



Spring-Summer 2017 Newsletter

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To right: Colette Lokonon, UQO graduate student, June 2014 on the Mary Haydon Trail.

GENUINE NEWS—From your Mont O'Brien President, Paula Armstrong, Biologist.

We apologise for a late spring newsletter. Members are invited to help with formatting & translating the next bilingual Association newsletter/bulletin, and writing on items of their interest.

1) **May 21 *Spring Birding*** excursion with Daniel Toussaint and friendly experts of the Club des Ornithologues. Meet us at 7 a.m. Sunday, May 21, at the gate to ch. Mont O'Brien on Route 301, 5 km west of Danford Lake Village. COO will lend binoculars to those without. In case you cannot get up with the birds that day, we will post a sign at the gate and parking triangle to say where we are birding. If you have not renewed your membership, you can do it then and there, or at 1 p.m. at the AGM (below).



To right: COO bird expert **Claude Martineau** with our member Suzanne Chitwood.



2) **Sunday May 21:** Mont O'Brien Association **2017 AGM** at **1 p.m.** at the Danford Lake Library, 10 Jondee. Mr. **Allan Davis**, Lake Georges Cawood Association President, will chair the meeting. **Three seats** on the Board of Directors will be open for nominations. Candidates have come forward for two seats. Michael Walker, Chris Salt, and Paula Armstrong will be returning in their second year. Kim Montague will return as Allyn-et-Cawood Municipal Council representative.

Besides the election for 3 seats, discussion is on the agenda re an Association **Members' By-law** covering camping at Lake O'Brien, etc.

(posted by the Board last summer in the Allevyn-et-Cawood Municipal Hall), along with the President's Report, the Treasurer's Financial Report, and new maps (small & large) for members. This business section of the meeting lasts about one hour. A gift card award from Mountain Equipment Co-op to a Mont O'Brien volunteer will be announced at the AGM.

3) Association Purpose: The Mont O'Brien **Biodiversity Reserve** is not a club, and the land is not the property of the Association. The Reserve is a government designation of public land to better protect native species of flora & fauna and biological diversity. It is part of the Québec goal of protecting 12% of the territory at a high level. Hunting, fishing, trapping, rustic camping, and hiking trails are permitted on such Reserves as long as they do not harm biodiversity. New roads & buildings, mining, and industrial logging are not permitted. A BAPE hearing on the Reserve delimitation and its Conservation Plan is expected in the Spring of 2020 (see [MDDELCC.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversité/aires protégées/Terres publiques/Réserve de biodiversité/"Mont-O'Brien, du"](http://MDDELCC.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversité/aires_protégées/Terres_publicques/Réserve_de_biodiversité/Mont-O'Brien_du)). The **Mont O'Brien Association** was instrumental in the 2008 designation of the Reserve. An interesting, colourful document on the activities permitted on biodiversity reserves is available in English & French from the MDDELCC¹.

The **Purpose** of the **Association**, which campaigned for the Reserve designation twelve years ago, is to provide access (keeping about 9 km of road open) for the public by means of low-cost annual family memberships, to help protect biodiversity, & to provide recreation/educational experiences and materials. Part of our purpose is the gradual development in this area of the economic activity of nature tourism. Although the Association has received several small grants during the past few years, and although we are a charitable organisation and provide tax receipts², we still rely mainly on volunteer efforts to maintain roads, trails and activities. To right: Mark Barclay carving a passage through a large old log on the "Easy Trail".



To left:

Women can use the Husqvarna brush-cutter to trim roadsides. Other forms of volunteer help will also be needed this summer.

4) New hiking trails and Trail maps : The Association is in the process of registering two new hiking trails with the Québec government. These trails do not go to the summit like the Mary Haydon Trail (which is about 4-5 km long because of twists and turns, and gradually ascends about 170 m), but rather through mature forest on the sides of

Mont O'Brien—one on the northwest side, and one on the east side. They don't have permanent names yet; they are just called the **Easy Trail** and the **Eastside Trail**. A small map of the "Easy Trail" is on page 3 of this newsletter. It is quite accessible from our access road, starts about 60 m south of the North Trailhead, is 1.1 km long, and does not have any steep slopes. It is well-flagged, and was used several times in 2016. Since a tree stand for hunting is present near its west end, we do not use the "Easy Trail" in Oct. & November. To right: Red waxy-cap mushroom, September 4, 2016 on the trail.



¹ See [MDDELCC.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversité/aires protégées/"Régime d'activités dans les réserves de biodiversité et les réserves aquatiques"](http://MDDELCC.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversité/aires_protégées/Régime_d'activités_dans_les_réserve_de_biodiversité_et_les_réserve_aquatiques). By Marc-André Bouchard. Available in English & French.

² The Association is non-profit and charitable, and is run by volunteers from the Danford Lake community, Kazabazua, The MRC Pontiac, and Ottawa-Gatineau. Our CRA registration number for donations is #144945730.



Map of "Easy Trail". Both trail and map created by the Association, with 10-m elevation lines. At the top is Ross' Creek, which is the northern boundary of the Biodiversity Reserve. The **Parking Triangle** is on the right, and the **North Trailhead** (start of the Mary Haydon Summit Trail) is farther right. The green line is the "Easy Trail". The trail distance is just 1.1 km, and total change in altitude is 10 metres. The black dotted line is the road to Lake O'Brien. One can make a pleasant 2-km circuit by walking back to the parking area on the Lake O'Brien Road. (There isn't much traffic.)

The "Eastside Trail" (a members' map will be produced this autumn) has a long view eastward. It will start about 2/3 km up the Mary Haydon Trail from the East Trailhead. It will not be flagged until it is registered, however.

A paper map of the Mary Haydon Trail is provided with each Annual Family Membership. A printed colour map of our access roads and two trails in a protective sheet will be available for a small charge at the AGM on May 21.

5) Sunday Nature Walks with Intern. The Association will share a Canada Summer Jobs intern with CPAWS-Ottawa Valley during July and August. The intern will help to lead a **Nature Walk** on Sundays for Association members on one of our various trails. The Nature Walks/Hikes will be **every Sunday in July and August of 2017**, from July 1 to August 27, alternating between mornings and afternoons (you will need to request a schedule showing the start times). They will not be fast or strenuous, and will last about 3 hours, with a break. We will meet at the Parking Triangle. Members may bring a guest, but please do not bring a large group. By arrangement with an accommodations business, for public education and to support the local economy, we may bring a few tourists on the Sunday Nature Walk. We are members of the Pontiac Tourism Association in order to promote local nature tourism. A walk will be cancelled in case of rain, but not in case of showers.

6) Lake O'Brien and tent pads. With the help of an FDT ("Fonds de développement des territoires") grant through the MRC Pontiac, as well as 100 hours of member volunteer labour, & 16 hours of paid work for a local person, the Association built **two "tent pads"** (slightly raised platforms filled with soil) at Lake O'Brien last October-November, to encourage family tent-camping by Association members at the lake. One pad measures 12' x12' and the other 12' x



16'. A small acknowledgement plaque will be attached. A fire circle is being made at a safe distance from the tent pads and the lake; some dry firewood will be stored there. Members may rent a tent for a weekend night in July or August for a small charge; our intern will set it up and take it down.

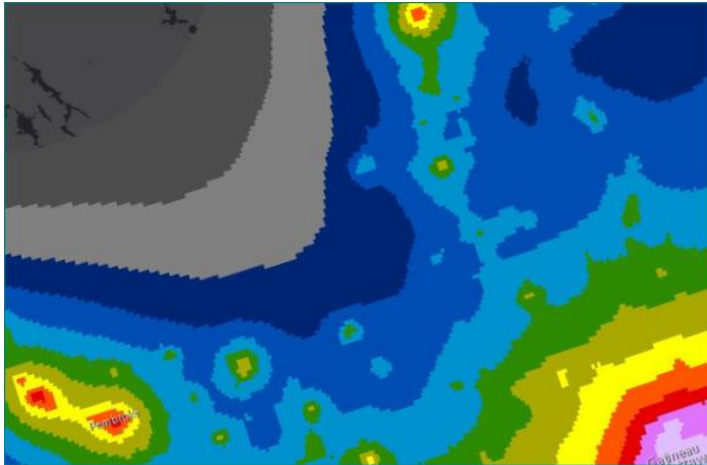
To left: Members Rick Blanchard and Michael Walker pounding rebar on the 12' x 12' tent pad at Lake O'Brien.

Ordinary cars cannot drive as far as Lake O'Brien, even though with care it is not hard to drive a car on our access road to the parking triangle, about 3 km from the highway. The distance from the parking

triangle to Lake O'Brien is about 2 km, so if one wanted to be quite rustic, one could backpack one's own small tent there. If a member would donate a heavy, robust old picnic table, it would be put to good use. We could get it to the campsite.

7) A **Trees & shrubs identification skills** walk with our intern for our members and their guests is planned for a July weekend morning, as well as a visit by the Board of Directors of CPAWS-Ottawa Valley and several of their members. Check with Board members for the exact date.

8) A special **Discovery exploration** of the Mary Haydon Trail on Mont O'Brien, using **LiDAR** images and **geology** to find and understand its ancient Precambrian formation layers, their subsequent fissures, to find the perilous "trapper's chute", and to examine post-glacial sand-flow, is set for a full day in August—send us your contact information to be informed of the exact date. We might also use the new "Eastside Trail".



9) **Stars & Planets-Trek.** We plan an August Saturday evening stroll to the western-most lookout on the Mary Haydon Trail, to observe stars & planets. Mont O'Brien is in a good location for viewing stars, as long as the sky is not covered with clouds. This is an illumination "map" of the Outaouais region, with Ottawa -Gatineau in the lower right, Maniwaki upper edge, Pembroke lower left. Lake Bryson can be identified in the grey area. Mont O'Brien is in a good area for viewing stars, near the edge of the dark blue region. This walk will probably be on Saturday August 19th, if the sky is not cloud-covered, since the new moon will be on August 21. We will meet before sunset, at about 7 p.m., with star maps & small flashlights. Bring older kids. Since cloud cover is changeable, the walk will

be confirmed for interested members on the Friday, about 28 hours ahead.

10) **Mushrooming Foray with MAO:** Expected on the 2nd Saturday in September, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. However, we still need to verify the exact date with MAO (Mycologues Amateurs de l'Outaouais). With MAO expert Yolande Dalpé, PhD, we have



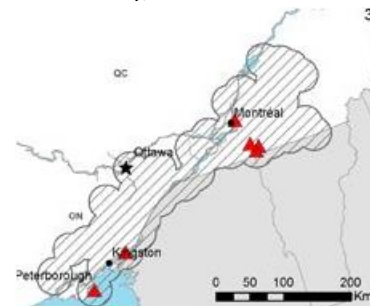
so far identified over **200 mushroom species** at Mont O'Brien, some of them edible, so we are a great favourite of Les Mycologues. To right: Yolande teaching , Sept. 18, 2016.





11) Ticks and climate change. "Deer ticks" or "Blacklegged ticks" (*Ixodes scapularis*) that can carry the Lyme disease organism may be in Gatineau Park, but they have not been reported at Mont O'Brien. I had personal experience with these ticks when I worked for the US forest service in Northern Wisconsin in 1999 & 2000, and in fact had to remove a few (and did not get Lyme disease). They are quite small (about 2 mm), but not invisible.

According to Health Canada, government entomologists have found these ticks in the mapped areas of red triangles, and believe the ticks may be in the black star area (Ottawa & Gatineau). Although no ticks of any species have so far been reported at Mont O'Brien, it is possible for a few to arrive. I advise you to wear long pants in brushy areas anyway, and if you are wearing shorts, don't sit in grassy areas. Don't wear sandals. You will probably need to use insect repellent with 15% DEET against blackflies when they are prevalent (especially about May 15- July 1), and wear a hat against deerflies, especially out in the sun during the summer. Check your skin in the evening at home, & check the skin of small children in a shower that evening. If you do find a tick, remove it with a small tweezers (grasp just behind the head, pull straight out), clean the area, save the tick in a zip-lock bag or medicine vial, and report it to a Board member. Please also report sightings of large animals other than deer on the Reserve to the Board.



The best way to protect against these ticks and Lyme disease is **to prevent climate change**, since these ticks do not survive very low winter temperatures. Supporting biodiversity protection and reducing the use of fossil fuels both help in fighting climate change. Therefore, we encourage you to join the Mont O'Brien Association and visit the Reserve, to bring your friends as guests and encourage them to join, and to bring children to the trails, Lake O'Brien and the Sunday Nature Walks, both for exercise and to learn. In the future, we should be able, without using fossil fuels, to bring people on day-visits to the trails of Mont O'Brien and to other Reserves. As a member of the Mont O'Brien Association, you and your family will have a precious opportunity to enjoy an important biodiversity conservation area, to continually learn more about it, to help decide its overall uses, and to aid in its protection. – Paula Armstrong

Membership forms may be downloaded from our website: www.montobrienassociation.org

The 2017 Annual Family Membership fee includes family members 17 years & younger.

Membership is required for crossing private land; the annual fee is needed for maintaining access roads.

Mail Membership form, Responsibility form, old key or 5\$ key deposit +Annual family membership (\$25.00) to:

Mont O'Brien Association, P.O. Box 904, Danford Lake, QC J0X 1P0

You will receive a family membership card, year 2017 key, and information.

Tax receipts are available for donations of \$20+.

12) Membership forms for 2017 are available from our website, from Marie-Thérèse by mail, and from Isabelle Cardinal (DG) or Melinda Lafleur at the Allevyn-and-Cawood Municipal Office in Danford Lake. A small map of the Mary Haydon Trail & other information in French & English is also available from them. Keep children close on the trails. Lake O'Brien use is unsupervised. The Reserve is a small wilderness. It is not a park!

Paula Armstrong, President
pauladalgaardarmstrong@gmail.com

Michael Walker, Treasurer
(819) 467-2219
mhwalker@ca.inter.net

Denise Larocque-Renaud, Community Rep.
dlarocquerenaud@gmail.com
(819) 467-3183

Chris Salt, Trails & Community Rep.
(819) 467-2966
SaltedTrooper@gmail.com

Kim Montague, Municipal Council Rep.
(819) 467-4077
Milford_K@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary: Marie-Thérèse Kazeef
(819) 467-2580
marie-theresek@sympatico.ca