

# Bert Miller Nature Club Shagbark Nature Park Initiative 1999-2009

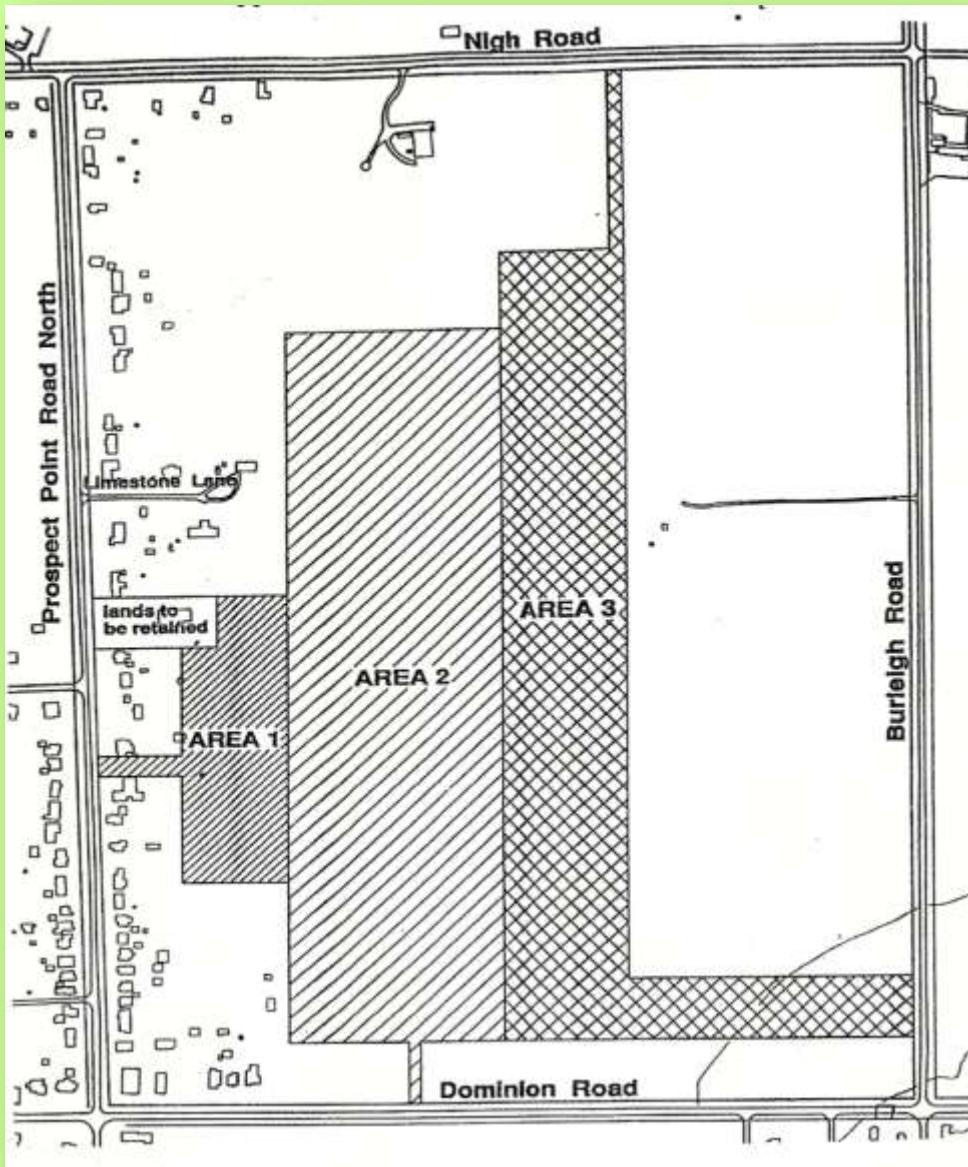


Photo: Diana Vandenberg

# Location



# Shagbark Nature Park is part of the former Carl Englehart Farm



## LOCATION

Access to the park is from Burleigh Rd. in Ridgeway.

## How It Began

Earl Plato approached the town in 1999 to begin the process for the Bert Miller Nature Club to obtain stewardship of the park.

Shagbark Nature Park was donated to the Town of Fort Erie in three parcels:

**Area 1:** 6.7 ac.

Lands donated by Ridgeway Lions Club.

**Area 2:** 32.19 ac.

Lands donated by Ed Lanchyshyn  
(Parklane Homes)

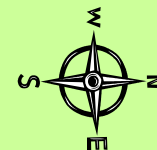
**Area 3:** 26.5 ac.

Lands donated by George Parazader  
(Maroon Enterprises)



## Shagbark Nature Park

- 65.39 acres
- Red line marks the boundaries
- No trails in this earlier aerial picture.





# Bert Miller Nature Club Obtains STEWARDSHIP 2001



- A committee was formed
  - **Chair:** Bob Chambers
  - Bill Van Brussel, Bill Vernooy ,Chris Hummel,Cyril Nieuwland, John Potter, Earl Plato, George Campbell, Jerry Winger, Joan Fonfara, Judy Campbell, Nadine Litwin, Ray Wilwerth, Vera Van Brussel
- A letter of intent was sent to the Town of Fort Erie.
- Insurance issues were settled, after a great deal of negotiation, resulting with the Town entered into a stewardship agreement with Bert Miller Nature Club December 6, 2001.

# The Dream Begins

- Bob Chambers drafted the building plan for the trail sign.
- The Lions Club funded its building .
- Trail designs developed
- Berms were made
- Circle P Paving contracted to install the gravel path and parking lot.





## CHANGING TIMES



Bob Chambers was instrumental in the development of the plans for Shagbark Nature Trail as it was called then. In December of 2004 he was forced to resign due to ill health. The community owes him a great debt of gratitude for his time, expertise and commitment to the Shagbark Nature Park project.

Great Horned Owl Babies.



Photos: Bob Chambers

Mr. "Eagle" Man Bob Chambers passed away suddenly in May of 2008.

# NEW BEGINNINGS 2005



A new committee was formed having many of the former members.



Shagbark trees

## Committee Members

Dawn Pierrynowski(chair)

**Bob Chambers**

**John Potter**

**Chris Hummel**

**Jan Nieuwland**

**Cyril Nieuwland**

**Joan Fonfara**

**Earl Plato**

**Ray Wilwerth**



Sneezeweed with Pearl Crescent butterflies



Juvenile bluebird  
Photo: Ron Goodridge

# Project Goals



- To extend and enhance the woodlot and meadow with native plants and trees.
- To build a chimney swift tower and display
- To create a demonstration wetland and pond.
- To improve the trails for year round activities such as hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- To create an interactive and educational naturalized area.



Photo: Diana Vandenberg



Winter tree identification & trying out Snowshoes

# Plants for Songbirds & Butterflies



# Native Plant Species

## What is a Native Plant?

Plants that have existed here prior to European settlement.

E.g. cardinal flower, wild bergamot, etc.

## Naturalized or Cultivars

These plants were introduced to North America during European settlement. They have colonized due to their aggressive growing habits.

E.g. Queen Anne's lace, chicory, etc.



Shagbark Woods

## Why Should You Care and Plant Native Tree and Plant Species?

- No extra watering is needed
- No need for fertilizers and pesticides
- Adapted to deal with local bugs and disease
- Wildlife is provided with food and habitat
- Improvement and protection of air and water quality
- Habitat diversity

Source: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority



Blazing Star

# Plant Inventory of Shagbark Nature Park (2006-2009)

Completed by Rick Young

## PLANTS ETC.

Agrimony	Agrimonia gryposepala
Aniseroot	Osmorhiza longistylis 2,3
Avens (White)	Geum canadense 2
Baneberry (White)	Actaea pachypoda
Barberry(Japanese) ( <i>alien</i> )	Berberis thunbergii 1
Basil(Wild)	Satureja vulgaris 3
Bedsstaw (Rough)	Gallium asprellum 3
Beechdrops	Epifagus virginiana 1
Beggar Ticks	Bidens frondosa
Bergamot (Wild)	Monarda fistulosa
Bloodroot	Sanguinaria canadensis 1
Buttercup(Kidneyleaf)	Ranunculus abortivus 1
Canada Mayflower	Maianthemum canadense 1
Carrior Flower	Smilax herbacea 1
Clearweed	Pilea pumila 3
Cleavers	Galium aparine 1
Clover(Red)(A)	Trifolium pratense 3
Clover(Yellow Sweet)(A)	Melilotus officinalis 3
Cress(Small-flowered Bitter)	Cardamine parviflora 1
Dame's Rocket(A)	Hesperis matronalis 3
Dandelion(Common)(A)	Taraxacum officinale 1
Enchanter's Nightshade	Circaea quadrisulcata
False Solomon's Seal	Smilacina racemosa
Fleabane(Daisy)	Erigeron annuus 3
Geranium(Wild)	Geranium maculatum 1
Ground Ivy(A)	Glechoma hederacea 1
Hepatica(Sharp Lobed)	Hepatica acutiloba 1
Herb Robert	Geranium robertianum 1
Hog Peanut	Amphicarpa bracteata
Indian Hemp	Apocynum cannabinum 2
Indian-pipe	Monotropa uniflora 2
Indian Tobacco	Lobelia inflata
Jack-in-the-Pulpit sp.	Arisaema sp.

## Jewelweed (Spotted)

Knotweed (Virginia)
Lily (Michigan)
Mayapple
Meadowrue(Early)
Meadowrue
Motherwort (A)
Parsnip(Wild) (A)
Pokeweed
Phlox(Wild Blue)
Snakeroot(Short-styled)
Solomon's Seal(Hairy)
Strawberry(Wild)
Spring Beauty
Squawroot
Tick Trefoil(Pointed Leaved)
Trefoil(Birdfoot)( <i>alien</i> )
Toothwort(Cut-Leaved)
Trout Lily
Trillium(Red)
Trillium(White)
Violet(Canada)
Violet(Common Blue)
Violet(Downy Yellow)
Violet(Long Spurred)
Violet(Wooly Blue)
Waterleaf(Virginia)
Wild Yamroot
Yarrow(A)

## Impatiens capensis

Tovara virginiana (Black)
Lilium michiganense 2
Podophyllum peltatum
Thalictrum dioicum 1
Thalictrum polygamum 2
Leonurus cardiaca 2
Pastinaca sativa 1
Phytolacca Americana 2
Phlox divaricata 1
Sanicula canadensis 3
Polygonatum pubescens 1
Fragaria virginiana 1
Claytonia virginica 1
Conopholis americana 1
Desmodium glutinosum 2
Lotus corniculatus 3
Dentaria laciniata 1
Erythronium americanum 1
Trillium erectum 1
Trillium grandiflorum 1
Viola canadensis 1
Viola papilionacea 1
Viola pubescens 1
Viola rostrata 1
Viola sororia 1
Hydrophyllum virginianum 1
Dioscorea villosa
Achillea millefolium 1

## FERNS & ALLIES

Sensitive Fern	Onoclea sensibilis 2
Spinulose Wood Fern	Dryopteris spinulosa 3

## GRAMINOIDS

Awl Fruited Sedge	Carex stipata 2
Bebb's Sedge	Carex bebbi 3
Bulrush (Dark Green)	Scirpus atrovirens 2
Bottle-brush Grass	Hystrix patula 2
Fox Sedge	Carex vulpinoidea 3
Soft Rush	Juncus effusus 3
Squirreltail Grass	Hordeum jubatum 3
Timothy( <i>alien</i> )	Phleum pretense 3
Wool Grass	Scirpus cyperinus 3

1 denotes seen on 6 May 2006

2 denotes seen on 2 July 2008

3 denotes seen on 1 July 2009

(A) denotes alien species





2005

Lakeshore Catholic High School students and teacher Fran Martin helped with the plantings.

Some of the  
Volunteers  
Who Made It  
Possible.  
Thank You!



2005

Fort Erie high school students and teacher Fred Louws helped with the plantings.



Bert Miller Nature Club Junior Naturalists



Volunteers



Niagara College Restoration Students



2006

Ridgeway-Crystal Beach high school student watered the newly planted grasses



Cyron Nursery-Jan Nieuwland



Home Depot Volunteers

# Spring Meadow Plantings

## 2005

Blue vervain  
Boneset  
Foxglove Beardtongue  
Fringed brome grass  
Great blue lobelia

Green-headed coneflower  
Hemp-dogbane

Joe-Pye-Weed  
Pale flag iris

Pale-leaved sunflower  
Prairie cordgrass  
Purple-stemmed aster  
Sneezeweed

Spiked blazing-star

Swamp milkweed  
Swamp rose-mallow  
Sweet Ox-eye

Tall anemone  
Virginia wild rye grass



## 2006

Spiked Blazing Star  
Big Bluestem  
Butterflyweed  
Indian Grass  
Spiderwort  
Iris virginicus  
Little Bluestem  
Cardinal Flower  
Lobelia cardinalis  
Long-leaved Bluets  
Wild Bergamot  
Monarda fistulosa  
New England Aster  
Red Osier Dogwood  
Ninebark  
Echinacea  
Rudbeckia hirta  
Pale Purple Coneflower  
Palida  
Sneezeweed  
Great St. John's Wort  
Hoary Vervain  
Verbena stricta  
Michigan Lily  
Switch Grass



John Potter





Silver maple



Northern red oak



White oak



Butternut



American beech



White ash



Shagbark hickory



Sugar maple



Sweet cherry



Basswood



White spruce



Eastern white pine

## Here are some leaves to look for.

For more leaf identification visit Dr. Jeff Kirwan and James Ward at <http://www.fw.vt.edu/dendro/forsite/key/intro.htm>

### Shagbark Park Inventory and Plantation Stock

(Land Care Niagara)

American Beech

Basswood

Black Maple

Bitternut

Black Cherry

Black Oak

Chokecherry

White Ash

Shagbark

Sugar Maple

Sweet Cherry

Hawthorn

Ironwood

Black Walnut

Nannyberry

Green Ash

Butternut

White Cedar

Black Cherry

American Chestnut

Bitternut

Silver Maple

Black Oak

White Oak

White Pine

Hybrid Poplar

Redbud

White Spruce

Highbush Cranberry

Black Elderberry



Black cherry



Bitternut hickory



Norway maple \*  
Invasive species



Black walnut

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
American Basswood	Tilli americana
American Beech	Fagus grandifolia 2
American Elder	Sambucus Canadensis 2
Bebb's Willow	Salix bebbiana 1
Bitternut Hickory	Carya cordiformis
Bittersweet	Celastrus scandens
Black Walnut	Juglans nigra 1
Blue Beech	Carpinus caroliniana
Choke Cherry	Prunus virginiana
European Buckthorn(A)	Rhamnus cathartica 3
Gray Dogwood	Cornus racemosa 1
Hop Hornbeam	Ostrya virginiana
Manitoba Maple	Acer negundo 1
Maple-leaved Viburnum	Viburnum acerifolium 3
Narrow-Leaved Meadowsweet	Spiraea alba 1
Privet(A)	Ligustrum vulgare 3
Purple-flowering Raspberry	Rubus odoratus 3
Red Cedar	Juniperus virginiana
Red Maple	Acer rubrum
Red Oak	Quercus rubra
Red -Osier Dogwood	Cornus stolonifera 1
Red-berried Elder	Sambucus pubens 1
Rock Elm ?	Ulmus thomasil
Running Strawberry	Euonymus obovatus 1
Shagbark Hickory	Carya ovata
Silky Dogwood	Cornus obliqua 1
Slippery Elm	Ulmus rubra
Staghorn Sumach	Rhus typhina
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum
Sweet Cherry (A)	Prunus avium
Tartarian Honeysuckle(A)	Lonicera tatarica 3
Viginia Creeper	Parthenocissus sp. 1
White Ash	Fraxinus americana
White Oak	Quercus alba 1
Wild Crabapple	Malus coronaria

## Shagbark Nature Park Tree Inventory



The Bert Miller Nature Club thanks member, Rick Young, who completed these tree and plant inventories between 2006-2009.

### NOTE

1 denotes seen on 6 May 2006  
 2 denotes seen on 2 July 2008  
 3 denotes seen on 1 July 2009  
 (A) denotes alien species

# TRAILS ARE BLAZED



# **Natural Areas Etiquette**

*When you visit Natural Areas, remember that they exist in a delicate balance which should be respected and preserved. Here are a few simple steps you can take to minimize your impact.*

- 1. Tread Lightly: Stay on designated trails to protect undergrowth.*
- 2. Take only photos, leave nothing behind: pack out all refuse and never remove natural objects.*
- 3. Leash Your Pets: Your favourite animal companion may pose a threat to both plants and animals in natural areas if allowed to wander freely.*
- 4. Respect Trail Closures: they are necessary to ensure public safety and protect sensitive habitats. Avoid muddy trails, especially during spring thaw and in very wet weather.*

**Come with us for a walk through Shagbark Nature Park.**



**Follow us.**



**After cycling on the Friendship Trail, we  
can park our bikes here and go for a walk.**



Which way  
should we go ?

I see a hawk!



Let's explore!



It says Shagbark Park is part of  
the Onondaga Escarpment.





There are bluebird boxes all around the meadow. We'll keep our eyes open for some bluebirds.

# Chimney Swift Tower

Look how beautiful the tower looks.

I hope some chimney swifts will come and make a home in it.



The building of this chimney swift educational kiosk was made possible by Blythwood Inc., Cotton and Stanley Construction.

Landscaping by Cyron Nursery

# WHY A CHIMNEY SWIFT TOWER?

Tower donated by the Blythwood Group, Cotton and Stanley Builders



**Habitat:** Chimney swifts are found throughout the eastern half of Canada and the United States in wooded and open areas. They have adapted to man-made structures and are no longer dependent upon hollow trees for nesting and roosting.

**Nest:** Originally chimney swifts nested in hollow trees, especially sycamores. They now use chimneys, barn silos, cisterns, and wells (Pearson 1936). Their nests are made of twigs, which are glued to a vertical surface with saliva to form a "half-saucer" (Forbush and May 1939).

**Food:** Chimney swifts feed almost entirely on flying insects but will sometimes take small caterpillars hanging from tree branches or leaves (Forbush and May 1939).

[http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/wildlife/nesting\\_birds/birds2.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/wildlife/nesting_birds/birds2.htm)

Learn more about chimney swifts through the following links:

- Driftwood Association

<http://www.chimneyswifts.org/>

- Bird Studies Canada

<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/birdmon/chsw/about.jsp>

- Nature Manitoba Chimney Swift Association:

<http://www.manitobanature.ca/CHSW.html>

- The Cornell Lab of Ornithology:

[http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/chimney\\_swift/id](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/chimney_swift/id)

- ROM Royal Ontario Museum

[http://www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php?doc\\_type=fact&lang=&id=322](http://www.rom.on.ca/ontario/risk.php?doc_type=fact&lang=&id=322)

- Audubon at Home:

[http://audubonathome.org/birdstohelp/pdf/Chimney\\_Swift.pdf](http://audubonathome.org/birdstohelp/pdf/Chimney_Swift.pdf)

A photograph of two children walking away from the camera on a gravel path in a forest. The child in the foreground is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The child behind them is wearing a light blue shirt and jeans. To their left, a wooden signpost with a flat top is visible. The path is covered with fallen brown leaves. The forest is dense with tall, thin trees, many of which are bare, suggesting autumn. Some trees on the right have green leaves, and there are some bushes with reddish leaves. The lighting is bright, casting shadows on the path.

**Let's go into the woods.**

This sure shows me what to look for. I don't want to get poison ivy!



A photograph of two children walking away from the camera on a dirt trail in a forest. The ground is covered in fallen brown leaves. The child in the foreground is a girl with blonde hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The child behind her is a boy with short brown hair, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The forest has many trees with bare branches, and some trees on the right have some green and yellow leaves. The scene is lit by bright sunlight, creating long shadows.

**This trail is beautiful. I  
love to crunch the leaves**

A photograph of a forest with many thin trees and some autumn-colored leaves. In the bottom left, two children are visible: a boy in a red shirt pointing towards the trees, and a girl with blonde hair looking at the camera. On a tree trunk to the right, there are two paint marks: a white rectangular mark above a red circular mark. The text "Look! Those paint marks show us what trail we are on." is overlaid in the center of the image.


Look! Those paint marks show us what trail we are on.



**I know this is the  
biggest rock here.  
It was left over by  
the glaciers.**

**This is one big sugar maple  
tree. I wonder how old it is?**




A close-up photograph of a large tree trunk with a hollowed-out hole. The bark is rough and textured. A row of mushrooms is growing along the side of the tree trunk. The background shows a forest with trees and fallen leaves.

Is anybody home?

**This is a great place to see birds.**



A photograph of two young children walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a grassy field. The child on the left is wearing a light blue shirt and jeans, and the child on the right is wearing a red shirt and dark pants. The path is surrounded by tall grass and some small bushes. In the background, there is a line of trees with some autumn-colored leaves. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

Time to go. We'll see lots  
more on the way back.

**The gang's all here. What a beautiful October morning to hike the trails. Why not join us?**





## VOLUNTEERS

Bert Miller Nature Club  
 Paul Philp & the Bert Miller Nature Club's  
 Junior Naturalists  
 Fred Louws & the Fort Erie High School  
 Students  
 Fran Martin & Lake Shore Catholic High  
 School Students  
 Members of the Community  
 Andrea Sinclair, Ann Mills, Paul  
 Weerdenburg & the Niagara College  
 Students  
 Cathy Green-Redekop & the Ridgeway-  
 Crystal Beach High School Students

# THANK YOU ONE AND ALL!

## DONORS

Beam's Excavation  
 Blythwood Group: Robert Mills  
 Cotton  
 Cyron Nurseries: Jan & Cyril Nieuwland  
 Evergreen  
 Friends of Fort Erie Creeks: Yvonne Hopkins  
 Home Depot  
 Home Depot's Niagara Falls Environmental Group  
 Land Care Niagara: Mike Rose, John Germain  
 Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority:  
 Deanna Lindblad, Andrew Mack, Steve Gillis,  
 Brianne Wilson  
 Ridgeway & District Garden Club: Cathy Fretz  
 Ridgeway Lioness  
 Ridgeway Lions  
 Royal Canadian Legion Branch 230  
 Stanley Construction: Jeff Stanley  
 Fort Erie Conservation Women's Auxiliary  
 Stevensville Kinsmen Town of Fort Erie  
 TD Friends of the Environment  
 Town of Fort Erie  
 Walker Bros. Ridgemount Quarry