road just southeast of the QEW interchange, in the centre of the large woodlot. Coffee and donuts are being generously provided by the City. Presentations will begin at 9:30, rain or shine so please come prepared!

Space limited to 30 persons so please pre-register with Jim Dougan before May 1, 1998 (Tel: 519-822-1609, fax: 519-822-5389, e-mail: [jda@sentex.net](mailto:jda@sentex.net)).

Donations to *SER Ontario* will be gratefully accepted!

*Jim Dougan*

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#### SER Ontario On-Line!

I AM pleased to announce that *SER Ontario* now has its own web site. This site is being hosted by the Trent University and can be found at <http://www.trentu.ca/ser> (and here you are!!).

The site is intended to promote who we are and what we do to non-members, and also serve as a resource to existing members. To date, we have posted the December 1997 newsletter. However, I will be adding previous newsletters and upcoming newsletters as they come out so that members who wish to read them on-line instead of receiving a hard copy will be able to do so (following notification by e-mail). I have also posted information about the upcoming SER- CRLA conference in Toronto, and will be adding details about the talks and posters to be presented as that information becomes available.

Portions of the 1998 Directory (ie. list of growers specializing in native plant material) will also be put on-line over the next few months. Links to the main SER (Madison) site and the two SER journals' sites are up, and I intend to set up a "restoration links" page as more sites in are brought to my attention.

I encourage anyone who has any suggestions, information they would like to see up, or links they think are "restoration-oriented" to contact me (e-mail: [mursic@uoguelph.ca](mailto:mursic@uoguelph.ca), tel. 519-763-8101) with feedback. We want to make the site as useful and informative to members and non-members as possible, so go surfing and let me know what you think!

*Margot Ursic*

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#### SER-Ontario Welcomes New Members

Margot Ursic first developed a keen interest in environmental and restoration issues (and a love of northern Ontario) when she started planting trees for Brinkman's Reforestation Ltd. almost a decade ago. During her 5 summers up north, Margot spent a lot of time thinking about trees, and after completing a Bachelor's degree in History/Liberal Arts in Montreal she decided to make the leap into Plant Sciences. After a year of upgrading with biological science courses, she began a Master's degree in Botany at the University of Guelph. While her thesis focussed on mycorrhizal associations of nursery conifers, Margot used her time as a graduate student to develop a broad understanding of plant/soil biology and ecology. After completing her MSc she worked as a Research Associate in the Fungal and Soil Ecology Lab (University of Guelph) where she continued to work on mycorrhizal associations but in relation to plant community ecology, global change biology and urban reforestation.

Margot has also been conducting scientific research for Dougan & Associates Ecological Consulting Services on a part-time basis since 1996, and has recently been hired to work full-time as the Research and Development Co-ordinator for this company.

Margot's understanding of restoration ecology continues to evolve, and she looks forward helping SER Ontario serve its members and promote itself through its new web site which she will be managing.

Al Unwin is a professor and program co-ordinator with the Centre for Environmental Training at Niagara College in St. Catharines, Ontario. As program co-ordinator, Al has been responsible for the development and administration of the Ecosystem Restoration Post Graduate program. This unique program is offered at the graduate level and introduces students to a variety of courses focused on ecological restoration. Prior to Niagara College, Al worked for several years as an environmental consultant focusing on pollution management and ecological engineering for the mining industry.

In the fall of 1998 Al and the Centre for Environmental Training will be moving to a brand new campus in Niagara-on-the-lake, where the Ecosystem Restoration students will be restoring a 14 acre decommissioned sewage lagoon located on-site.

A very warm welcome to our new executive members!

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#### 1997 SER Annual Conference - Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

THE 9th annual International Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration, was held in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida from November 12 - 15 last year. As the snow flew around the heads of the chapter members in Ontario, hundreds of individuals from around the globe attended the annual conference and soaked in the beautiful surroundings of south Florida. The focus of the conference was 'ecological restoration and regional conservation strategies' and provided many with an in-depth view of specific restoration issues facing the State of Florida. Since the ecological disaster caused by hurricane Andrew in 1992, many of these issues have become increasingly important to the state of Florida and provided many with a glimpse of the complexities of re-establishing functioning ecosystems on isolated lands common to south Florida.

Possibly, the highlights of the week-long event were the pre and post-conference field trips that allowed attendees to both view and participate in restoration work occurring in the coastal zones of south Florida. The most widely attended field trip was a six day post-conference excursion to Andros Island in the Bahamas where I am sure many of the participants worked extremely hard with little time for relaxation.

As one of the few attendees from the Ontario Chapter, I was quite impressed by the diversity of individuals that were represented at the conference. Educators, policy makers, practitioners and scientists all were well represented which provided for some interesting debate and discussion usually over a tropical cocktail of some sort around the pool or ocean side restaurant -- truly a rough way to spend a few days.

*Al Unwin*

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### Joint Autumn Conference

SER-ONTARIO is joining with the Canadian Land Reclamation Association (CLRA) to host a conference at the Radisson Hotel, Markham on September 28 to 30, 1998. Participants are expected to come from all Canada and the northern United States.

The theme is reclamation and restoration of settled landscapes, covering restoration of sites disturbed by human activities, both in rural and urban areas.

A sub-committee of the SER board is working with CLRA to plan the conference. The format will be one to two days of indoor sessions with a day (or more) of field trips. There will also be an *SER-Ontario* members meeting to bring everyone together for the first time.

Ideas for papers, poster sessions, field trips, invited speakers, and sponsors for parts of the conference are invited from all members. Please forward these to Marion Norman at the Ontario Chapter office as soon as possible. The deadline for papers is March 20, 1998.

*Stephen Smith*

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### Tallgrass Communities Recovery Plan Developed for Southern Ontario

A RECOVERY plan for tallgrass communities in southern Ontario has been produced by World Wildlife Fund and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, along with the assistance of an expert advisory team.

Tallgrass prairies and savannas are some of the most endangered communities in Canada. Tallgrass communities formerly occupied at least 800 km<sup>2</sup> of the pre-settlement landscape in southern Ontario, but today less than 3%, or 21 km<sup>2</sup>, remains. What little is left supports a high number of rare species including almost 20% of Ontario's rare plants. Twenty-four species of flora and fauna associated with Ontario's tallgrass communities have been recognized as at risk by the Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC).

The traditional model of a recovery plan focuses on one species, but in this case it was clear that a broader approach would be both more efficient and more effective by benefiting many rare species. This plan was developed to deal with ecological communities as a whole. It is the first such undertaking in the province and it will provide a model for future national and regional recovery planning efforts.

*Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan* calls for increasing protection, conservation, and restoration activities. It also advocates raising public awareness, increasing stewardship activities, and encouraging greater research and information sharing. A key recommendation is the formation of an Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association to help lead and co-ordinate a concerted recovery effort. The formation of this group is already underway. Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan calls for increasing protection, conservation, and restoration activities. It also advocates raising public awareness, increasing stewardship activities, and encouraging greater research and information sharing. A key recommendation is the formation of an Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association to help lead and co-ordinate a concerted recovery effort. The formation of this group is already underway. Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan calls for increasing protection, conservation, and restoration activities. It also advocates raising public awareness, increasing stewardship activities, and encouraging greater research and information sharing. A key recommendation is the formation of an Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association to help lead and co-ordinate a concerted recovery effort. The formation of this group is already underway. Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan calls for increasing protection, conservation, and restoration activities. It also advocates raising public awareness, increasing stewardship activities, and encouraging greater research and information sharing. A key recommendation is the formation of an Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association to help lead and co-ordinate a concerted recovery effort. The formation of this group is already underway.

The recovery of tallgrass communities in Ontario is an ambitious goal; reaching that goal will require the assistance and co-operation of a wide variety of agencies and individuals. Please join the work toward this goal. For details on how to get involved in implementing the Recovery Plan and to find out more about the Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association, please contact:

*Lindsay Rodger*  
World Wildlife Fund  
tel: 416-489-4567, ext. 281  
e-mail: [lrodger@wwfcanada.org](mailto:lrodger@wwfcanada.org)

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