

2008 CONSERVATION PIONEER AWARDS



This award is designed to recognize individuals who have demonstrated life-long, outstanding contributions to the field of conservation. They are recognized for their innovation, leadership and dedication to the conservation field. Either through their personal activities and/or leadership, they have gone beyond the call of duty or responsibility to an employer, client or their community.

These individuals have helped to celebrate and inspire innovation in the conservation field and have made a difference in their area of expertise. Nominees have encouraged and motivated others to take similar leadership roles towards conservation work.

Nominations are reviewed and evaluated by a special sub-committee of the Latornell Steering Committee.

DR. JOHN GUNN

Nomintaed by:
Nickel District
Conservation Authority



John Gunn has had a distinguished career as a University Professor and Scientist who has spent over 25 years working at the forefront of freshwater and restoration ecology. Dr. Gunn has produced over 150 publications (including 53 journal papers) in the field of restoration ecology and has been a grant holder with Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada since 1992. In recognition of his expertise, John was recently appointed to the Premier's Lake Simcoe Science Advisory Committee.

Dr. Gunn leads the Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit in Sudbury whose mandate is to collaborate with community groups and industry in order to ensure the long-term protection of water resources. The Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit operates one of the longest and most extensive monitoring programs in the world measuring the impacts of multiple stressors on freshwater ecosystems. Their findings have effected environmental clean-up efforts locally as well as contributing to national and even international efforts to ensure cleaner water.

Currently, Dr. Gunn is leading an effort to build a new research centre called the "Living With the Lakes Centre" at Laurentian University. The Centre will focus regional efforts in an attempt to protect and restore local watersheds. It is expected that these local achievements will provide a blueprint for similar undertakings globally.

John Gunn has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards including the Alumni Achievement Award (research and public education) from the University of Guelph and the President's Award for Conservation from the American Fisheries Society. Dr. Gunn's career has been built on the premise that protection and recovery of ecological resources is dependent upon a combination of good science and cooperation among citizens, industry and government at all levels.

LORNE SMITH

Nomintaed by:
Grey Sauble
Conservation Authority



Lorne Smith is a teacher. He chose teaching as his profession and taught for many years at various locations throughout Dufferin and Wellington County. Throughout his career Lorne believed in a hands-on approach to nature and passed on a love of nature to his students. His classroom always had a "nature" theme and on more than one occasion included the hatching of mallard and pheasant eggs.

Lorne has been retired now for 25 years and is still teaching. A self-described "bit of a nature nut", he has been a conservationist since he was a child. He is now known by another moniker - the "Bluebird Man." The Eastern Bluebird population in Southern Ontario has been in decline for many years as urban sprawl has replaced their natural habitat. Since joining the Sydenham Sportsmen's Club in 1983, he has spearheaded the construction of over 6,000 bluebird nesting boxes from Orangeville all the way north to Manitoulin Island. Once completed, (often from scrap lumber), the boxes have a useful life of ten years and each of the boxes is subject to annual inspection and maintenance. Lorne's passion for nature has been infectious. Today there are over 120 volunteers involved in the annual maintenance of the boxes. Lorne, his wife Mabel, and friend, Bob, are responsible for the upkeep of 600 of the bluebird boxes by themselves! Lorne's efforts are credited with helping to reestablish the once-declining species.

Lorne has educated thousands of children and adults. He continues to speak about Bluebirds with cubs, brownies, and scouts as well as elementary schools and retirement homes. His efforts have been recognized by Sydenham Sportsmen's Association, which has recognized him as "Adult Conservationist of the Year" on two separate occasions. Lorne's newest project involves working with an Owen Sound school in the development of a nature trail along the east side of Owen Sound that will eventually join the Tom Thompson Trail. Lorne's conservation legacy continues to grow.

HAROLD PARKER

Nomintaed by:
Nottawasaga Valley
Conservation Authority



Harold Parker has been a committed steward of the land for all of his life. A 5th generation farmer, Harold has always believed that the land should be passed on to the next generation in better condition that when you received it.

As a landowner, he placed his property under a woodlot management program with the Ministry of Natural Resources. For four decades, Harold and his family have been planting shrubs and trees on the property which over time has resulted in a considerable wildlife habitat.

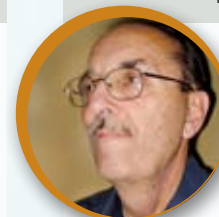
For the past 35 years, Harold has been a key figure within the Nottawasaga Valley watershed with regards to environmental issues and solutions. His life-long involvement with what is now known as the Internationally Significant Minesing Wetlands has ensured that Harold's name is synonymous with the environmental health of this area. For decades, he has volunteered his time and provided the Ministry of Natural Resources with information concerning areas of concern within and around the Minesing Wetland. Harold's ability to recognize long term environmental concerns and his ability to develop both corrective and preventative plans has had significant benefits for the long-term integrity of the Minesing Wetland and the Nottawasaga Valley watershed.

As a member of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's executive committee and later Chairman, Harold headed the fundraising efforts of the Nottawasaga Foundation for the construction of the John L. Jose Environmental Learning Centre. He also initiated the process of having the Minesing Wetlands designated as an Internationally Significant Ramsar Wetland.

Today, Harold remains an active director of "Friends of Minesing Wetlands" - a group of which he is a founding member. He continues to address service clubs, schools on the merits of land stewardship and still hosts visits from Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and various other groups on the family's property.

JIM MYSLIK

Nomintaed by:
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs



James Myslik has left a lasting mark on the conservation of natural resources in Ontario, particularly in matters related to water. During his forty year career with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Jim has undertaken a number of key initiatives for the province that have contributed significantly to water research and education. Further, he has taken an active interest in encouraging and guiding young professionals and engineers in the conservation of Ontario's natural resources.

Jim began his career with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food ("OMAF") (as the ministry was then known) in 1969. He put his degree in Agricultural Engineering (Hydrology) to immediate use as OMAF's water engineer and soon became the "go-to guy" for other professionals in the field. Over the course of his career, Jim has helped to elevate the profile of water management policy and programs throughout Ontario.

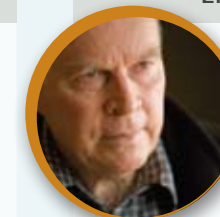
Jim Myslik's efforts were essential in the conception and formulation of the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) - a plan that became the foundation for agri-environmental action in the Province for the past sixteen years. Jim co-developed program materials as well as helped to develop the Best Management Practices information series. The EFP concept has now been adopted by all Canadian provinces.

Jim played a pivotal role the development and implementation of the Rural Water Quality Program where he facilitated input from farmers representing over 40 agriculture commodity groups. This program is a provincially recognized success story and has supported 1,150 agri-environmental best practices, each of which contains an Environmental Farm Plan.

An active interest in encouraging and guiding professionals and the public in the conservation of Ontario's natural resources for the past forty years have established James Myslik as an environmental champion and Pioneer.

BOB WHITTAM

Nomintaed by:
Severn Sound
Environmental Association



Bob Whittam is a life-long naturalist who has enjoyed a forty year career in conservation that has been varied in its breadth and scope. He has worked as the chief bird bander at Long Point Bird Observatory; as a naturalist at Bon

Echo Provincial Park, on fish at the Royal Ontario Museum, as well as developing interpretive programs for the 1,000 Islands National Park. While with the Canadian Wildlife Service in Ottawa, Bob completed natural heritage inventories for Cap Tourment National Wildlife Area and Perce Rock National Park.

Bob's most significant accomplishments in conservation however, came when he was appointed as Executive Director of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre. Bob spent twenty four years in this position mentoring staff and the public alike. As a testament to his outstanding knowledge of birds, plants, insects and general ecology, many of his former staff members have since accepted significant positions with environmental conservation organizations nation-wide. It was Bob's passion for and commitment to his work that enabled the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre to remain open to this day when all other wildlife centres across the country have since been closed due to budget constraints. Bob spearheaded fundraising efforts that resulted in the Centre being operated successfully on a non-profit basis under the direction of the Friends of Wye Marsh.

Bob Whittam's work has been widely recognized. He has received awards from the local Rotary Club and Business Association in Midland, the Ontario Lieutenant Governor and the Silver Jubilee medal from the Queen. His role was so valued by the Severn Sound Remedial Action Plan that they have created the "Bob Whittam Environmental Award" which recognizes individuals who exemplify environmental advocacy and stewardship to the Severn Sound watershed. Through all of this, Bob has always taken the time to recognize the good work of others and doesn't look for recognition himself. He continues to be one of nature's strongest advocates.

JOAN BELL

Master of Ceremonies



Joan Bell graduated from the University of Waterloo with an Environmental Studies Degree in Honours Geography. During the summer of her 3rd year of university Joan was hired by Art Latornell (then Director of the Conservation Authorities' Branch) into the Junior Conservationist Award Program. That was the beginning of a 36 year career with the Ontario government and Conservation Authorities. During that time period Joan has worked with Grand River Conservation Authority, Ontario Parks, Ministry of Energy and since 1987 has been with the Hamilton Conservation Authority as Manager of Grants and Special Projects. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Hamilton and has served on the Interpretation Canada, Green Venture and Tourism Hamilton Boards.



2008
CONSERVATION
PIONEER
AWARDS

PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

- 2007** – The late Bruce Duncan, Deborah Beatty, Lou Wise, Michael Hough, Ted Mosquin
- 2006** – Sally Beaton, Robert Bowles, Ron Reid, George Stormont
- 2005** – Don Lobb, Dr. Gray Merriam, Dr. David Pearson, Dr. Anthony Smith, Ben Vanderbrug
- 2004** – Malcom Kirk, Patrick J. McManus, Dr. Duncan Sinclair, David Cressman, Maria and Paul Heissler
- 2003** – Ron Scott, Jack Macpherson, Arthur Herbert Richardson, Greta McGillivray, William McLean
- 2002** – Hal Hooke, Terry Sprague, Jim Bruce, Terk Bayly, Rheal Proulx, Tom Millar, Peter Michael, Rose Harvie
- 2001** – The late Ken Mayall, Murray Miller, Douglas Hoffman, Elwood Moore, George R. Richardson, the late Gordon Oldfield
- 2000** – Jim Bauer, Janet Fletcher, Harry Barrett, Trevor Dickinson, Ray Lowes, Bob Burgar
- 1999** – John Murray, Charles Alexander, Len Johson, Dr. Dave Ankney, Christine Nornbell, Russell Piper, Mac Coutts, Ken Higgs

If you are interested in nominating an individual for consideration to the 2009 Conservation Pioneer Award, see the criteria detailed on the A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium website at www.latornell.ca



UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

A.D. Latornell Symposium
c/o Steering Committee
Conservation Ontario
Box 11, 120 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4W3
Tel.: 905-895-0716 Fax: 905-895-0751
email: info@latornell.ca
www.latornell.ca