

Sent: October 8, 2014 3:23 PM

Subject: NEWS RELEASE - Official trail opening at the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve Today



Blazing new trails at Hazel Bird Nature Reserve

Nature Conservancy of Canada opens new trail in Central Ontario

Cobourg ON (October 8, 2014) – The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) held an official trail opening at the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve today. This property protects tallgrass prairie, sand barren, oak woodland and black oak savanna habitats of the Rice Lake Plains.

The event was held today with Mark Stabb, Program Director for Central Ontario, NCC; Mayor Mark Lovshin, Hamilton Township; Todd Farrell, Coordinator, Conservation Biology, Central Ontario and representatives from the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and the Oak Ridges Trail Association sharing words.

Partners, donors and guests joined NCC on this beautiful fall day to learn more about the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve's trail system and learn more about why this property was named after Hazel Bird, a local naturalist, educator and pioneering conservation volunteer. In the late 1960's, this area was a favoured location for Hazel's renowned nest-box program for the restoration of eastern bluebirds. Today, NCC continues to work hard to help restore and protect environmentally significant flora and fauna on this property.

Canada's natural areas are part of our national identity. Conserved lands are a real and lasting expression of our commitment to ensuring a legacy for future generations. NCC aims to help people value and experience nature through our work, properties and events such as these.

Quotes:

"With this trail we are welcoming visitors to explore the tallgrass habitats of this special place, and helping them to become better connected to our habitat conservation and restoration efforts. We hope to build a growing network of volunteers committed to restoring tallgrass prairie and oak savanna here and across the Rice Lake Plains," said Mark Stabb, Program Director for Central Ontario, NCC.

"This trail also represents a new partnership with the Oak Ridges Trail Association, whose volunteers will be helping to monitor and maintain this side loop of the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail," said Dana Kleniewski, Ontario Director of Development and Communications, NCC.

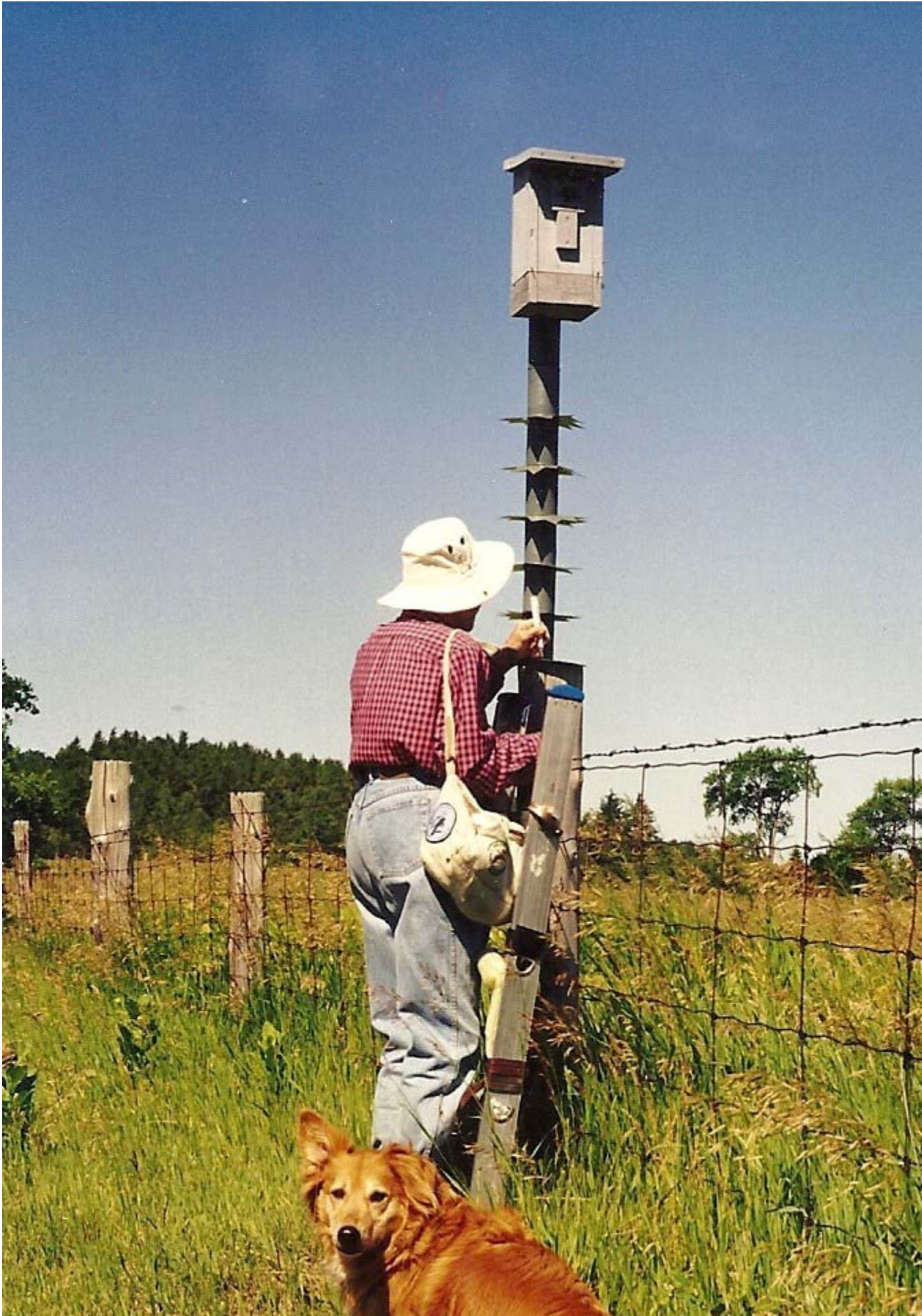
Facts:

- | NCC's first project in Ontario was the conservation of Cavan Swamp in 1969, a type of wetland supporting numerous orchid species, muskrat, beaver and waterfowl. NCC works in communities across Ontario from the Oak Ridges Moraine, Frontenac Arch, the Minesing Wetlands, Manitoulin, Lake Superior to Pelee Island.
- | The Rice Lake Plains is a roughly 100,000 acre (40,470 hectare) landscape located at the eastern end of the Oak Ridges Moraine, southeast of Peterborough. Globally, these habitats are rare,

and oak savannas are considered amongst the most endangered ecological communities in North America. Grassland birds and other rare species depend on this rare habitat to survive. The Rice Lake Plains represents the easternmost arm of Ontario's Greenbelt.

- | To date, NCC and its partners have conserved over 1,920 acres (777 hectares) of significant habitat on Rice Lake Plains – almost 70 percent of our current five-year conservation goal. NCC is restoring and expanding natural prairie and savanna remnants, bringing the rich natural heritage of this special place back to life.

Photos:



Caption: Hazel Bird monitoring one of 35 bluebird boxes she maintained on this and the adjacent properties (Photo by NCC).

About:

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is the nation's leading land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain. Since 1962 NCC and its partners have helped to protect more than 2.7 million acres (over 1.1 million hectares), coast to coast. The Nature Conservancy of Canada has conserved over 178,000 acres (72,034 hectares) in Ontario. For more information visit: www.natureconservancy.ca/on.

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The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the nation's leading not-for-profit, private land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain. Since 1962, Ontario and its partners have helped to protect more than 178,000 acres (72,034 hectares). NCC received an "A+" grade on MoneySense's 2013 rating of the 100 largest charities in Canada - the highest ranking of all Canadian environmental charities and placing us in Canada's top four most efficient charities. To learn more about our projects and help support our work, please visit our website: www.natureconservancy.ca/on

This fall take #time4nature

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