

Turtle Times

Your Donations At Work

www.kawarthaturtle.org

ONTARIO TURTLE CONSERVATION CENTRE

Summer 2016

From the Director

It has been a packed year so far, with lots of exciting things happening at OTCC. In addition to our usual projects (hospital, hatchlings, field work and education), we have been very fortunate to have some new partners approach us and are looking forward to announcing this formally. We are also working towards a Capacity Building venture that will allow us to increase our scope even more and expand our role in conservation. Stay tuned!

Thanks to everyone for your support - we depend on you, and we couldn't do our work without all of you!

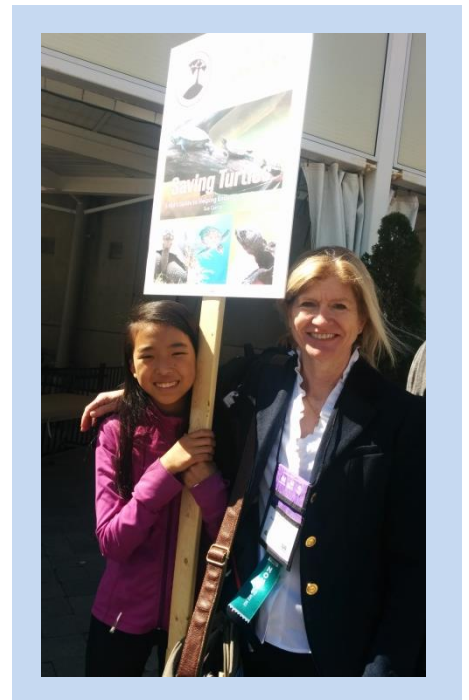


-Dr. Sue Carstairs Executive and Medical Director

In the News

OTCC's own veterinarian, director, and now in house author, was recently recognized for her book *Saving Turtles: A Kids' Guide to Helping Endangered Creatures*. The book was nominated by the Ontario Library Association's Forest of Trees, Silver Birch Award Program in the children's non-fiction category. Dr. Carstairs was able to attend the ceremony in Toronto and speak to the students that were showing their support for the book!

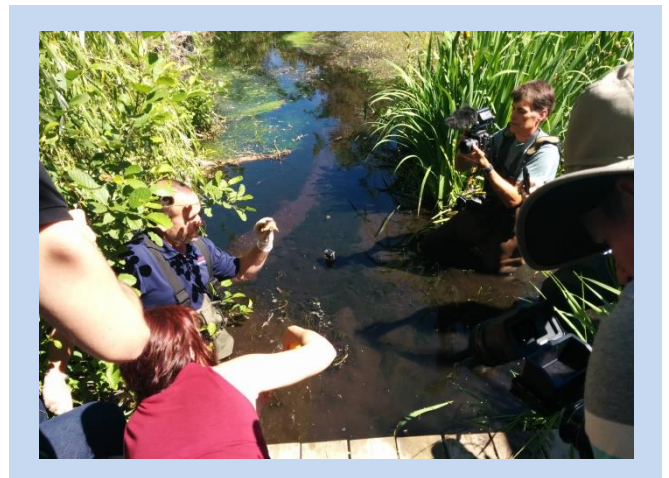
Copies of the book are available for purchase at the centre, and all proceeds go towards supporting turtle conservation.



Dr. Sue Carstairs with a student who carried the book's banner "Saving Turtles" at the Silver Birch Award event.

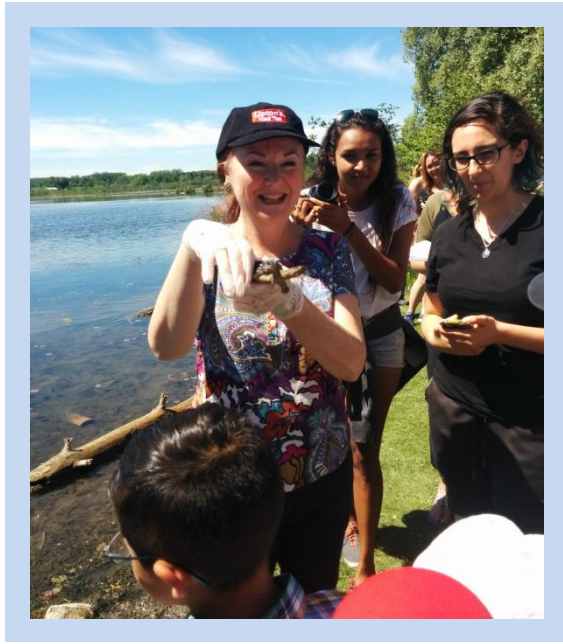
Hatchling Release at Seneca College in King City

A few hatchling turtles, raised over the winter at OTCC, were released to the wild with much fanfare this June. These were 15 of over 1000 babies hatched at OTCC last year. Their rescue tale began when turtle eggs were discovered on a bridge scheduled to be torn down on the campus. Seneca Facilities Manager, Rick Greenlaw, alerted Dr. Sue Carstairs, who is a professor at Seneca. She



Seneca Facilities Manager, Rick Greenlaw, releases one of the small snapping turtle hatchlings that was raised at OTCC from the eggs rescued at Seneca campus.

collected, incubated, and hatched the eggs as part of the OTCC's head-starting program.



Patricia Koval holds one of the 15 snapping turtles released in the beautiful wetland at King Campus.

With the help of WWF-Canada's Go Wild Community Grant, presented by TELUS, we were able to host a public event to celebrate their release, offering a rare opportunity to see a species at risk returned to the wild. Their story illustrates the power of collaboration and caring.

Shell-e-brating Turtle Conservation in T.O!

The turtles and volunteer team headed to Toronto for a beautiful evening to raise funds for OTCC. The evening was hosted by Patricia Koval at the stunning Torys LLP venue which provided one-of-a-kind vistas of Lake Ontario as a backdrop. We would like to extend a special thank you to Emily Giles for coordinating, and co-emceeing with Monte Hummel for the evening. We would also like to thank Brennan Caverhill and his students from

the Environmental Visual Communication program for the wonderful event photos. We'd like to extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone that attended. We had so much fun with this supportive crowd!

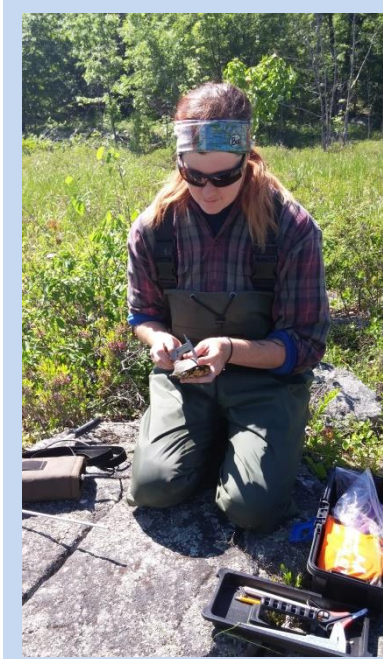


Christina Davy, Alicia Lane, Jessica Steinberg, and Emily Giles pose for a shot at our turtle-y awesome photo booth at the fundraiser in Toronto this spring!

Field Research

We have had another successful field season continuing our long-term study of headstarting as a conservation tool. We are using radio telemetry to monitor threatened Blanding's turtles and are also continuing population surveys of endangered spotted turtles. Megan Miller is our die-hard, lead technician this season and she has been joined by some equally tough volunteers to get the job

done! A special thank you to Dylan Cook, Olivia Vandersanden, Ian McBain, the Stewardship Rangers, and all that have come out for a day or two to help us keep this important project moving forward. To read more about their experiences in the field please visit our website (kawarthaturtle.org/blog/research-blog/). The following is an excerpt from one blog post that highlights the beauty that goes hand-in-hand with this tough work:



Megan is measuring a radio tagged Blanding's turtle has been tracked throughout the season.

"...those that have had the opportunity to take part in this project before me had explained the hard work and time required for a successful tracking season, but, what they didn't portray was the sheer beauty and enjoyment I would get out of being in the field...although sometimes the work can be daunting, and the weather and bugs unforgiveable, I have grown to love this place. The landscape is picturesque. At first the trees were bare with only a few tellings of a warmer season, but now the forest is lush with green, and pops of colour here and there are signaling the flowers are beginning to bloom. In the month I have been here I have seen more new birds to add to my lifer list than I have in the many years I have been studying in school. I happened upon my first ever moose, have witnessed some of the biggest fish in the lake mock my coworkers as they try their hand at fishing, and have watched the sun go down on

countless perfect days..." -Megan

Volunteer Spotlight

We wouldn't exist without our amazing volunteers. They help us with all aspects our organization, and often come to us from all over the world! Students from universities and colleges also complete unique placements, help us with research, and gain hands on experience working with species at risk. We wanted to feature one of our volunteers, Ryan Lamoureux, who is a Trent University student that completed his Conservation Internship with us. Ryan has travelled to the Yukon to complete field work with hares this summer and has been writing a blog including the amazing scenery and wildlife sightings he has encountered. We thought other wildlife enthusiast may enjoy reading about his adventures! (to read more: ryanlamoureux.wordpress.com)! Thanks for all your hard work Ryan!



(top) Ryan with a radio collared hare that is part of the research project up in the (bottom) Yukon wilderness(bottom).

Turtles on the Silver Screen

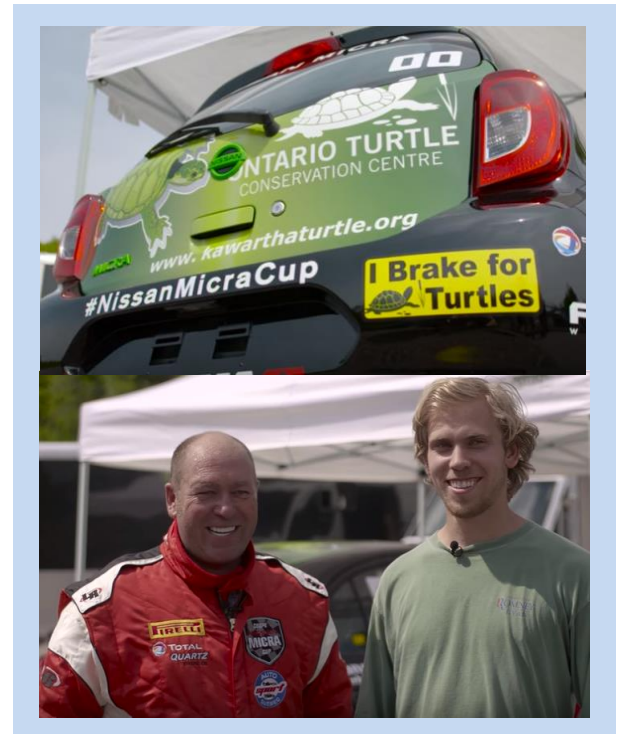
OTCC was lucky to host an amazing crew this summer that was filming a short documentary. The film is funded by BRAVO Factual, produced by Junction Box J, and directed by Scott Dobson. We are really looking forward to the release this fall! The documentary will be featured at film festivals and will help raise awareness about OTCC's work to conserve Ontario's turtles. Stay tuned!



Cinematographer, Juan Montalvo, and a very well camouflaged director, Scott Dobson, filming the work of OTCC for the documentary.

A Little Car Helping to Raise Awareness for a Big Message!

Craig Willoughby Sr. and Jr. are taking the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre message on the Nissan Micra Cup Tour. This father and son team, and local business owner of Lloyds Labs Inc. in Peterborough, are helping raise awareness for turtle conservation in a very unique way. The team decided to cover the tiny race car in an image of a turtle. As they speed around the track, they remind onlookers that we should not be racing anywhere off the track by having the "I Brake for Turtles" bumper stick design boldly displayed on the bumper. This bumper sticker, a common sight in Peterborough and the surrounding areas, shows support and acts as a reminder to keep an eye out for these slow moving creatures on our roadways. Seven of Ontario's 8 species are listed as at risk of disappearing; therefore, conserving and protecting remaining populations is vital to their survival!



(top) The Willoughby's racecar is sporting the OTCC's "I Brake for Turtles" bumper sticker to raise awareness for turtle conservation. (bottom) Craig Willoughby Sr. and Jr.

A big thank you to the Willoughby's, and Trans Canada Nissan for helping us share this message and best of luck on the racing circuit!

Hospital

As usual, the hospital was hopping all summer, particularly in May and June. The unusual weather seemed to affect their movement somewhat, and this season's pattern is definitely different than in the past. We are also busy incubating the 1500 eggs that come from injured turtles in our care. About half of the turtles admitted to the hospital are females on their way to lay eggs. Some of these eggs have already begun to hatch, so we hope you can stop by and see the new babies!

A big thank you to the many clinics and organizations that donate much needed medical supplies for the care and treatment of our patients. A special thank you to Dr. Jimmy Chen of Aspen Springs Dental Clinic for donating a new dental drill tool and bit, used to repair turtle shells!

Frozen Release

We had an interesting rescue this winter. In February we received a call to our hotline about a snapping turtle sitting on top of a frozen pond! This turtle must have been a little confused by the unseasonably warm spell that thawed the edges of the pond. The turtle emerged, but had no way to return to its hibernation site under the ice as the lake had refrozen with cooling temperatures. The turtle, "Ice T", as he was fondly named, spent the winter at OTCC and was happily released back home this spring. Thank you, Wendy, for the one-of-a-kind rescue story.

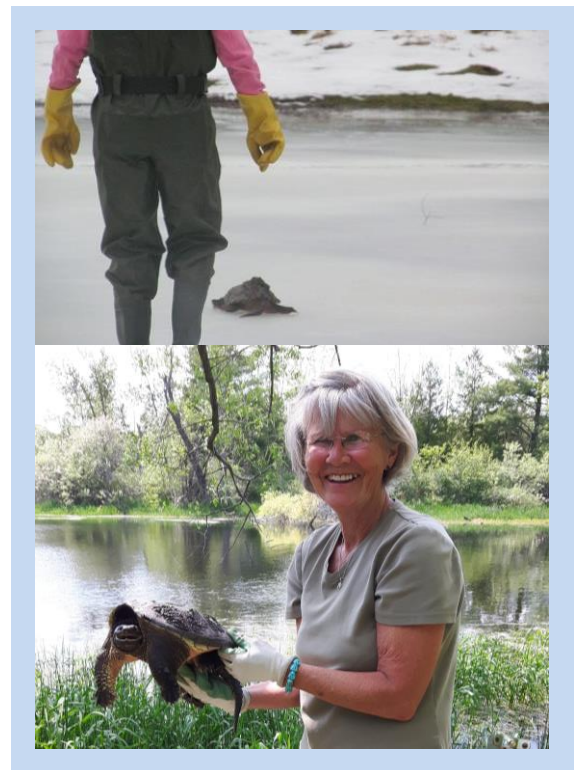
Education

We have been busy hosting groups and offering programs this summer. If you would like to book a tour, please call 705-741-5000 to arrange. We hope you can join us at our fall **open house on September 10th, 2016 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm**. There will be a chance to tour the indoor and outdoor displays, chat with staff and volunteers, and purchase some tasty treats at the bake sale, all proceeds go towards supporting OTCC!

For more information about these stories, to [support this ongoing work](#), or to [become a member](#), please visit www.kawarthaturtle.org.



A tiny Blanding's turtle emerges from the egg at OTCC ; one of many to hatch this summer!



'Ice T' the turtle was rescued from from a frozen pond (top) in Feb. and succesfully released in spring by one of our amazing volunteers, Wendy (bottom).