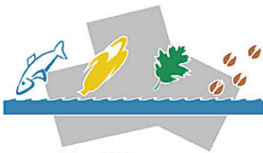


Natural Connections Program

Wildlife Habitat Management

Brantford Prairie Creation Project

Aug-06



**Brant Resource
Stewardship Network**

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Healthy plant and wild-
life populations require
healthy habitats. The
goal of wildlife habitat
management projects is
to encourage the rehabili-
tation of significant wild-
life habitats and expand
them where there is an
opportunity.

The project enhances
existing natural habitats
in the area. Some of the
provincially significant
plants are:

Green milkweed
Side-oats gramma grass
Hoary tick-trefoil
False gromwell
Porcupine grass
Stiff goldenrod
Dwarf chinquapin oak

The project is an impor-
tant step in linking to-
gether the isolated prairie
fragments of Brantford

Support of the project
was provided by the
Brantstar Developments
and the Ontario Ministry
of Natural Resources.

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Foundation.



At the start of the 1800s the city of Brantford was dominated by tallgrass prairie and scrub oak barrens. Early settlers described the area in and around Brantford as:

"...thinly timbered tract of country. The timber here consists solely of scrub oak. Scarcely a bush of any other kind is to be seen...."
"...there are extensive tracts of land almost wholly free from any sort of timber. Such land is commonly called "Plains". From the Indian settlement on the River Ouse (near Brantford), to the village of Burford, a distance of nearly 13 miles, there is not an acre of woodland to be seen, and yet, in this tract alone, there are at least 100,000 acres."

In 2006, one hectare of land within the city of Brantford (pictured to the right) was planted with seeds collected from Brantford prairie remnants. A few of the more than 20 plants growing in the created prairie are (pictured on top from left to right) wild bergamot, stiff goldenrod, hoary vervain and little bluestem grass.

The created prairie will provide an important protected area for many of the rare prairie plants that still occur in Brantford. Habitat succession and fragmentation has shrunk and isolated the few remaining remnants which makes managing them difficult. The site will provide a managed area to sustain the plant populations of many of the dry prairie species that were once common in Brantford, as well as begin to reconnect the remnants.

The creation site abuts an old sand prairie with green milkweed (bottom left) and hairy beardtongue (upper left). In July a local Ministry of Natural Resources Stewardship Ranger Crew (pictured below) weeded, and planted plugs in the degraded remnant. The created prairie will provide a new place for these plants to colonize; which will provide them with a better chance at survival.

