### **ONTARIO TURTLE CONSERVATION CENTRE**

Home of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre







2021 Annual Report

## A Message from our Executive and Medical Director



2021 saw OTCC leap ever closer to our goal of building our new Conservation Centre. With the successful launch of our Capital Campaign, we are well on the way, reaching two-thirds of our goal. Our plan is to complete the Campaign in 2022, and commence construction, with completion in time for the turtle season in 2023!

Our new facility will allow OTCC to continue to grow strategically, while enabling us to make closer connections with the surrounding community and beyond. Education is truly the key to conservation, and the more people we can reach with our conservation message, the better the outcome for Ontario's turtles, and conservation in general. The new site will set the stage for our hospital to grow. Although we accomplish an enormous amount at our current hospital's site, we are limited by space as to how many veterinary placements and hospital volunteers we can

accommodate. Acting as a teaching hospital, it's key that we help others to carry out this work as well. Also, while we have never turned away a turtle needing medical care, every square inch of the current facility is currently in use, and this does present a challenge! We definitely need more space!

Our Turtle Team members have outdone themselves once again in 2021, successfully navigating ongoing Covid-19 challenges, and continuing to strive for excellence in all areas. Our education programming continues to grow, reaching delighted participants both on-line and in-person. The volunteer program is robust, and provides super opportunities for volunteers of all ages. This also allows us to increase our impact, since the enormous volume of work could not be accomplished solely by staff members. Our field work wrapped up its 10th season, helping to 'ground truth' the work we are carrying out with head-started hatchlings, and demonstrating that it is a viable conservation strategy in its own right. Our team truly has the team spirit, and all will pitch in to help with all areas as needed.

We are all excited for the upcoming year, and look forward to welcoming everyone "Where Community and Conservation Connect," our new Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre, in the near future!

A heartfelt thanks to all who make our important conservation work possible - our supporters, donors, volunteers, and staff. Thanks to you, our work is making a difference.

Sue Carstairs, B.Sc., D.V.M., O.Ont. Executive and Medical Director

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# Treatment, Rehabilitation and Release



1514 Turtles Admitted to the Hospital

2337 Turtles Released Back to Source Wetlands Across Ontario

4976 Eggs Incubated

1787 Hatchlings Returned to Wild

29 Juvenile Blanding's Turtles Tracked via Telemetry at Field Site Throughout 2021 we continued our urgent work to conserve declining populations of at-risk turtles, with 2337 turtles of all species being released back into their home range wetlands. It was another very busy season at the OTCC Hospital with 1514 injured at-risk native turtles from across Ontario being admitted for treatment. This number is in keeping with the rapidly increasing number of admissions OTCC has been experiencing the past few years, and over triple the number admitted five years ago. The season was also an exceptionally long one, with the mild weather resulting in turtles

continuing to travel far later than usual, and turtles being admitted into November. Disease surveillance, including testing for Ranavirus and Herpesvirus, continued to be an important component of our work.

Given the unique life cycle of turtles, with each adult being vital to the population due to their late maturity and low recruitment into the adult

to of Dr. Kristen Janke and snapping turtle by Jessica Holdci

population, recent research has shown that our rehabilitation work is having a tangible and significant impact. OTCC played an integral role in the research published in the Journal for Nature Conservation\* in 2021, with the findings demonstrating that rehabilitation and release of injured adult turtles can have a positive impact on populations.

Of critical importance is the fact that the conservation of our turtle populations directly improves the ecological health and functioning of our life-sustaining wetlands and shorelines across Ontario and beyond.

\* James E. Paterson, Sue Carstairs, Christina M. Davy. "Population-level effects of wildlife rehabilitation and release vary with life-history strategy" *Journal for Nature Conservation*, Volume 61, June 2021.

# Head Started Hatchlings and Field Research

Each season, we collect thousands of eggs from injured female turtles who are brought to the OTCC Hospital. With increased admissions comes increased eggs, and in 2021 we incubated over 4976 eggs, with 1787 hatchlings resulting from this program. Hatchlings from all species were headstarted, (cared for throughout the winter) at the OTCC hatching facility, since the larger they are when released, the greater the chance of survival when they are released

back to their source wetlands the following year.

Once again in 2021, we continued our field research to study head-started turtles. 2021 was our 10th season of this longterm project to follow a group of head-started juvenile

Blanding's turtles hatched from eggs of injured turtles admitted to OTCC, alongside a group of comparably sized, wild-hatched juvenile Blanding's that were found at our study site. Last



# Inspiring Conservation Action



Virtual program delivery of our education programming, introduced due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, gained momentum in 2021, reaching twice as many participants as the previous year. We engaged enthusiastic participants of all ages and backgrounds in turtle conservation with our Behind the Scenes Virtual Tours, Live Streaming Events and Turtle Time Video Series.

Behind the Scenes Virtual Tours

Through OTCC's Behind the Scenes Virtual Tours, educators took their students on cyber field trips and completed research projects. Our virtual tours give the students an inside look at the Centre, and provide a novel way of visiting OTCC without ever leaving the classroom. While they don't take the place of meeting our education ambassador turtles in person, the virtual tours have had the positive effect of greatly expanding the geographic reach of our programs.

Turtle Trek Adventure and Turtle Encounters

In parallel to the on-line presentations and videos, when restrictions were lifted in the summer, we reintroduced in-person educational experiences at the OTCC education centre. Beginning in July, we piloted a new in-person program entitled "Turtle Trek Adventure," a 1.5 hour program, offered in the OTCC outdoor education centre for families and small groups. Turtle Encounters, our private in-person tours, also launched again in July, due to the lessening of COVID-19 restrictions. Small groups of six

had the facility to themselves on the one hour guided experience, as they learned about Ontario's eight native turtle species, why they are listed as a species at risk, and how they can help.

Through both our virtual and in-person education programming, OTCC provided interactive sessions to over 8400 participants last year. Importantly, our education programming targets the root causes, inspiring and mobilizing youth as well as citizens of all ages to get involved in projects to develop eco-passages and signage at hot-spots, install nest protection when appropriate, implement nest site naturalization, and become involved in wetland conservation.



# Through Education

First Responder Training and Conference Presentations

Two new on-line videos, "Initial Treatment of the Injured Turtle" and "Turtle Trauma; Beyond the Initial Stabilization" were presented at conferences in Canada and the United States. The videos, which are packed with the up-to-date knowledge in Turtle Trauma, were also used to train 5 new First Responders last year.

Live-streaming Turtle Webcam

OTCC's education turtle ambassadors delighted on-line audiences through our live-streaming internet webcam. We began using our streaming technology in September, and now offer viewing four times weekly on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitch. Our reach via Facebook is in excess of 113,000 per month.

Turtle Time Videos

In addition to the on-line tours, workshops and streaming events, OTCC also continued the popular "Turtle Time" video series. Topics in 2021 included: World Wetlands Day info, the Eastern Musk Turtle, Protecting Turtle Nests, Turtle Hatchlings, Hatchlings vs. Adults, World Turtle Day info, Turtle Rescue Kit Checklist, Turtle Physiotherapy, and Turtle Hatchlings/Water. Over 3,000,000 viewers have been reached with the videos since they began in 2020.

Resource Materials

Our educational tours and workshops are complemented by on-going support by phone, e-mail, web site (https://ontarioturtle.ca/ourmission/brochures/), social media posts,

and complementary brochures and fact cards. A brochure on *Nest Protection*, and a brochure on *Phragmites*, which describes the invasive wetland plant and its impact on turtle populations, were added to our extensive list of resource materials in 2021.



8467 Participants
Attended In-depth
Workshops and Tours

307 Events Hosted

128 Schools Involved

5131 Students Attended

72 Organizations Involved

5 New First Responders Trained

# Where Community and

Our Capital Campaign to raise funds to build our own facility was publicly launched in 2021, and rapidly gained momentum. Our outstanding supporters have now brought us two-thirds of the way towards our goal!

The rapidly increasing admissions of the past few years has pushed our current facility well beyond its limits. Further, our renowned education program has been ready to expand for the last two years, but has been constrained by our current location. The new facility and location will enable us to immediately increase the capacity of visitors to our programs upwards of 30%, and will provide an incredible setting to offer a variety of rich and memorable experiences to the community.

The exceptional generosity of Mary and Gerry Young, providing their 100 acre farm close to our current location in Peterborough, has enabled us to dream big. The construction project is planned to commence in 2022. OTCC has been working towards this venture for the past 10 years, building the financial reserves and infrastructure necessary to successfully complete this ambitious project.



### Conservation Connect

Our vision for the new facility is shown in the artist's depiction at right, and conceptual design of the building and landscaping below. A 10,000 square foot building will house a much expanded Hospital, Hatchling Facility and Education Centre that conserves and celebrates the site's natural and agricultural heritage. The stone foundation of the original barn will become a landscape feature for an education facility in the form of a patio, for observation of the surrounding woods and wetlands.

OTCC's rehabilitation techniques and scientific research are world class, contributing to international conservation



knowledge. Our new home will match our organizational strength, in a location that will truly be an oasis for conservation and education. We look forward to welcoming you soon *Where Community and Conservation Connect*.

Left: Aerial view of Farm, by Gervais Vignola of FishDog, and Scott Adams of Birch Bark Media; Above: Artist depiction of new building by Ray McNiece; Below: Conceptual Design of Building and Landscaping by Wilk Associates Landscape Architecture Ltd.



## Financial Statements

### Statement of Revenue and Expenditure

Year Ending December 31	2021	2020
Revenue		
Grants Donations Special Events and Fundraising	555,304 464,219 62,012	577,292 374,251 58,009
Investment Income	4,951 1,086,486	7,095 1,016,647
Expenditure		
Salaries and related benefits	390,019	274,341
Turtle veterinary care and supplies	164,153	222,506
Occupancy, Telephone and Utilities	106,554	121,076
Office, Professional fees, Bank charges	82,586	85,355
Special Events / Fundraising / Outreach	32,512	22,306
Amortization	<u>33,155</u>	20,087
	808,979	<u>745,671</u>
Unrealized loss on marketable securities	-4,708	-
<b>Excess of Revenue Over Expenditure</b>	272,799	270,976

As at Year Ending December 31

#### **Statement of Financial Position**

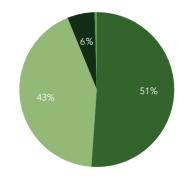
2021

2020

	2021	2020
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	560,255	219,402
HST Receivable	23,603	112,660
Grants Receivable	28,421	212,524
Prepaid Expenses	5,097	5,097
Investments	<u>860,114</u>	<u>855,163</u>
	1,477,490	1,404,846
Long Term Investments	21,825	3,601
Capital Assets	<u>315,222</u>	<u>271,541</u>
	<u>337,047</u>	<u>275,142</u>
Total Assets	1,814,537	1,679,988
Liabilities		
LIANIIITIAS		
Current Liabilities	27.700	27.472
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	26,799	36,472
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue	71,942	36,472 200,944
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue	71,942 <u>425</u>	200,944
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue	71,942	
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities	71,942 <u>425</u>	200,944
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities Fund Balances	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b>	200,944 = <b>237,416</b>
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities  Fund Balances Operating Fund	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b> 440,000	200,944 = <b>237,416</b> 607,428
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities  Fund Balances Operating Fund Internally Restricted Fund	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b> 440,000 *922,577	200,944 = <b>237,416</b>
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities  Fund Balances Operating Fund Internally Restricted Fund Invested in Capital Assets	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b> 440,000 *922,577 315,222	200,944 = 237,416 607,428 *563,603
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities  Fund Balances Operating Fund Internally Restricted Fund Invested in Capital Assets Externally Restricted	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b> 440,000 *922,577 315,222 <u>37,572</u>	200,944 237,416 607,428 *563,603 271,541
Current Liabilities Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities Deferred Grant Revenue Deferred Revenue Total Liabilities  Fund Balances Operating Fund Internally Restricted Fund Invested in Capital Assets	71,942 <u>425</u> <b>99,166</b> 440,000 *922,577 315,222	200,944 = 237,416 607,428 *563,603

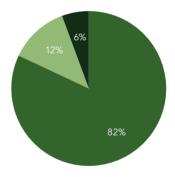
\*Internally Restricted Fund 2021 and 2020 includes \$137,629 Capital Campaign Fund

#### Source of Funds



- Grants
- Donations
- Special Events and Fundraising
- Investment Income

#### Use of Funds



- Turtle Conservation Programs
- Administration
- Fundraising

#### Notes to Financial Statements

OTCC follows the restricted fund method of accounting. The Operating Fund accounts for the Centre's daily operating activities, and consists of funds sufficient to support the Centre for at least 6 months. The Capital Asset Fund reports the Centre's capital assets, related liabilities, revenue and expenditures. The Internally Restricted Fund reports activities of the Strategic Sustainable Fund which currently consists of funds set aside by the Board of Directors. The Capital Campaign Fund reports activities of the Centre for the development and construction of a new facility.

Despite the continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its global effect on businesses and charities, OTCC maintained its grant, donation and fundraising income consistent with previous years.

## Together We Can Make a Difference

A special thank you to our many volunteers who generously offered their time and expertise, and continued to adeptly navigate protocols for health and safety in 2021. OTCC's volunteers provided care for turtles, transported them across the province, returned them to their source wetlands, and supported the organization in a myriad of ways. We would also like to thank the many individuals, businesses and organizations that made generous donations of equipment, services, and supplies.

Jillian Abraham Sabrina Adam Sabrina Adams Tiffany Askett Holly Astrom Jessica Benavides Kamryn Bishop Shayna Briard Allison Bromby Sidney Brown Kai Brucker Ayanna Cane Joelyn Cazabon Shelby Cohen Alex Dewit Sabrina Dopking Dana Driscoll Elena Duncan Kelsie Dyson Mckayla Egan Darlene Goldring Willow Graham Karlotta Grasse Heather Grieves Ann Gronow Vicky Hart Rosie Heffernan Alex Hickey Jessica Hodgson Julie Hoit Natalie Holley Marilyn Hubley Marlene Hull Zach Hummel Mike Illes June Illes Claudia Jaczkowski

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Thank you to the 923

Thank you to House of Scales for donation of UV bulbs, Think Turtle Conservation Initiative for hospital supplies, Martha Jacobs for hand-made jewellery for the gift shop, Henkel and Bancroft Home Hardware for Super Glue, Marian and Rick Pierce for Super Glue, Louisa Mui for office supplies, Ann Gronow for chest waders, Casey McKibbon for office supplies, Donna Thomlinson for hospital and field supplies, Stephen J Gordon for office furniture, and the Riverview Park and Zoo for fish.

In-Kind Donations



# Thank You to Our Supporters

OTCC's work is made possible through the contributions of individual donors. foundations, governments, corporate partners and organizations. We are deeply grateful for your generosity.

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l'école Saint-Joseph (Wawa) The Sambol Children Todd Sayles and Denise Morton-Sayles Terry and Denise Sheedy

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We also thank the many donors who gave less than \$200



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50,000 - 99,999

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Township of The Archipelago

United Way - East Ontario

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Photo: Jessica Holdcroft

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The Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is Canada's leading turtle rehabilitation and conservation centre.

The mandate of the OTCC is to protect and conserve Ontario's at-risk freshwater turtles and their wetland habitats.



### **ONTARIO TURTLE CONSERVATION CENTRE**

Home of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre

4-1434 Chemong Road, Selwyn, Ontario, K9J 6X2, 705-741-5000

www.ontarioturtle.ca info@ontarioturtle.ca

Charitable Registration # 85752 4409 RR0001



The Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre respectfully
acknowledges that it is situated on the treaty and traditional
territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg.
We offer our gratitude to the First Peoples for their care for, and
teachings about, our earth and our relations.