

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club  
2022 Conservation Award - Member:  
Sharon Boddy

*This award is given in recognition of an outstanding contribution by a member in the cause of natural history conservation in the Ottawa Valley.*



We are pleased to award Sharon Boddy for her conservation work with two Friends groups in west Ottawa where she lives. Sharon co-founded the Friends of Carlington Hill in 2016 (renamed Friends of Carlington Woods in 2021) and founded the Friends of Hampton Park in 2019. She continues to lead both groups. In October, Sharon led OFNC members on a tour of Carlington Woods.

Carlington Woods is a 22 hectare upland deciduous forest with some mature trees, adjacent to Carlington Park and the former quarry. Hampton Park is located just 2 km away, north of the Queensway beside Island Park Drive. The park is almost 100 years old with a good variety of native plant species, including trees more than 200 years old. Both Friends groups raise awareness of the natural value of their forests and work to preserve them.

Carlington Woods and Hampton Park are both Environmental Protection Zones of the city, a designation that prohibits off-leash dogs, mountain biking and building forts. Nevertheless, these urban forests face pressure from these activities and other recreational use. In 2021, Sharon obtained a City of Ottawa Community Protection grant on behalf of both groups, to commission a Natural Heritage and Impact Study on both parks.

[https://carlingtonparkhome.files.wordpress.com/2021/02/report\\_carlingtonhampton\\_final\\_dec21.pdf](https://carlingtonparkhome.files.wordpress.com/2021/02/report_carlingtonhampton_final_dec21.pdf)

The study identified significant features and concerns in each forest and recommended specific restoration projects, removal of invasive species and formalizing a reduced trail network. It confirmed the Friends' concerns and goals. Both Friends groups host guided walks, organize clean ups, and maintain lively Facebook pages with cartoons, photos, conservation advice, and invitations to work parties and walks. They have established pollinator gardens at the edge of





each forest. In Hampton Park, they blocked some informal trails, planted native species on them, and collaborated with the NCC on removal of Japanese Knotweed colonies. In 2021-2022, Sharon coordinated a major project in Carlington Woods to replace dense buckthorn in a small area, with native species. For this, she collaborated with both Friends groups, Tree Fest Ottawa, local residents, and local students to gain funds to buy plants, grow up native plants from seeds, remove the buckthorn and plant the native species. She presented the project to the Invasive Plant Council's conference in January 2023.

Sharon Boddy is a writer, an environmental researcher, and community leader on conservation issues in west Ottawa. She communicates tirelessly with positive messages via a large email distribution list, Twitter, and the newsletters for each Friends group. She writes the newsletters, applies for grants, and liaises with city and NCC officials on behalf of the Friends groups. She organizes and leads most of their activities. The Ottawa Citizen has published her articles about Carlington Woods and Hampton Park Woods. Recently, she hosted eight virtual presentations by local experts on urban forests; this was a joint project of Tree Fest Ottawa and the Friends groups.

Sharon's colleagues confirmed: "she is the right person to receive this award... two urban natural areas will be sustained and conserved because of her amazing efforts, diligence, communicating skills and ... experience." Congratulations, Sharon, and thank-you.

*Prepared by Lynn Ovenden*

