

HULLETT NEWS



SPRING 2023

Board of Directors

Message from the Board

The very mild winter slowly left Hullett Marsh late in 2023 with persistent late March snows. Spring weather was slow to arrive this year. Permanent staff had poor ice conditions to complete the winter waterfowl nesting structure work.

2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the Friends of Hullett as an incorporated registered charity within Canada, caring for this unique property. **You will be able to purchase 4 styles of special ball caps to commemorate this milestone (see Page 8).**

HPWA is a **“Multi-Use”** property and respecting each other’s activities safely is important. FOH has published these 2 **“tip sheets”** to help you research, understand and enjoy your visits!

I would like to thank the volunteer Board of Directors, staff and most importantly, the membership and volunteers for their efforts and donations. **Special thanks goes out to Jim Bayne for 23 years of dedicated service on the FOH Board of Directors and the property itself!**

Looking ahead to the summer, Scott and Ben are building a team of students to work at the HPWA. We have 3 funded **Canada Summer Job** positions open to Canadian residents between 15-30 years of age. Currently, staff are hosting a part-time high school co-op position from **CHSS in Clinton**.

We hope you enjoy this Spring Newsletter. You can click any of the links at the bottom of each newsletter page to be directed to their affiliated media platforms.

Duane Inkpen
Chairman of the Board

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Water Access Restrictions

Water access (for any purpose) is **not permitted** in the HPWA from **May 15 to July 31** in **Zone A** and **May 15 to July 15** in **Zone B** annually to minimize the disturbance to nesting waterfowl. This includes retriever training activities, wading, canoeing, and kayaking.



Turtle Nest Protection

Our nest protector boxes are in the process of being installed throughout the marsh over nests to help increase the survival rate of their eggs. Nest protectors help defenseless eggs of our two known native species in the marsh, **Common Snapping Turtles** and **Midland Painted Turtles**. It is important to protect these turtles and their eggs because it takes turtles about 10 years to reach sexual maturity!

We will keep everyone updated on this project as it progresses through our social media.

Brake for Turtles

As temperatures are on the rise, so is activity of snakes and turtles throughout Hullett Marsh. Hullett is home to a variety of different species of turtles, snakes, and amphibians. A majority of these species are listed as Species at Risk in Ontario.



Charity Dinner 2023

The **8th Annual Charity Dinner and Auction** has come and gone and was an overwhelming success. After a 3-year hiatus, the **Charity Dinner and Auction** returned this year with strong member support and many **generous donations**.

This year:

- All 85 tickets that were made available **sold out in less than 2 weeks** – a new **Friends of Hullett** record!
- More than **40 door prizes** were generously donated
- **Over \$13,000** was raised to help maintain and improve the HPWA
- Limited edition **FOH 25th Anniversary** hats were unveiled
- A **special thanks** goes out to – **Clinton Sporting Goods, Bluewater Golf Course, West Coast Leisure Sales, and Bon Vivant Catering** for helping to make our event a success

If you missed out on attending this event, keep an eye on your email later in the year as **Friends of Hullett** looks to host it once again in the **spring of 2024!**

Connect with Us

Friends of Hullett continues to use various forms of Social Media to communicate with our users! Keep informed by checking out our website, Facebook or Instagram. Links to these accounts can be found at the bottom of each page of this newsletter.



Membership Renewals

As of December 31, 2022, memberships that were purchased prior to September 1st, 2022 have **expired**.

There are various payment options available, including cash in our drop box at the office gate, cheque (made out to **Friends of Hullett**), e-Transfer (auto-deposit, no password required) to fohoffice@tcc.on.ca and PayPal!

Please complete the **new simple** auto-fill enabled [Member Form](#) on our website!

Summer Volunteers Needed!

Trail Maintenance/June to August:

- Pruning, trimming, cleaning and paint blazing
- Firewood gathering

Nesting Mallard Tube Retrieval/August and September

- Using waders, kayaks and canoes to bring in the tubes after the nesting season

Zone A Hunt Stake Maintenance/August and September

- Cutting and marking walk-in trails to hunting stakes
- Repair and cut shooting lanes at accessible hunting stands

If you would like to help out with any of the above tasks please **send us an email** to fohoffice@tcc.on.ca to get the ball rolling!

CHSS Co-Op Student

My name is Denver Fisher and I am a Grade 12 co-op student at CHSS. I am in my final year of high school and I am taking a 2 credit co-op with Friends of Hullett. Once my co-op at the marsh is complete, I hope to come back and work here throughout the summer because of how much I have enjoyed it. After I graduate high school I am going to college for a 2 year course in Conservation Biology with hopes to become a Conservation Officer.

So far at the marsh, we have done exciting things like collect data for duck and owl boxes. We collect the data to



determine what species have been using the boxes as well as whether or not the hatch was successful. While doing the duck boxes I also learned the difference between a Hooded Merganser egg and a Wood Duck egg. If there was enough snow on the ground we got to take the snowmobiles out to do some of the data collecting. I have

also learned things like how to live trap a squirrel (even though I haven't got one yet).

On my first day we drove around the marsh in the FOH truck so that I could see the place for the first time and that's when I knew that I would like it here. I was surprised by how big the marsh was, it felt like it kept going forever! All the different ponds and parking lots on the property is crazy. So far what I have enjoyed doing the most was the duck boxes because I really enjoyed learning about what was happening inside each box. Every box told a different story and had materials inside like snake skins, plastic wrappers, bird nests, and eggs. I'm excited to start working with other wildlife like turtles in the spring. I am tasked with fixing up some of the turtle boxes as we will be putting them out in the coming weeks. After my co-op is completed here I hope to come back again for the summer and keep learning before heading off to Fleming College.

Denver Fisher

CHSS Co-Op Student

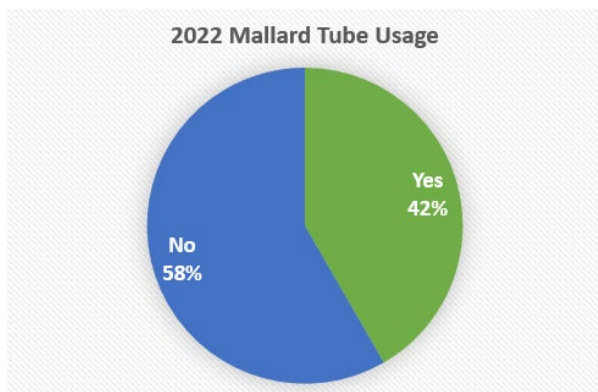
2022 Nesting Season Report

Another nesting season has come and gone at Hullett Marsh and we have continued to see our Mallard Tube and Duck Box Nesting Programs thrive. This data helps us to better understand what the birds are looking for in nesting habitat, as well as to better position boxes and tubes to allow for the highest possible usage and success rates. We would like to thank all of those who help to make these programs so successful year after year, without your help this would not be possible.



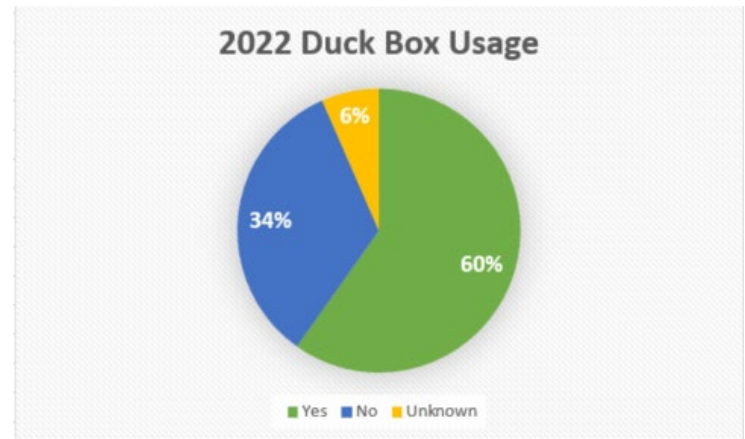
Mallard Tubes

The Friends of Hullett observed a **42% usage rate in our Mallard Tubes during the 2022 nesting season**. Of the 34 tubes that were placed in the marsh **18% were considered to be successful nests**. These tubes have been replaced in the marsh and hopefully we continue to see an upward trend in usage and success in the 2023 season.



Duck Boxes

Friends of Hullett staff observed a **60% usage rate** in our Duck Boxes during the 2022 season. Of the 122 duck boxes, **20% were considered to be successful nests**. Of the boxes that were used, it was found that **34% were used by Wood Duck, 31% were used by Hooded Merganser, 10% were used by both species and 6% had unknown duck species usage**.



With the continued help of our amazing volunteers, we will make sure that these ducks have ideal nesting grounds for years to come, and in doing so, ensuring that there will be stable populations of these birds for all outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy. We hope to see you all again in the 2023 season.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please contact us at fohoffice@tcc.on.ca for more information.



2023 Fall Pheasant Release

The Friends of Hullett are pleased to announce that due to **strong continued 2022 financial support** we have set **another sales record** and have been able to maintain the release at **1200 pheasants** for the 2023 hunt.

You can easily purchase your **Pheasant Challenge** tickets [here](#) via **PayPal with your credit card** or buy them in person at **Clinton Sporting Goods**.

Big thanks goes out to our sponsors

<https://clintonssporting.com/> and
<https://www.sommersgen.com/>

We are hopeful to keep this program going in the future with the number of released birds being based on financial support from pheasant hunters. **Hunters; the future of the pheasant release program is in your hands!**

Vanessa Palmer Award

Every year, FOH recognizes a dedicated student who is pursuing post-secondary education within the environmental field. Students are to submit a letter to FOH stating their contributions and/or achievements, plus a reference to validate their contributions.

This year, we had the honour to offer the award to two students who both displayed impressive knowledge, passion and awareness for the environment. **FOH congratulates our award recipients:**

Sammie Orr & Abigail Peel

As part of being a recipient of the Vanessa Palmer Award, the students will receive a **Certificate of Recognition**, plus \$200.00 to go towards their education. Their name will be added to our Vanessa Palmer Award plaque. Student will receive their award on the day of the AGM.

Annual General Meeting

Join us at the **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. By attending this meeting, you will have a chance to voice your opinion and make a difference!

We will start by discussing the current state of the marsh and current projects. The Vanessa Palmer Award will be presented, followed by an open discussion with all members and then elections for **three (3) Board of Directors (BOD)** positions. We will close with a guest presentation by **Ange Coneybeare** to share her knowledge of birds with our membership.

After this meeting, members are welcome to join for a barbeque lunch provided by FOH. A guest presentation as well as guided tours will be available from [Ambe Winged Tours](#). Please email staff at fohoffice@tcc.on.ca if you are interested!

The AGM will be held on **Sunday, May 28, 2023** at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be at the HPWA Office Complex, located at **41378 Hydro Line Road** outside of Clinton.

Agenda

- 1/ Introduction of **Board of Directors and Guests**
- 2/ Report from Marsh Staff/**Scott Austin and Ben Elliott**
- 3/ Financial Report/**Chris Ambrose**, Treasurer
- 4/ Report from the Friends of Hullett **Board of Directors**
- 5/ Past service award presentation/**Duane Inkpen**, Chairman
- 6/ Presentation of Vanessa Palmer Award/ **Scott Austin**
- 7/ Questions, Comments and Suggestions from **Membership floor**
- 8/ Election of officers to the **Board of Directors**
- 9/ Guest Presentation/**Ange Coneybeare**
- 10/ Lunch provided for all/**Jim Bayne** master mobile chef

Photo Contest

March 31st marked the deadline for submissions to our 2023 photo contest. We would like to thank everyone who participated in this contest and would like to congratulate everyone on your amazing photos.

This year, FOH once again created an online poll to let the community vote for their favourite photo. Your participation led to a very close race, here are your winners for the 2023 photo contest:

1st Place: Doug Gordon



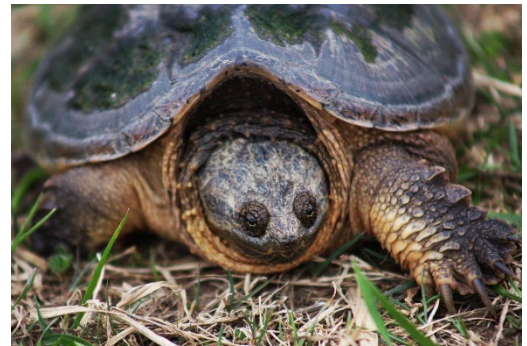
2nd Place: Curtis Beach



3rd Place: Deb Johnston



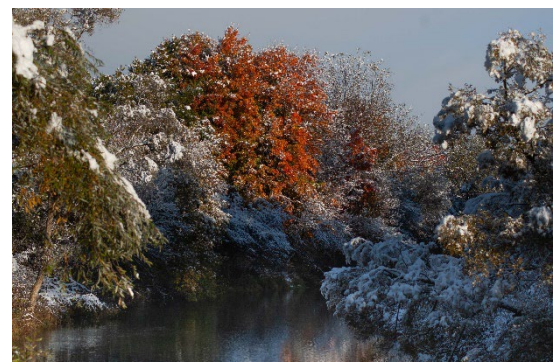
4th Place: Curtis Beach



5th Place: Doug Gordon



6th Place: Nancy Denham



Dog Days of Summer with Steve Dalrymple

Some of you who frequent the Hullett PWA on Saturdays from the end of April and up until mid-September may wonder what is going on in Zone B. Have you ever encountered a large group of people from around SW Ontario in the fields with various dog breeds? Does it look like these people are hunting birds? Heck, you may have even heard gunfire. Well, that's because NAVHDA is out and about.

NAVHDA stands for the North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association. This is an international organization made up of Chapters across Canada and the United States. The local chapter who use the Hullett PWA is the Ontario Grand River chapter.

You might be wondering what the heck a "versatile dog" is. Well, these are your typical pointing gun-dogs and include well known breeds like the German shorthaired pointer, the Hungarian Vizsla, the Weimaraner, and the Brittany spaniel. Some of the lesser known breeds include the German wirehaired pointer, the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon or the English, Irish or even the Gordon setter. If you are lucky, you may even see rare breeds like the Spinone or the Bracco Italiano. These dogs are all bred to be steadfast hunting companions that will perform in both the field and water.

NAVHDA is a club that is united in the goal to bring out the full potential of your chosen dog through training and testing. There is some evaluation of the individual breed's confirmation, but it is more about performance than appearance. This is not a place for "show dogs", although some handlers do also participate in show circuits. NAVHDA dogs are also not "tried" in a competition setting where dogs win or lose. The dogs are judged against a set standard that is established by the association. Any and every dog has the potential for

top marks on any given test day. The chapter members use places like Hullett to support each-other with training scenarios on land and water.

A portion of the training uses released game-birds to simulate hunting scenarios. These can be pigeons or chukars, but sometimes include pheasants and ducks. The local

Chapter obtains a permit from the MNRF to release these birds. Sometimes the birds are shot and sometimes they are just flushed depending on the training objective.

If you see the NAVHDA group out and about on a Saturday while you are enjoying the Hullett PWA, be mindful that they are handling dogs and shooting could be involved. If you have your own doggy out for a walk, please be courteous and keep them from interacting in the scenarios or with other dogs. If you are interested in the organization, please feel free to approach the group in one of the parking lots where they set up base. They welcome new inquiries. You can also obtain more information on NAVHDA by having a look on the internet or social media. [NAVHDA International](#) has an informative website and the [Ontario Grand River Chapter](#) has one as well.

See you in the marsh!

Steve Dalrymple
Hullett BOD and
NAVHDA member



Steve training with his dog Eisen.

Limited Edition 25th Anniversary FOH Hats

This year marks the **25th anniversary of Friends of Hullett** becoming a registered charitable organization. To commemorate this momentous achievement and celebrate all the hard work of past and present staff, volunteers and members of the Board of Directors, FOH has commissioned **4 unique styles of ball caps**. These hats can be purchased at the Hullett Office (**41378 Hydro Line Road**) for a price of **\$25 each**.

Available styles include:

