

Contact Information

Conservation Ontario (Conservation Authorities)

PO Box 11, 120 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket ON L3Y 4W3
Tel: 905-895-0716

E-mail: info@conservation-ontario.on.ca

Web site:

www.conservation-ontario.on.ca

Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON)

355 Lesmill Rd, Don Mills, ON
M3B 2W8.

Tel: 416-444-8419 or toll-free
1-800-440-2366

E-mail: info@ontarionature.org

Web site: www.ontarionature.org

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Call or visit the nearest office. Check the blue pages in the telephone directory, or dial 1-800-667-1940 to connect you to any OMNR office in Ontario. The OMNR prescribed fire specialist can be reached at 705-564-6019.

Ontario Stewardship Councils

The OMNR has established stewardship councils in most southern Ontario counties to facilitate local community stewardship of natural resources. Contact 1-800-667-1940 to find out if the local stewardship council is involved with a prairie or meadow restoration project.

Society for Ecological Restoration,
Ontario Chapter

c/o Centre for Environmental Training
Niagara College, Glendale Campus
135 Taylor Rd, R.R. #4

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

Tel: 905-641-2252 x 6494

Fax: 905-988-4309

E-mail: info@serontario.org

Web site: www.serontario.org



TALLGRASS

FACTSHEET 5

O N T A R I O

Ontario Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Association

Looking for Help?

This factsheet provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding getting involved in tallgrass prairie and savanna recovery projects in Ontario.

How can I learn about tallgrass projects happening in my area?

Tallgrass conservation projects are happening in numerous communities across southern and northwestern Ontario. Contact Tallgrass Ontario, your local stewardship council, or local naturalist club to find out what is happening in your area (see page 4). Contact the Federation of Ontario Naturalists if you need help locating the nearest naturalist club.

Where can I visit a native prairie or a restoration project in my region?

A number of native prairie remnants are open to the public and are well worth the visit. There are restoration projects on public land that you can visit, and some on private land that can be visited with permission. Every summer, public walking tours, workshops and restoration work days are held at sites across the region. Contact Tallgrass Ontario or check out their website for a list of sites. Also, read Factsheet #1 in this series titled *Get up, get out and see some tallgrass* for a list of publicly owned prairie and savanna remnant sites.



Prairie white-fringed orchid. Paul Pratt

How can I learn about how to undertake my own tallgrass restoration project?

The best place to begin is by reading one of the excellent manuals written on the subject (see page 3). *Planting the Seed: A Guide to Establishing Prairie and Meadow Communities in Southern Ontario* is recommended as it was written specifically for individuals and community groups interested in undertaking a planting project in southern Ontario. This manual outlines all the steps involved, provides recommended species lists, and has an extensive section listing additional resources. Copies are available from Tallgrass Ontario.



For more Information

For more information on tallgrass prairies and savannas and conservation efforts, contact Tallgrass Ontario. Tallgrass Ontario is a not-for-profit organization whose role is to direct and assist with the recovery of this endangered habitat. The organization has representatives from government, conservation groups, and other interested organizations and individuals. New members are always welcome.

Head Office:

Tallgrass Ontario
659 Exeter Road,
London, ON N6E 1L3
Phone: (519) 873-4631
Fax: (519) 873-4645

www.tallgrassontario.org
info@tallgrassontario.org

Field Office:

Tallgrass Ontario
120 Main St East
Ridgetown, ON N0P 2C0
Phone: (519) 674-1542
Fax: (519) 674-1512

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This factsheet is one in a series about Ontario's tallgrass prairie and savanna communities. Some of these include:

- #1 Get up, get out and see some tallgrass
- #2 Fire and the prairie
- #3 Identifying tallgrass prairie species
- #4 An owner's guide to managing tallgrass prairie and savanna
- #5 Looking for help?



Burnie the Badger

Illustrations by Judie Shore.

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Where I can obtain plant material or contract assistance for my tallgrass project?

The Society for Ecological Restoration, Ontario Chapter (SER-Ontario), publishes a directory that lists more than 50 native plant nurseries and seed suppliers, as well as those who provide contract seed collection and growing services. Contact SER-Ontario for details (see page 4).



Prairie plants can be purchased as plugs.
Kim Delaney

Where do I find a qualified person to conduct a prescribed burn? Apply herbicide?

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) holds expertise in all aspects of prescribed burning for tallgrass prairie. In addition, several private companies offer prescribed burn services. Your local MNR district office or the MNR prescribed fire specialist can direct you to the local MNR fire-management office. The fire-management office can provide information on accredited contractors.

Applications of a non-persistent herbicide (e.g. glyphosate) is sometimes required to remove troublesome weeds in the beginning stages of a restoration project. A special license is required to purchase and apply the concentrated



Prescribed burn in Brantford. Donald Kirk

Where can I obtain financial assistance to help with my community restoration project?

There are several sources of funds to help cover the costs of plant plugs, seed, equipment, contract assistance and so on. Businesses and corporate organizations may be interested in supporting local tallgrass projects. Local community foundations, family foundations and funds may also consider funding environmental projects.

TD/Canada Trust's Friends of the Environment Foundation accepts proposals for restoration projects. The MNR may have grants through their Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program. Your local conservation authority, naturalist club, stewardship council, or angling and hunting club may be interested in sponsoring, assisting, or providing land for tallgrass restoration projects.

form of this herbicide. Check the local yellow pages under lawn maintenance services or inquire at your local farm supply store to find a qualified herbicide applicator.

Financial contributors usually request acknowledgement.

How can I help recover tallgrass in Ontario?

In lots of ways! Become a member of Tallgrass Ontario and assist with ongoing conservation and education initiatives. Get your hands dirty and have some fun by getting involved in a tallgrass restoration project near you. Spread the word about this endangered ecosystem and what individuals and groups can do to help recover it.



Recommended Reading

Brown, L. 1979. *Grasses: An Identification Guide*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

- This guide uses simple illustrations and language to help the non-botanist identify many grasses, sedges and rushes.

Delaney, K., L. Rodger, P. Woodliffe, G. Rhynard, and P. Morris. 2000. *Planting the Seed: A Guide to Establishing Prairie and Meadow Communities in Southern Ontario*. Burlington: Environment Canada. Available from Tallgrass Ontario.

- What you need to know about planting a prairie or meadow in southern Ontario is contained in this publication. It deals with everything from choosing plant species to preparing and maintaining the site.

Hilts, S., and P. Mitchell. 1998. *Caring for Your Land: A Stewardship Handbook for Carolinian Canada Landowners*. Guelph, ON: Centre for Land and Water Stewardship. Available from the Carolinian Canada Coalition (\$10), 659 Exeter Road, London, ON N6E 1L3. Phone: 519-433-7077.

Ladd, D. 1995. *Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers*. Billings, MT: Falcon Press Publishing in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy.

- This is an excellent photographic guide to many of the flowering plant species of prairies and meadows, more than half of which occur in Ontario.

Madson, J. 1982. *Where the Sky Began: Land of the Tallgrass Prairie*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

- A classic. One of the best-written overviews of tallgrass prairie, describing the historical context, the ecological context as well as changes by humans to these "Lawns of God."

Morgan, J.P., D.R. Collicutt and J.D. Thompson. 1995. *Restoring Canada's Native Prairies: A Practical Manual*. Argyle, MB: Prairie Habitats. Available at cost from the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network, Box 1168, Chatham, ON N7M 5L8. Tel: 519-354-6842.

- This book provides excellent background information and a lot of technical detail involving the "how to" of prairie restoration such as mechanical seed harvesting for large-scale projects, and the calibration of seeding equipment.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1998. *Management Options for Abandoned Farm Fields*. Extension Notes. Manotick, ON: LandOwner Resource Centre.

- This factsheet is available from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Public Information Centre (1-800-667-1940) and the Landowner Resource Centre (1-888-571-4636).

Packard, S., and C. F. Mutel (eds.). 1997. *The Tallgrass Restoration Handbook for Prairies, Savannas and Woodlands*. Society for Ecological Restoration. Washington, DC: Island Press.

- This publication provides excellent scientific background and discussion on tallgrass prairie and savanna restoration. It is full of species lists, tips and scientific references and is written by well-respected, practical and practising prairie experts.

Pauly, W.R. 1988. *How to Manage Small Prairie Fires*. Madison, WI: Dane County Park Commission. Available for \$4 US from the Dane County Parks Department, 4318 Robertson Road, Madison, WI, 53714.

Rodger, L. 1998. *Tallgrass Communities of Southern Ontario: A Recovery Plan*. Report prepared for World Wildlife Fund Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Available electronically from Tallgrass Ontario's website at www.tallgrassontario.org Click on Publications, Recovery Plan.



A sampling of prairie related literature.
Lindsay Rodger