



# RIVERSONG

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER GRAND RIVER LAND TRUST INC.

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## What's Happening at Ruthven

By Marilynn Havelka, CAO

Bird Festival at Ruthven May 8th & 9th...YES THIS WEEKEND!

The bird banding station has exploded with neotropical migratory birds. They started arriving on the weekend and Chief Bander, Rick Ludkin expects that this coming weekend it will be at its' peak. Just in time for the Bird Festival.

The festival will be a two-day affair with speaker Jody Allair providing the "key note" presentation on Friday evening at 7:15 pm. His topic *Conserving our Shared Birds*, will share some of his experiences banding in Belize, Columbia, Trinidad and Tobago. Jody is a Biologist and Science Educator at Bird Studies Canada which is located in Port Rowan. A social hour will follow his presentation with the sounds of the Latin Vintage Orchestra and refreshments.

If you are an early bird the banding station opens at 6 am on Saturday and will be in full swing until at least noon. Join the licensed banders and volunteers as they extract birds from the various mist net locations and then take them into the banding lab to process information and band the birds

Matt Timpf will lead a Bird Census Walk at 8 am followed by a [Spring Trail Walk](#) and [Make a Leaf Library](#), a family event. David Agro will speak about the Jocotoco Foundation in Ecudaor, and Geoff Carpentier will share his experiences while banding in Tierra del Fuego. Matt will take the stage and discuss the types of birds that impact banding operations at Ruthven and the last presentation will be given by Tom Mason who will share his experiences at the COTERC station in Costa Rica.

I expect you get the gist of the theme for this event - Ruthven has partnered with the Ignite

TORONTO 2015 Pan/Parapan Am Games. Their priorities are to connect with the themes and events of the games and to strenghten cultural connections between Ontario and South and Central America and the Caribbean.

Activities for kids will be available all day Saturday with face painting (of course birds), bird balloons with Fluffy the Clown and a Birds of Prey Show by the Canadian Raptor Conservancy. Food with flavours from the south will be available too! The weather forecast looks good but the show will go on rain or shine! See you this weekend.

### Correction from the last newsletter:

Nancy Furber, one of our bird banders also volunteers with the Canadian Snow Bunting Network started the project in 2010 (not 2003). The team Nancy works with have banded over 2,274 Snow Buntings since Februry 3 (and 'not over the years') - a remarkable accomplishment of this year.



*Banding at the Hagersville grain depot - an unusual location for Snow Buntings who normally feed in wide open country spaces and not in town!*



*A turkey is curious and perhaps looking for food at the ground cage capturing Snow Buntings.*



This past Sunday, May 3, the beautiful voices of The Haldimand Chorals filled the Coach House with music. Conductor Stillman Matheson led the "Love and Laughter" program filled with a variety of music.



The previous e-newsletter included an article on the conservation work being carried out on the basement floors in the mansion. The work is now complete and the original drain excavated by archaeologists in the estate office. The drain has been enclosed with glass and will be available for interpretative purposes.



In early March I had the opportunity to visit the Owens Thomas House in Savannah, Georgia. The first feature I saw in the basement of the mansion was an 'expose; brick drain under the basement floor.



Fisher Archaeological Consulting staff and a monitor from Six Nations field walk an area targeted for future wetland restoration work on the Ruthven property. The group is working towards completing an archaeological assessment of the parcel, a requirement of our easement with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

## Mark These Events on Your Calendars

The historic house opens for the season on May 16th. Hours: Wed- Sun, and holiday Mon. 10am-4pm, tours on the hour. Enjoy the grounds during daylight hours. Regular admission rates apply

**Day of 1,000 Canoes**  
June 20, 2015 ~ 10am - 2pm

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## Volunteer?

We have several projects on hand!  
If you are interested, please give us a call at  
the Gate House.

**905 - 772- 0560**