

# Carolinian Canada Coalition

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## **Ontario's unique Carolinian region under siege**

(November 2, 2007 — Toronto) Sweeping from Toronto through Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton, London and Windsor to Lake Huron and Lake Erie lies a unique ecological region populated with dozens of rare species of plants, wildflowers, animals, birds, amphibians, and butterflies not found anywhere else in Canada.

A group of dedicated science writers and scientists who have spent decades documenting this region have now put together a book for area residents to see what is special about this region – and to understand the threats it faces. Many of these unusual native species — Wild Hyacinth, Wood Poppy, Cucumber Tree, Prairie Rose, Bald Eagle, and Spotted Turtle — that depend on the region's distinctive habitats are threatened due to development pressures.

One third of Canada's rare and endangered plants and animals live in this Carolinian region ecosystem. It is also home to more than one quarter of Canada's population. The authors are hoping that raising awareness amongst Ontarians of the unique native species in their backyard will contribute to responsible development in the Carolinian region and ensure that its unique species are protected and will continue to exist in this precious southwestern Ontario landscape. In spite of its large population, most people are not aware of the ecological riches of Carolinian Ontario.

The contributors work for leading environmental organizations, universities, and museums including:

- World Wildlife Fund-Canada
- Bird Studies Canada
- Royal Ontario Museum
- Federation of Ontario Naturalists
- North American Native Plant Society

The book is the result of more than 20 years of research by the authors and many other scientists and organizations who are part of the Carolinian Canada coalition based in London, Ontario. Titled *The Natural Treasures of Carolinian Canada*, it is a large format full-colour paperback with more than 200 colour images of Carolinian birds, plants, animals, trees and other species. It explains what is special about the region, and discusses the threats arising from expanding human settlement as well as climate change. About the contributors:

- Wasyl Bakowsky, a vegetation ecologist with the Natural Heritage Information Centre, resides in Peterborough.
- Gregor Beck is a wildlife biologist who resides in the heart of Carolinian Canada, St. Williams.
- Tom Beechey, from Cambridge, is the associate director of the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas.
- Alan Dextrase is the senior biologist with the OMNR in Peterborough.
- William DeYoung is a landscape ecologist who lives in London.
- Sandy Dobbyn is the Zone Ecologist for the southwest zone of Ontario Park in London.
- Lorraine Johnson is the author of many native plant gardening books. She lives in Toronto.
- Michelle Kanter, a wildlife biologist, lives in London. She is the Executive Director of Carolinian Canada.
- An avid bird-watcher, Kevin Kavanagh spent fifteen years with World Wildlife Fund-Canada. He resides in St. Williams.
- Jon McCracken is the senior Program Manager with Bird Studies Canada. He lives in Port Rowan.
- Deborah Metsger is the Assistant Curator of Botany at the Royal Ontario Museum. She lives in Toronto.
- Gordon Nelson is currently the Chair of Carolinian Canada and the Parks Forum of Ontario. He lives in London.
- Michael J. Oldham is botanist/herpetologist with Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre in Peterborough.
- Paul Pratt, a resident of Windsor, is co-editor of Ontario Odonata and is the naturalist for the City of Windsor.
- Steven Price is Senior Conservation Director for World Wildlife Fund-Canada. He lives in Toronto.
- Shawn Staton holds an Honours B.Sc. in Biology from the University of Guelph. He currently lives in Burlington where he works as an aquatic biologist.
- Ric Symmes is the former Executive Director of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. He lives in Orillia.
- Michael Troughton helped compile the Background Study of the Thames River Watershed and Nomination Proposal, which led to the designation of the Thames as a Canadian Heritage River.
- Allen Woodliffe grew up in the heart of the Carolinian zone, Chatham. He is the District Ecologist for the Aylmer District, which occupies at least 80 percent of the Carolinian zone.

The Natural Treasures of Carolinian Canada: Discovering the rich natural diversity of Ontario's Southwestern heartland, Edited by Lorraine Johnson  
 \$34.95, 8 1/4"x10 1/2" ", paper with French flaps, colour photography throughout, 160 pages, ISBN: 1-55028-990-X · 978-1-55028-990-9  
 Publication Date: October 31, 2007  
 Distributed by Formac Distributing Limited, [www.formac.ca](http://www.formac.ca) · [orderdesk@formac.ca](mailto:orderdesk@formac.ca)