



WINTERGREEN
STUDIOS

LABB 2022

Report to TD FEF

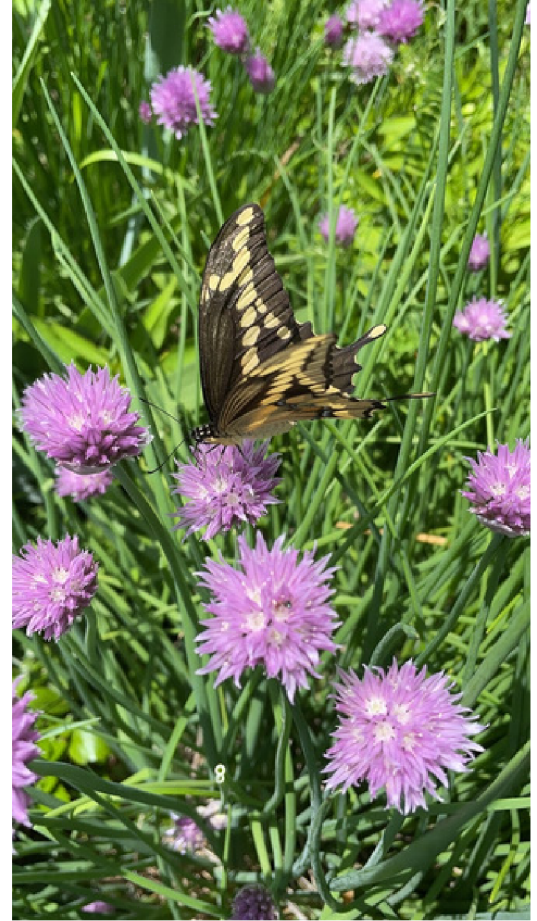
October 2022



TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation

Introduction

Wintergreen Studios is a year-round environmentally friendly educational retreat centre, located on 200 acres of mixed forests, meadows, and granite outcrops in the heart of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve. The reserve is part of a global network of UNESCO designated reserves—natural regions with unique geographic features, populated with people committed to sustainable community development. Wintergreen’s off-grid solar-powered facilities serve a three-fold focus on education, culture, and the environment.



Annual Land Art BioBlitz

The Annual Land Art BioBlitz (LABB) takes place over 5 days at Wintergreen Studios, where students and the public gather to take part in educational workshops on natural history and healthy living. Participants are also invited to explore the 204-acre property to get up close to the plants, animals, and fungi on the land and contribute their observations to a citizen science database at Wintergreen Studios.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Annual Land Art BioBlitz has followed safety protocols from 2020 through 2022, transitioning from all virtual in 2020, to hybrid, with virtual and small in-person events in 2021, and larger in-person events in 2022.

The 2022 event was an expansion of the 2021 hybrid Land Art BioBlitz, which was also supported by TD FEF. To reach the widest audience, the 2022 Land Art BioBlitz was a free event, open to all ages. We welcomed public drop-ins as well as elementary and secondary school groups who pre-booked a visit to Wintergreen. The event included four days of in-person events, one virtual day of live presentations on Zoom by speakers across Canada, and citizen science engagement through iNaturalist and downloadable Land Art Activities on our website.

What Did We Achieve?

From June 1st to June 5th, 2022, we hosted our eighth Annual Land Art Bioblitz thanks to funding from TD FEF, along with additional small grants, in-kind contributions, and extraordinary volunteer support. This year we focused on expanding our in-person programming by welcoming elementary and secondary school groups back to Wintergreen for the first time since 2019. By expanding our in-person programming while continuing to offer several virtual workshops, we were able to bring greater awareness and appreciation of the non-human species living in Southeastern Ontario while ensuring all participants felt safe and comfortable participating.

Throughout the event, we hosted 74 workshops, offered a variety of art and sensory experiences, and invited participants to get creative and explore the outdoors through guided hikes or self-guided exploration. We also logged new species observations using iNaturalist and offered several virtual workshops, curated classrooms, and Land Art Activities that participants could do from home.

 **School Visits @ Wintergreen**

 **Family Day @ Wintergreen**

 **Virtual Day**

 **iNaturalist**

School Visits @ Wintergreen

From June 1st to 3rd, Wintergreen hosted 8 elementary and secondary schools with 309 students and 36 staff. Participating schools included Loughborough Public School, Calvin Park Public School, Madeleine-de-Roybon, Mille-îles, Quintillian School, Lakeshore School, Forest Folk Kingston, and Pathways to Education.

Most schools arrived by bus and were greeted by staff with information packages and schedules for the day. School days started with an opening ceremony and land acknowledgement, followed by a series of different scheduled workshops with a lunch break in between the morning and afternoon sessions. Students participated in activities such as pond studies, guided hikes, and foraging frolics.

Family Day @ Wintergreen

On June 4, 2022 we hosted Family Day at Wintergreen Studios. Over 80 people attended this family-friendly event, which was packed with workshops on topics ranging from nature photography to molluscs to a Labyrinth Walk.

Virtual Day

Finally, on June 5, 2022 Wintergreen hosted a series of three virtual workshops. These Zoom webinars were facilitated by environmental professionals and enthusiasts from a variety of organizations. The three workshops we hosted this year were: 'Community Science' facilitated by Rena Upitis, 'Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre Tour' facilitated by Leah Birmingham and Jess Pelow, and 'Is Becoming a Beekeeper the Way to Save Declining Bee Populations?' facilitated by Shelly Candel of Bee City Canada.

iNaturalist & Species Count

iNaturalist is a citizen science app, created in part by the Canadian Wildlife Federation, that allows users to track their observations of plants, animals, and fungi. A 2022 Land Art BioBlitz 'project' was created in the app, which allowed users to sign up for our project and contribute their observations to our database. Following the format of 2020 and 2021, users were able to add observations from where they were situated across the country, rather than contributing observations from Wintergreen Studios alone. This showcased the vast diversity of beings across Canada and highlighted many species-at-risk who share our home.

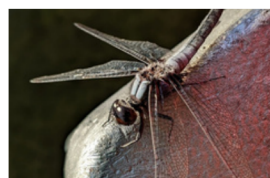
In total, there were 7,667 **observations** added to our project, representing 2,065 **species**. This marked an increase from the 2021 BioBlitz, where 1,299 species were identified.

The top six most observed species at the 2022 Land Art BioBlitz were:



Grey Ratsnake

54 observations



Chalk Fronted Corporal

46 observations



Painted Turtle

49 observations



Common Watersnaker

44 observations



Common Garter Snake

47 observations



Slaty Skimmer

44 observations

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

The 2022 Land Art BioBlitz achieved incredible results, bringing our community together to learn about and celebrate the natural world through various artistic explorations!



TESTIMONIALS

Students that attended the Land Art BioBlitz 2022 expressed their appreciation and enthusiasm for the various hands on learning opportunities offered during this fun, educational event.

“ We saw so many snakes. People should come to Wintergreen because they can learn so many new things they don't know about science

– *Ria, 12 years old*

“ My favourite part was that we got to go pond dipping ... we found some water skaters, a few beetles. People should come visit Wintergreen because it's very fun and you get to do so many activities

– *Misty, 7 years old*

“ I loved it. I loved being able to eat the plants and petting the snakes. I think people should come visit Wintergreen because this is a place where people from thousands of years ago came and we get to see what they've seen in the past

– *Marissa, 13 years old*



Finances & Support

Funding

In addition to the **\$11,800** grant from TD FEF, we received funds from three additional grants totalling **\$9,400**. We also received **\$8,600** of in-kind support from various individuals and community organizations. In-kind support included volunteers as well as contributions from Pathways to Education.

Project Costs

Staff costs for planning and coordinating the BioBlitz event was the largest expense at **\$15,000**, while honoraria for our workshop speakers totaled **\$5,500**. Buses totalled **\$2,800**. Other expenses included curriculum materials, marketing, food and accommodations, and portable toilets.

TOTAL PROJECT COST = **\$33,000**

TOTAL FUNDING RECEIVED = **\$20,200**

TOTAL IN-KIND SUPPORT = **\$8,600**

TOTAL COST TO WINTERGREEN = **\$4,200**

Volunteers

In March 2022, we hosted 3 teacher candidates from Queen's University who assisted with event promotion and created the land art resources and lesson plan packages used in the Virtual BioBlitz. One of the teacher candidates volunteered her time throughout the entire Land Art BioBlitz event.

In total, we had **22 volunteers** who contributed more than **450 hours** throughout this year's BioBlitz event.

Funders, Partners, and Supporters

For nearly a decade, foundations, corporations, not-for-profits, and individuals have contributed to the success of the Land Art BioBlitz in the way of funding, promotion, volunteering, and workshop facilitation.



TD Friends of the Environment Foundation



CATARAQUI REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



BUILDING A GRADUATION NATION **Pathways** to Education



LOOKING AHEAD

The next Annual Land Art BioBlitz will take place from **Tuesday, May 30, 2023 to Saturday, June 3, 2023**. We hope to transition back to entirely in-person where we will continue to offer free programming to both the public as well as elementary and secondary school students.

We are grateful to TD FEF for recognizing the value of this event and we look forward to celebrating nature's beauty and diversity again in 2023.

01

Audience Scope

For the 2023 event, we hope to engage more in-person participants through hosting all 5 days of the event in-person at Wintergreen Studios.

02

Facilities

We look forward to expanding our outdoor programming with the use of our new outdoor classroom. This renovated space will become the central location for workshop delivery at LABB 2023, further emphasizing the importance of our connection to the green spaces that surround us.

03

School Visits

To involve as many students and schools as possible, we plan to increase school visits from 3 days to 4 in 2023.