

Annual Report 2022

Photo by Terence Gui





(Re)open for Business

And by business, I mean connecting our community to the wonders of nature, which last year we were able to do on a scale that felt very pre-pandemic. Looking back on the recent past, 2021 was filled with cautious optimism as we gradually returned to delivering our nature education, gardening, and conservation programs. But in 2022 we really flung Riverwood's (figurative) doors open and welcomed back even more children, youth, and adults who were eager to get back to learning, volunteering, and enjoying the outdoors with us.

As you'll see in the following pages, 2022 saw The Riverwood Conservancy deliver a wide range of nature-focused programs to schools, community groups, and the public, while engaging people of all ages in our gardening and conservation activities that keep our natural spaces healthy and ecologically diverse.

We not only engaged our community with nature, but we also asked for their input on our work. Over the summer we undertook a community needs assessment to better understand what keeps people coming back to Riverwood and TRC's programs, and what we could offer to make even more memorable experiences with nature. The results of that needs assessment will dovetail with the strategic planning process that we initiated in 2022. A new strategic plan that will help direct us through 2026 will be finalized in 2023.

To our community of caring members, donors, volunteers, and supporters, thank you for making our year of renewal and reopening a success. Your unwavering commitment to nature, and our organization, through the hardest stretches of the pandemic will not be forgotten as we move forward in a way that feels happily familiar.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara Wilbur-Collins'.

Sara Wilbur-Collins, CFRE
Executive Director

Renewal, at Many Levels

When spring rolls around at Riverwood, I'm always in awe of the colourful bursts from the early flowers in the gardens, the emerging leaves on the trees, and the bright markings on red-winged blackbirds. That feeling of warm, bright renewal after a period of cold and grey was also something many of us around Riverwood felt throughout 2022.

The return to our regularly scheduled programming was particularly uplifting after the challenges and restrictions of two-plus years of pandemic uncertainty. That return, more or less, to a regular state of affairs meant not only the revival of public events and school field trips at The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC), but also that Board members were once again able to get out into the community to spread the word about Riverwood and TRC, and to engage new partners to strengthen our presence in, and value to the City of Mississauga. We are always grateful for the City's continued support and the opportunity to collaboratively help keep Riverwood the beautiful and unique urban park that it is.

We embraced this feeling of renewal for our Board of Directors to reflect on the past, study the present and plan for the future with revitalized rigour. The Board has been heavily involved in a strategic planning process which began in 2022 and which will culminate with the delivery of our new strategic plan in 2023. The Board continues to move with its 10-year vision through careful planning and future consultations to ensure Riverwood and TRC remain relevant and welcoming to all for many years to come. The Board retains its commitment to action on climate change as a lens through which we adjust and implement our strategic plan, and we continue to advance diversity, equity and inclusion across all of TRC's governance and operational processes and practices.

We're looking forward to what 2023 has in store, but doing so with the knowledge that two of our outstanding board members, Dave Leeder and Shirley Daniels, will be stepping down from their positions during that time. Both Dave and Shirley have been integral members of TRC's Board of Directors, providing the exceptional insight, guidance, and commitment needed to help TRC blossom over the years. Words cannot properly express how appreciative we are for their service, and we wish them the very best.

Our Board members are an incredibly dedicated and hard-working group, championing TRC and selflessly providing their time and energy to ensuring thoughtful governance to the organization, and for that I thank them all.

Our wonderfully enthusiastic staff, under the capable leadership of our Executive Director, Sara Wilbur-Collins, continually engage students, program participants, volunteers and park visitors to experience the natural beauty of Riverwood while learning about, caring for and better appreciating nature and its importance.

We are always so grateful to our devoted volunteers, loyal members, and many donors and sponsors, for we would not be able to do all these amazing things without your support and time.

From all of us on the Board, thank you for being connected to Riverwood, and for caring about the amazing work that our organization does for the community.



Heather Shaw
Chair of the Board of Directors

The Riverwood Conservancy would like to acknowledge that the land on which we operate is within the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the traditional land of the Wendat Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. This land is part of the Upper Canada Land Surrenders to the Crown. Today, the region surrounding Riverwood remains home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work here.

Community Connections

\$18,000

Raised at our Gardens & Gourmets fundraiser at Capra's Kitchen



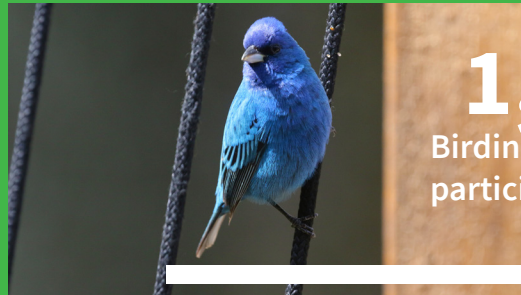
250

Visitors for Jingtamok: The Riverwood Indigenous Social, delivered in partnership with The Indigenous Network



1,800

Birding program participants



75

Knit squares installed by CNIB Deafblind Community Services as a yarn bombing piece to mark Deafblind Awareness Month in June



1,439

Total volunteers engaged in 2022

14,468

Volunteer hours contributed



Rewilding Riverwood

Derek Stone

Conservation and Program Manager

Diligent visitors to Riverwood may often sneak a peek at one of our deer picking its way through the woods, or catch a glimpse of our very hard-working beaver building his dam. It's always a treat to see Riverwood's wildlife thriving in the middle of the city. However, there are countless other species hiding in Riverwood's diverse environments – burrowed under the rich forest soil, lazing amongst the reeds in our wetlands, and nesting in our grassy wildflower meadows – that are not always seen or recognized, living their lives under our very noses, and equally worthy of our support.

To that effect, in 2022 you may have seen our volunteers working hard to restore sensitive environments that had been damaged by human impact over the pandemic. Over 600 metres of ad-hoc trails in ecologically sensitive meadow and forest areas have been blocked off and restored. Over 500 trees and shrubs have been planted in our ravines to create privacy and habitat for wildlife. Many wheelbarrows of sediment and aggregate have been removed from our local wetlands to restore amphibian and reptile habitat.

So whether we're planting trees in the rain-soaked spring, knee-deep in muddy wetlands in the heat of summer, or removing invasive plants on a windy day in fall, our efforts always focus on championing the diverse cast of creatures that make their home at Riverwood, even if they aren't always immediately visible.

Our conservation work doesn't happen entirely with shovels in hand though – if you've been supportive of our action on the ground in any way, thank you. The cross-section of nature and community is where Riverwood's conservation program thrives, and your support of what we do allows us to take on these projects with a smile – even when we're covered in mud.

535 
Trees planted
around Riverwood

1,037 
Wildflowers planted
around Riverwood

2,000 
Pounds of garlic
mustard removed

Growth Spurts



Taya Kehler
Gardens Coordinator

The Canadian Garden Council and Communities in Bloom proclaimed 2022 as the Year of the Garden, and we embraced that theme by expanding Riverwood's existing gardens, creating new gardens, and offering a variety of gardening programs throughout the year.


Thanks to the generous support of the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and our passionate volunteers, we expanded our vegetable garden, doubling its size by removing 400 square feet of lawn and adding eight newly built raised beds. This let us grow over 30 species of vegetables and herbs, and donate 300 lbs of produce to our local food bank.

While gardening programs have always been a part of our offerings, we were thrilled to add vegetable gardening programs to both our Discovery schedule and elementary school programs.

During your visits to Riverwood, you may have also noticed our newest addition, the Resilience Garden, located next to the Chappell House parking lot. This perennial planting buffer was designed with native and non-native plants that are both drought- and salt-tolerant, to withstand the effects of the surrounding road and parking lot. This has been a great educational tool to advocate for and model effective ways to garden in an urban setting.

We are so grateful to our dedicated volunteers. The beauty of Riverwood's gardens is a reflection of their hard work, and last year's successes would not have been possible without their support. We're looking forward to another great year in the gardens!


300
Pounds of produce
donated to The
Compass Food Bank


2,800
Square feet of
added or expanded
garden area



Local Explorers

Stephanie Keeler
Community Programs Coordinator

In 2022, we saw an abundance of new programs, connections, and a growing sense of community at Riverwood. Our Discovery programs thrived once again, featuring new speakers, topics, and engagement opportunities. Throughout the year, we focused on connecting people to nature through different avenues and programs, including forest bathing, birding, trivia nights, astronomy nights, garden tours, and hands-on workshops.

Our volunteers and program leaders served as a gateway to the natural world, inspiring community members to take their knowledge home and share it with their friends and families, so they could make a difference (sometimes quite literally) in their own backyards. These programs are never a one-way street; participants and visitors bring their own experiences and understanding of the natural world, and we build knowledge as a community.

In the spring, we held our second BioBlitz, which was met with enthusiastic public engagement. A total of 79 individuals contributed to our citizen science efforts, resulting in over 2,600 observations of 516 species at Riverwood during the month-long event. This data is valuable in assessing the health of our *flora* and *fauna* populations, identifying new species yet to be recorded at Riverwood, and determining the populations of invasive species. We were blown away by the support, skills, and engagement from our community.

Thank you to all Discovery program volunteers and participants, whose dedication and enthusiasm makes this work possible and so enjoyable for the staff and wider community. With passionate individuals of all ages and walks of life taking part in these programs, we know that Riverwood will be a thriving space for generations to come.

210 
Discovery programs
delivered in 2022

6,120 
Discovery program
participants engaged

Living Classrooms

Erin Farrow

Education Naturally Teacher

Through the early months of 2022, the education team and a few dedicated volunteers delivered over 70 virtual workshops and webinars to both public and private school clients. After delivering a fully-booked March Break Day Camp, we continued to deliver Education Naturally virtual programs, including a unique opportunity to present at a virtual conference attended by Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Intermediate students in southeast Mississauga schools. We virtually guided over 300 students through retreats at Riverwood, fungus growing science experiments, and pet and wild turtle care practices.


In the spring, we visited Stanley Mills Public school in Brampton and facilitated nature discovery programs in the schoolyard to the entire school population. Then in May we marked the return of public school field trips to Riverwood, and we delivered programs to two school groups – a Mother’s Day celebration for Guiding Light School and gardening-focused activities for Edenrose Public School. Parkway and Nahani Way Public Schools also sent their entire schools to Riverwood, where students and staff enjoyed outdoor nature-based programs. Everyone involved, including our office and support staff, were delighted to see young learners return to Riverwood.


After the summer break, Education Naturally programs resumed with regular on-site programs to private and public school groups as well as homeschoolers. We also saw the return of more volunteer support from the community, including intern students from York University and the University of Toronto Mississauga. A second teacher was hired to help support the demand for double bookings, and to help fill the programming start-up gap in September, private one-off Nature Babies programs and a public Nature Babies series were also delivered.

Despite the constant pivoting between program delivery formats, over 25 unique virtual, hybrid, and in-person programs were delivered throughout the fall. By the end of 2022 – which saw the delivery of over 130 Education Naturally programs – Education Naturally reached a milestone of engaging over 70,000 participants since its inception in 2005. Congratulations to the past and current education programming team for delivering such meaningful environmental education programs, and thank you to all who made this programming possible.



213 
Education Naturally
programs delivered

5,610 
Education Naturally
program participants

1,703 
LEADS program
participants



Catherine Wassmansdorf
Education Program Manager

In 2022, we saw the continuing evolution of LEADS (Leadership in Environmental Achievements through Diversity and Skills) programs from virtual in the winter months, to outdoor half-day hikes, to the return of pre-pandemic-like on-site programs. We also continued to offer Indigenous-focused programming in concert with our local partners.

In the summer of 2022, we supported Gwayakochigaye, a program that aimed to help Indigenous students connect with the land, their culture, and learn about nature and climate change through both Western and Indigenous lenses. The Gwayakochigaye program was delivered in collaboration with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and the University of Toronto Mississauga. In partnership with The Indigenous Network, we held Jingtamok: The Riverwood Indigenous Social, and hosted Women's Full Moon Ceremonies to further foster connection and community.

In our education offerings for secondary students, we developed a new program for International Baccalaureate classes that saw students collect over 700 pieces of litter from Chappell Creek and sort them according to material type or corporate brand. Students collected and processed creek sediment samples and identified microplastics using stereo-microscopes donated by the University of Toronto Mississauga.

Virtual trigonometry programs turned out to be a surprising hit during the pandemic, with over 110 students reached in 2022. Geography students enjoyed working with a wide variety of Riverwood-specific maps, navigating with Global Positioning System devices, and seeing geological processes at work when the Credit River overflowed its banks, revealing new fossils after each event.

Great thanks go out to Weston Forest for their vital, ongoing support. Many thanks as well to the Suncor Energy Foundation and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada's PromoScience program, both of which concluded their support for LEADS programs in 2022.



Good as Goldenrod

Kerry Furneaux
Enabling Garden Coordinator


1,437
Enabling Garden
participants in 2022

Enabling Garden programs continue to provide therapeutic horticulture – the use of plants, gardening and nature-related activities to enhance an individual’s mental, physical, and emotional well-being – to groups and individuals in our community. Not only did we welcome some of those individuals and groups back to Riverwood for in-person programs, but we also expanded our offerings beyond the park’s boundaries.

We developed a new partnership with Bough Beeches Place Retirement Home, which saw our programs delivered outside Riverwood to both independent living and memory care participants. Monthly programs offered seniors the chance to connect to nature through thoughtfully created custom programming. With very positive feedback and the consistent support of volunteers, this successful pilot will continue into 2023.

An off-site presentation at the Caledon Public Library helped launch their Reading Garden, and introduced 70 seniors within the community to the therapeutic and mental health benefits of gardening. Presentations to the Etobicoke Master Gardeners and Conservation Ontario shared knowledge of Riverwood and our therapeutic horticulture practices to a combined audience of 145 people.

Our partnership with Heart House Hospice continued as we offered six programs through the summer to bereaved families. Using the garden and surrounding natural areas, we worked to create unique and interactive programs that allowed participants to reconnect to nature while supporting their grief.

And an amazing group of young women who are now regular participants, the Goldenrod Girls, engaged with us twice a week, on-site, through spring, summer, fall, and winter totalling 75 programs. Together we planted, weeded, watered, maintained, and harvested fresh produce that was donated to The Compass Food Bank. And to top it all off, the Girls spoke about the positive impact Enabling Garden programs have had on them at our Gardens & Gourmets fundraiser at Capra’s Kitchen.



Continuity

Trishia Kluge
Donor and Volunteer

It's been almost 20 years since I started volunteering with The Riverwood Conservancy, which was known back then as The Mississauga Garden Council. It was shortly after I retired from paid employment and right when that wretched garlic mustard was becoming really invasive. It still needs to be contained, but I now leave the pulling to younger, stronger bodies.

The volunteer bird feeding schedule still gets me to Riverwood every week, where I walk the trails with a partner and usually pick up some litter on the way. I also assist with Discovery program walks and talks, some indoors and some outdoors.

I feel I get so much more from volunteering at Riverwood than I give. It provides me motivation to get outside year-round which gives me mental and physical exercise, and much pleasure. It gives me an opportunity to talk to strangers I meet on the trails about a place I love. I've made many long-term friends through attending programs either as a volunteer or a participant. I've also learned so much from the wonderful staff and speakers throughout the years.

I'm fortunate in that I can donate both time and money to TRC. Both are essential and I'm often told how very much appreciated these contributions are. Giving my time gives me a warm feeling of helping such a worthwhile and valuable organization. Giving financially means I can help TRC carry on its work educating, informing, and delighting the people of Mississauga and preserving its green spaces for the next generation.

I have encouraged several friends and acquaintances to get involved at Riverwood in any way they can. I don't think any of them regret it. Things we do now are forming a legacy for the future and we must think ahead.

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 690,595	\$ 654,162
Accounts receivable	19,909	54,874
Harmonized sales tax receivable	7,331	8,383
Prepaid expenses	5,694	6,334
	<u>723,529</u>	<u>723,753</u>
Capital assets	23,077	33,212
	<u>\$ 746,606</u>	<u>\$ 756,965</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 78,691	\$ 67,865
Deferred contributions – operating	134,914	236,439
Deferred contributions – capital	7,748	11,426
	<u>221,353</u>	<u>315,730</u>
NET ASSETS		
Operating Reserve	509,923	419,449
Capital Asset Reserve	15,330	21,786
	<u>525,253</u>	<u>441,235</u>
	<u>\$ 746,606</u>	<u>\$ 756,965</u>

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended December 31, 2022

	Operating Reserve	Capital Asset Reserve	Total 2022	Total 2021
REVENUES				
Grants	\$ 779,113	-	779,113	985,041
Government assistance	-	-	-	61,516
Donations	283,012	-	283,012	123,980
Program fees	106,944	-	106,944	27,195
Events, fundraising, and sponsorships	63,825	-	63,825	53,208
Honoraria	35,894	-	35,894	480
Other revenue	22,273	-	22,273	15,353
	<u>1,291,061</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,291,061</u>	<u>1,266,773</u>
EXPENDITURES				
Administration	100,248	-	100,248	174,534
Amortization	-	12,099	12,099	10,148
Communications and marketing	12,075	-	12,075	6,572
Fundraising	16,907	-	16,907	20,247
Program expenses	130,526	-	130,526	94,920
Purchased services	20,749	-	20,749	87,222
Salaries and wages	914,439	-	914,439	834,354
	<u>1,194,944</u>	<u>12,099</u>	<u>1,207,043</u>	<u>1,227,997</u>
Excess of revenues over expenditures (expenditures over revenues) for year	<u>\$ 96,117</u>	<u>(12,099)</u>	<u>84,018</u>	<u>38,776</u>
			2022	2021
OPERATING RESERVE				
Balance, beginning of year			\$ 419,449	374,286
Excess of revenues over expenditures for year			96,117	47,085
Transfer			(5,643)	(1,922)
Balance, end of year			<u>509,923</u>	<u>\$ 419,449</u>
CAPITAL ASSET RESERVE				
Balance, beginning of year			\$ 21,786	28,173
Excess of (expenditures over revenues) revenues over expenditures for year			(12,099)	(8,309)
Transfer			5,643	1,922
Balance, end of year			<u>\$ 15,330</u>	<u>\$ 21,786</u>

2022 Supporters

Guardians of Riverwood | \$100,000+

City of Mississauga
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Suncor Energy Foundation

Guardians of Riverwood | \$25,000+

Credit Valley Conservation
Scotts Canada Ltd
Natural Sciences and Engineering
Research Council of Canada
Anonymous (1)

Sunshine Circle | \$10,000+

Government of Canada
Volvo
The Frank Fowler Foundation
Gillian Lien-Robinson
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Climate Impact Fund
Weston Forest
Armstrong Milling Co Ltd

Pollinators' Circle | \$5,000+

Hazel McCallion Fund for Arts,
Culture and Heritage – Community
Foundation of Mississauga
PwC Canada
Retired Teachers of Ontario – District 39 Peel
Anonymous (1)

Gardeners' Circle | \$1,000+

Patricia Kluge
PricewaterhouseCoopers Canada Foundation
PMA
Jim and Micheline Muscat
The Riverwood Conservancy Endowment Fund
Aviva Canada
Sherilyn Ketchen
The Davis Group – Scotia Wealth Management
Axis Communications
Children and Youth Fund – Community
Foundation of Mississauga
Catherine Doehler
Arthur and Carol MacDonald
Scott Funeral Home
Intact Insurance – Employees
John R. Percy
Luke Gillin Fund
MGC Mercantile Inc.

Big Al's Mississauga
Cloverleaf Garden Club of Mississauga
Ulrich Krull
Laurie Pallett
Patricia Rusciolelli
Dave Taylor
Anonymous (2)

Riverwood Supporters | \$500+

Suzanne J. Roy
Julia D'Costa
Medtronic
Greg Lavery
Sara Wilbur-Collins
Charles and Pat Brown
Mohammad Hussain
Steven Gemmell
Greater Toronto Airports Authority
Carolyn and Allan Sherk
Heather and David Shaw
Credit Valley Horticultural Society
Elinor Laffey
Marcia Gifford
Christina Woodward
Franca Vettese
Dean Sane
Marsh & McLennan Companies
David and Linda Leeder
Lorraine Crow and James Giles
Vandyk Properties
Allegis Global Solutions
Baylis Medical
Granite REIT Holdings Limited Partnership
Ellen Harfield
Hoffman-La Roche Canada
LaFarge Canada Inc.
Ron Massicotte
Prophix Software Inc.
Starbucks
The Corporation of the Town of Caledon
Walker
Walker Grease Trap Services
Anonymous (1)

Thank you to all of the individuals and organizations who contributed in 2022!
For a full list of the year's donors, please visit theriverwoodconservancy.org/supporters.



Many thanks to our major contributors and partners





Registered Charity No:
BN889418034RR0001