

What is Already Being Done?

Conservation Authorities, landowners and community groups are already working together in stewardship partnerships to improve, restore and secure natural habitat for plant and animal species at risk.

Conservation Ontario has developed a series of fact sheets that show habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects for species at risk. Eight projects are featured in this project and include:

- Buffers and Livestock Fencing
- Butternut Recovery Program
- Communities for Nature
- Habitat for Reptiles
- Restoring Habitat for the Prothonotary Warbler
- Restoring the Shore for Fish
- Restoring the Wainfleet Bog
- Wetland Creation and Enhancement Program

Most of these projects take place on private land and are being assisted by Ontario's Conservation Authorities.

There is help available. Special programs exist that provide financial and technical assistance to landowners or communities through Conservation Authorities or other environmental agencies.

To learn more, please visit: www.conservationontariospeciesatrisk.ca.



Least bittern
(*Ixobrychus exilis*)



Bog restoration planting – Wainfleet Bog



Queen snake (*Regina septemvittata*)



Bio-engineering – Upper Thames



Stewardship Partners Working Together to Recover Species at Risk



Conservation Authorities Working Together to Recover



Species at Risk

Our health and quality of life depends on biodiversity – a mix of wild plants, animals and habitats. We are fortunate to live in a province of rich biodiversity and our job is to ensure there is enough suitable, healthy habitat available so that Ontario’s plants and animals can thrive and grow.

We need to live in balance with plants and animals because, although we may not know it, many of them directly impact on our daily lives.

- Plants such as trees absorb carbon dioxide and use energy from the sun to convert it to oxygen.
- Many of our pharmaceuticals’ ingredients come from plant sources.
- Crops such as corn, wheat and soybeans provide the genetic pool we need in order to continue to develop hardy commercial crops.
- Plants help to improve our soils, reduce flooding, prevent erosion and keep our water clean.
- Various wild animal species – such as fish – provide food and jobs for many people.
- Many activities associated with plants and animals provide jobs in the tourism industry.

WE NEED TO LIVE IN BALANCE

WITH PLANTS AND ANIMALS

BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH WE MAY NOT

KNOW IT, MANY OF THEM DIRECTLY

IMPACT ON OUR DAILY LIVES.

What Threatens Plant and Animal Species?

The greatest threats to plant and animal species today are population growth and development, pollution, changing climate and using natural resources faster than they can be replenished or replanted.

The provincial *Species at Risk Act* works to conserve, enhance and recover endangered and threatened species. This is a shared responsibility between many stewards including landowners, conservation groups, Conservation Authorities and government. The problem has become more urgent. Despite early efforts, more species are slipping into the endangered category every year as a result of neglect and the ever-increasing reach of human activities. With 95 percent of Southern Ontario privately owned, private landowners are the essential link to maintaining or even enhancing our biodiversity. Their actions can have a direct impact on many species throughout the province.

The battle for biodiversity will be won or lost in backyards, on farms and in Ontario’s green spaces by people, agencies and government teaming up to give habitat a hand.



Photo: Simon Lunn

Eastern ratsnake, also known as the black ratsnake (*Elaphe obsoleta*)

AT RISK IS USED TO DESCRIBE

SPECIES THAT ARE LISTED IN ONE

OF THE CONSERVATION

CATEGORIES OF ENDANGERED,

THREATENED, VULNERABLE, OR

SPECIAL CONCERN.



Photo: Simon Lunn

Map turtles (*Graptemys geographica*)



Photo: Simon Lunn

Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*)