

TURTLE TIMES

Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre*

Fall/Winter Hours:

Monday to Friday 9 - 5
Saturday 9 - 3

In this issue:

OTCC In the News	1
Message from the Director	2
A Very Special Supporter	3/4
New Recycling Program	3
Update from the Trauma Centre	5
News from Education	7/8
Notes from the Field	9
Volunteer Spotlight	10
The Hatchling Hub	11/12

* Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is the operating name of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre



Dr. Margo Tante, an OTCC volunteer, releases hatchlings to a pond.

OTCC In the News: Returning Hatchlings to the Wild



Supporters and team members from KLT and OTCC head down the trail

In June of this year, OTCC teamed up with Kawartha Land Trust (KLT) to release more than two dozen snapping turtle hatchlings back to the wild in the wetlands alongside the Stony Lake Trail network. Donors and volunteers of both the OTCC and KLT were present for this event. The turtles were hatched last fall from eggs recovered from a female snapping turtle that was injured near Stony Lake Trails, and brought to OTCC for treatment. These clutches were among the 600 hatchlings that overwintered at OTCC in our head-start program last year. Our head-start program increases the survival of hatchlings, since the larger hatchlings are better able to avoid predation. On average, less than 1% of hatchlings born in the wild survive to adulthood.





*Home of the Kawartha Turtle
Trauma Centre*

4-1434 Chemong Road,
Selwyn, Ontario K9J 6X2
tel: 705-741-5000
web: www.ontarioturtle.ca
e-mail: info@ontarioturtle.ca



OTCC's mission is to protect and conserve Ontario's at-risk native turtles and their wetland habitats. The Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is the only dedicated turtle rehabilitation and conservation centre in Canada.

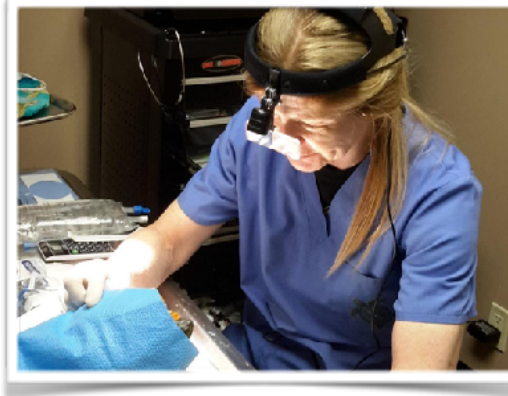
Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is the operating name of Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre
Registered Charity
85752 4409 RR0001

TURTLE TIMES is published for the members and supporters of the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre

Your Donations At Work!

Message from the Executive and Medical Director

by Dr. Sue Carstairs



2018 has been another milestone year at the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre!

We all feel very fortunate to be able to have such a large impact in the field of conservation. Our

partnerships have grown, our supporters have grown, and our conservation results have grown. Our hospital has supported many people across the province, and even globally, in adding to their knowledge and skills in the field of Turtle Trauma, thereby ensuring that more turtles are helped. We have admitted 940 turtles so far this year, and are still hatching the over 4,000 eggs we incubated! Now that the busy admission season is over, we are equally busy in other areas, including the on-going care of over 700 turtles at the centre, as well as developing plans for even more improvements in the coming year. There are grant proposals to be written, and meetings and networking to be done. We feel extremely privileged to be hosting the Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, to the centre in November.

Now that we have such a strong team, I have been able to spend more time working on publishing our valuable data in peer-reviewed journals. *Revisiting the Hypothesis of Sex-related Turtle Road Mortalities* is in press, and *A Question of Scale: Replication and the Effective Evaluation of Conservation Interventions* has been published in FACETS. Both were done in collaboration with our amazing partners.

A tremendous thank you to all our members and supporters, for helping us to accomplish so much for the turtles of Ontario!



A Very Special Supporter

by Diana Morrison, Administrator

The people of Bancroft were stirred into action this past spring by Kelly Wallace, known in Bancroft as the Turtle Lady, who works tirelessly on behalf of turtles in her area. She monitors nesting sites and has been known to spend hours watching over nesting turtles so that they don't come to harm during this vulnerable time. She speaks at various events, and hosts a number of information sessions to raise awareness and funds.

In the spring, Kelly approached us and asked what she and the town of Bancroft could do to help the OTCC. They tackled our wish list and one-by-one, fulfilled almost every item on the list. She worked with 1st Bancroft Beavers and Cubs, to make and sell turtle signs, and sent us the proceeds. The "Turtle Bomb", consisting of hundreds of hand-made turtles scattered throughout the town of Bancroft to celebrate World Turtle Day, and bring awareness to their plight, was her idea.

Continued on page 4



Chuck Potter and Kelly Wallace deliver gifts from Bancroft



Our New Recycling Program

We are pleased to have enrolled in Kimberly-Clark's RightCycle program, a program that turns hard-to-recycle items into useful items. OTCC regularly uses items such as disposable gloves to avoid the spread of infections both among the turtles, and to ourselves. As a conservation organization, we don't want to contribute to the problem of excessive waste in our landfills, or the garbage that finds its way into our ecosystems. Unfortunately, while recycling is clearly a worthwhile initiative, the implementation of this program comes with increased costs. We're looking for sponsors for this program. It would only take ten people contributing \$5.00 per month to cover the cost of recycling. If you're interested in helping with this program, please visit our website and click on the donate button, where you'll have the option to give monthly, either by credit card or via your PayPal account.

Save Turtles and Taxes by Donating Securities to OTCC



A donation of publicly traded securities such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds and segregated funds to OTCC may provide you with significant tax benefits, while conserving at-risk turtle populations.

When you transfer securities that are listed on a public stock exchange directly to OTCC you may not pay tax on capital gains. This may provide you with a tax saving of up to 50 percent and may be a greater tax savings than donating the cash proceeds from the sale of the securities. Donors also qualify for a charitable tax receipt based on the asset's fair market value.

It's easy to give the gift of securities. Contact OTCC for more information and a transfer form at info@ontarioturtle.ca or 705-741-5000.

Special Supporter continued from page 3

Kelly and the town of Bancroft not only collected a significant amount of contributions for the centre, but when she heard that we needed a new ECG machine for the hospital, she collected enough money to fulfill that wish too.

She never ceases to amaze us, and we are thrilled to have her on the side of turtles. We are pleased to acknowledge and thank Kelly for her efforts and commitment to turtles and the OTCC.



1st Bancroft Beavers and Cubs



An Update from the Trauma Centre

by Amanda Klack, Veterinary Technician

2018 has been another extremely busy year for the OTCC, especially in the hospital. We were very fortunate to have received a generous bequest from Gail Grace Christie to create our new intensive care unit. This unit has enabled us to house the injured turtles that need ongoing treatment and care until such time as they can be



released in the spring of 2019. Each year we have experienced an increase in intakes and eggs, so this new unit has been a very valuable asset, enabling the expansion of our centre. It has allowed us to admit every injured turtle for

released. It has set up the hospital to run more smoothly in a number of ways. While previously many turtles had to be housed on the floor, we now have increased shelf space for the turtles, improving conditions for the turtles, and freeing up walking space for the staff and volunteers that care for them. Now that the trauma season is over for this year, the majority of injured turtles have left the ICU. The space is still very much in use, but now with hatchlings! We have had eggs hatching since June of this year, and we are keeping over 520 hatchlings over winter at the centre for eventual



which we receive a call, and gives the hatchlings that have hatched at OTCC a better chance at survival once they are released.



Shop the OTCC Store

Are you in need of a cozy hoodie for those blustery days?



A unique piece of jewellery to wear to that upcoming event?



The perfect gift for the turtle lover on your list?



We have you covered!

Drop by our store to check out our extensive collection of turtle merchandise, call 705-741-5000 for more information, or shop for many of the items on-line at <https://ontarioturtle.ca/shop/>.

100% of the proceeds from all sales goes towards the conservation of Ontario's Turtles.



News from OTCC's Education and Outreach Program

by Wendy Baggs, Education Program Coordinator

It has been an active, productive and rewarding time for the Education Program!

2018 has been our busiest year yet! We have traveled from Point au Baril to Tobermory, Lyndhurst to Haliburton, Oshawa to Wilberforce, and Orillia to Killbear Provincial Park, plus all the places in between!

Our Education Program has been described as dynamic and engaging, and the number of



requests for on-site and off-site workshops demonstrates to us that the OTCC is on the right path. Many of our requests to attend community groups, host field trips and visit schools have come from referrals. Our Outdoor Education Centre was enjoyed by many, even our

amazing *Education Turtle Ambassadors* that spent their summer in the beautiful outdoors.

Our doors welcomed individuals that pre-booked private tours, along with families out for an afternoon in search of a unique experience.

continued on page 8

Education continued from page 7

We have increased the number of participants reached by 30% over last year. By the end of this year we will have engaged with over 13,000 individuals, with students being the top participants.

Our Education Program's success was made possible by some incredible educators that hit the ground running and never



missed a beat! We made quite the team!

Our goal is to educate students and individuals about Ontario's at-risk native turtles. We also explore the topic of biodiversity and how we can make a difference as stewards of the environment by promoting greater awareness, understanding and appreciation of Ontario's turtles.

Thank you for your support of OTCC's Education Program!



If you're interested in booking an event, tour, or want a copy of the education brochure, please contact Wendy at 705-741-5000 or email her at education@ontarioturtle.ca

Notes from the Field



by Donnell Gasbarrini, Turtle Programs Manager

This year has been very successful for our field team! The team has been out, navigating bogs, marshes, forests, and undulating rocky landscapes in search of the juvenile Blanding's turtles that we are tracking. Some of these juveniles were raised in a captive environment at the OTCC, giving them a "headstart" in life. Other turtles that are being tracked are the same size as the headstarts, but were hatched and "raised" in the wild without any human involvement.

We are collecting a variety of information from these individuals so that we can compare everything from growth rates to habitat use to overall survival rates between these two groups, in an effort to determine how effective headstarting is as a conservation tool. Stay tuned for the first paper to come of this study, with our findings to date, which will be published in a peer reviewed journal in a few months' time!



This Blanding's turtle was found basking in a vernal pool. We were led to the location by another turtle that we were tracing. This one is a new addition to the team this year, and has been tracked since the end of May. He/she will continue to be tracked in the 2019 field season!

For unique stories and tales from the field, please visit our Blog series on our web site at <https://ontarioturtle.ca/news/>, put together by our die-hard field technicians. The team will be back at the field site in April or May 2019 to continue with this exciting work, and we are looking forward to sharing more photos, stories, and information with you next summer!



From left to right: The 2018 Field Team: Kelton, Mackenzie, Kirstin, and Toby at a portage pass.





Volunteer Spotlight

Carol Small

by Diana Morrison, Administrator

Carol Small started volunteering with the OTCC about 6 years ago, when the centre was still located on Erskine Avenue. Her interest in turtles grew with the snapping turtles that appeared routinely to nest in her driveway. She began her volunteer work at OTCC as a turtle taxi driver. Her first responsibility was to pick up injured turtles from the local First Response Centres, drive around with turtles in her car and then transfer them to the OTCC when it opened. She arrived at the centre to train as a habitat cleaner, but the following week she was asked if she wanted to learn how to feed turtles. She has continued as a turtle feeder since that day.



Carol's background as a physiotherapist is coming in handy! She not only maintains her feeding schedule on Fridays, but during the winter months, she also comes in on Tuesdays to give physio to turtles that have spinal damage. When asked why she continues to donate her valuable time to OTCC she says, *"I have loved*

working with the turtles, especially doing their physio. I missed that part of my life since I retired from physio."

We recently featured "Carol and Turtle Physio", a short video on our Facebook page, of Carol helping a Blanding's turtle. Check it out!

Carol lives in Young's Point, is married, and has a daughter, and a grandson. She is an avid and devoted gardener. Her gardens are known to be beautiful! The

dedication Carol demonstrates toward Ontario's turtles and to the OTCC is wonderful, and we couldn't do what we do without her.

Thank you Carol!



The Hatchling Hub



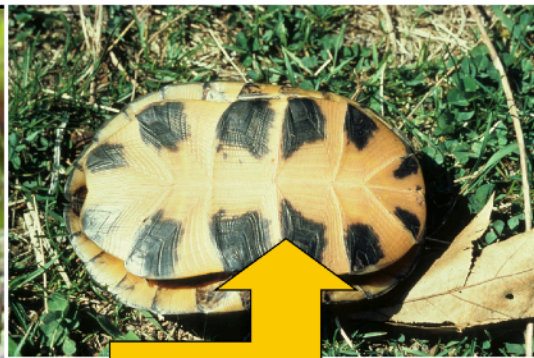
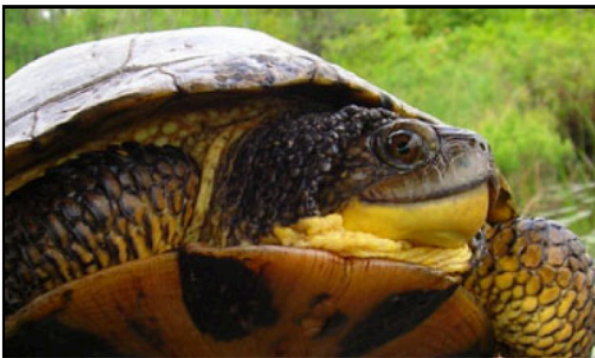
Shellarious Jokes!



1. What do you get when you cross a turtle and a porcupine?
2. What does a turtle do on its birthday?
3. What do you get when you cross a turtle with a giraffe?

(Answers at the bottom of this page)

Did you know???? Blanding's turtles can not only pull their entire body into their shells, but they can also close it! They have a hinged plastron (that's the name of their lower shell) that allows them to close the front and back!



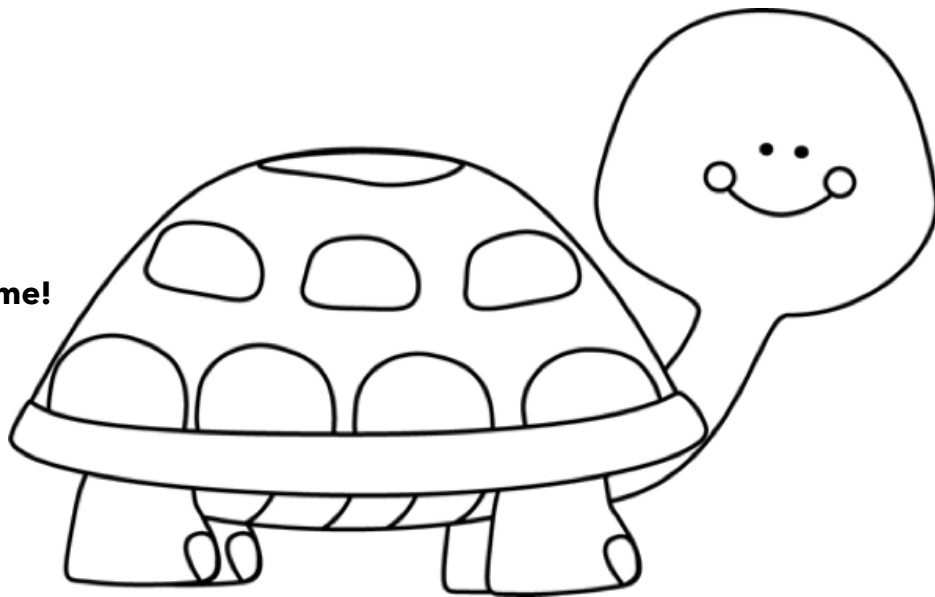
Squeak...good

Answers to jokes:

1. A Slow Poke
2. It Shellebrates!
3. A Turtleneck!

The Hatchling Hub

Colour me!



Can you find your way through
this turtley awesome maze?

