

History

In 1997, Mr. Robert Charles Johnston, a long time resident of the Township donated this property to be used as recreational land for generations to come. Mr. Johnston was a local engineer and architect; he was quite heavily involved with the original design and construction of the Douro Community Centre.

Twenty to thirty years ago, Mr. Johnston planted many of the trees that fill the property today; he planted mainly Red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) with some White spruce (*Picea alba*).

In 1973, the large pond on the Johnston property was dug. It is believed that at one time the pond was stocked with Rainbow trout but no evidence of these **fish are seen today. It's speculated** that they either died off or were fished out by predators such as Great Blue Heron and mink.

In 2010, this property was named the Robert Johnston EcoForest by the municipality. With the assistance of provincial and federal funding the Township of Douro-Dummer was able to re-design and construct this trail system to protect and enhance the natural resources found here and for it be used as parkland/conservation and passive recreational purposes for the enjoyment of the local general public. It is also hoped that local schools and community organizations will use the property as a tool to learn more about the environment and the natural history of the area used by the general public.

Have fun and enjoy the EcoForest Trails, but please leave only your footprints!

EcoForest Rules:

No Motorized Vehicles

No Hunting

No Overnight Camping

No Alcoholic Beverages

Pick up after your pet, Stoop & Scoop

For further information, please contact:

Township of Douro-Dummer

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www.dourodummer.on.ca

Thank you to the Federal and Provincial Governments for their financial contribution to the establishment of the Robert Johnston EcoForest Trails through the Recreational Infrastructure Canada Program in Ontario and Ontario Recreational Program (RInC/Ontario REC).

Brochure photo ©Ernie Silhanek

Robert Johnston EcoForest Trails

185 Douro 5th Line

Douro, Ontario



Township of

Douro-Dummer

www.dourodummer.on.ca

Interpretive Location Descriptions:

1. Pond: Although small in size, this pond attracts a variety of bird and animal life including Great Blue Herons, ducks, muskrats and white-tailed deer. Numerous butterflies, dragonflies and other interesting species can be found here.

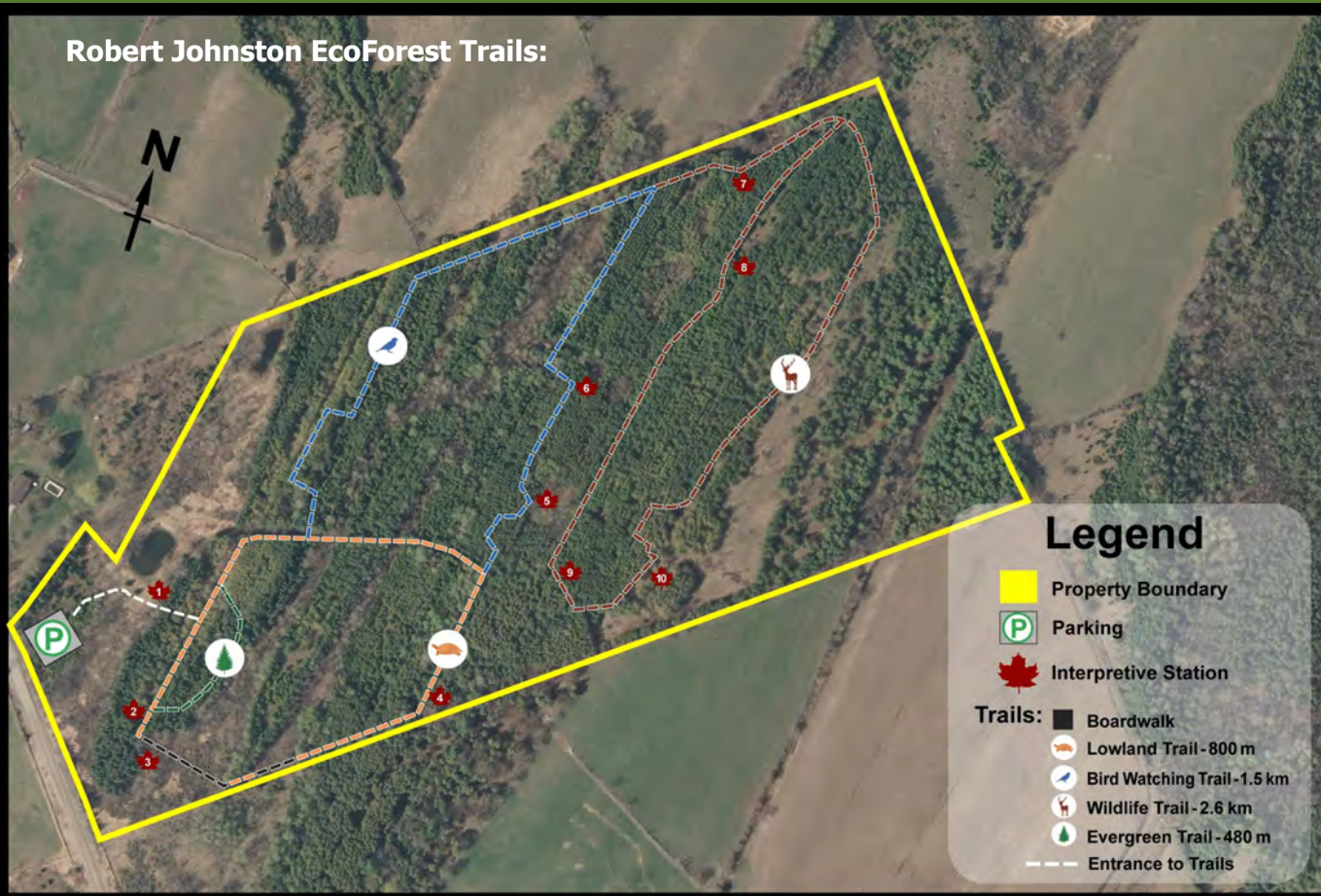
2. Brush Piles: During the construction phase of this trail system, the twigs and branches produced from pruning the trails were used to create brush piles. These piles are attractive shelters for many bird and mammal species.

3. Wetlands: Wetlands are considered the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems. The vegetation found in the wetland is very typical of wetlands in the area and consisted mainly of a few dead trees (which provide perches for birds of prey), willow (*Salix spp.*) and red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) shrubs and a variety of grasses (*Poaceae spp.*), sedges (*Carex spp.*) and other herbaceous plants.

4. Beech Trees: These large beech trees (*Fagus grandifolia*) with the distinguishable smooth gray bark, are a valuable food source for many wildlife species in the area. The beech nuts (called beechmast) are edible however are quite bitter due to the high content of tannin.

5. Hardwood Forest: This small hardwood forest consists of Hard (Sugar) maple (*Acer saccharum*), Basswood (*Tilia americana*), White Birch (*Betula papyrifera*), White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*), Ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*) and Trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). Such small hardwood plots provide for the diversity of the area in the scale of the overall landscape

6. White Ash: This large multi-stemmed tree is a white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). The wood from White Ash is very strong and is used for items such as handles, agricultural tools and furniture. The juices from White Ash rubbed immediately on a mosquito bite has been reported to afford some relief of the itching and swelling.

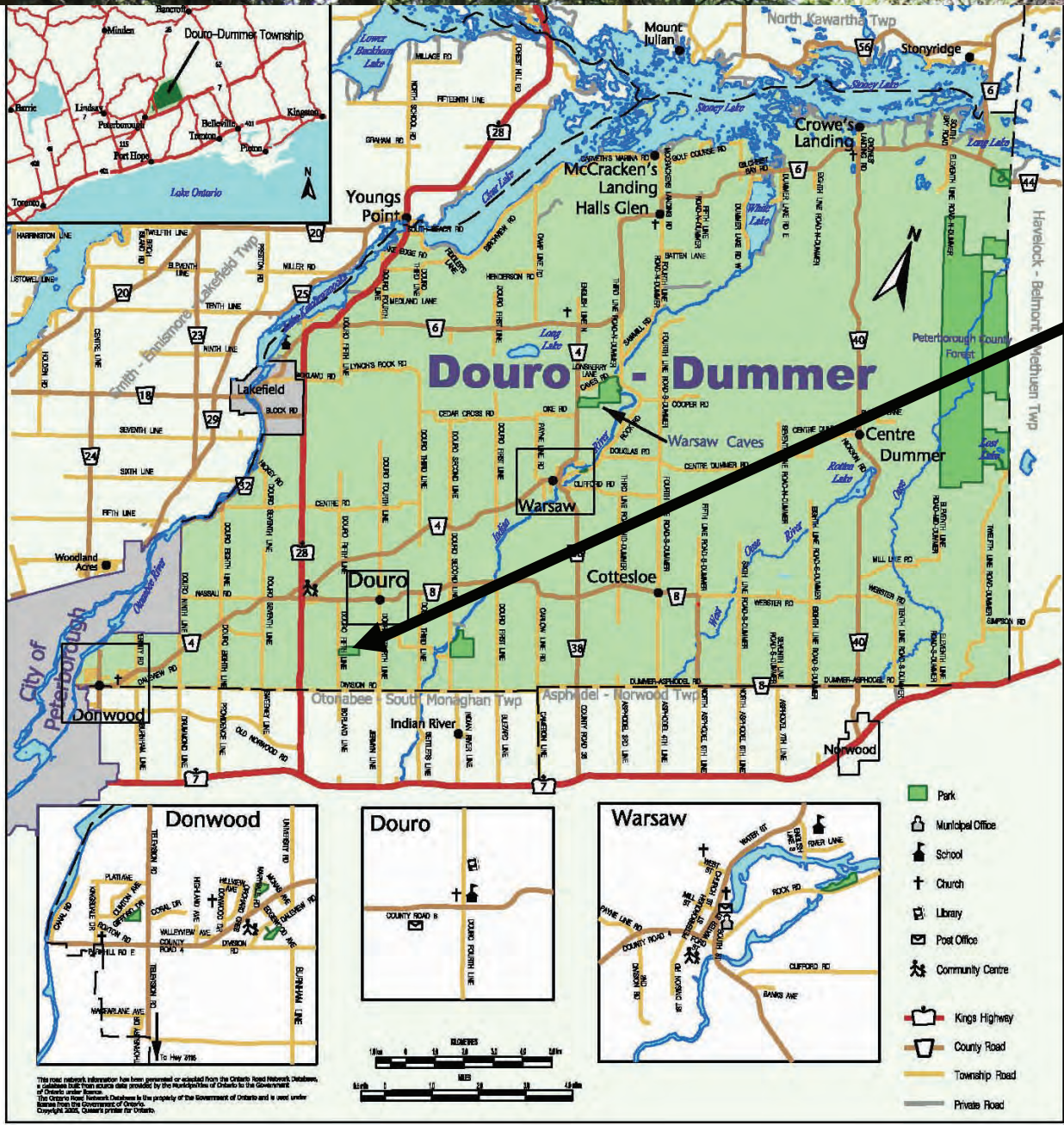


7. Drumlin/Red Pine Forest: The slope before you is part of a geologic feature called a drumlin. A Drumlin is an elongated tear drop-shaped hill formed by glacial ice. Its long axis is parallel with the movement of the ice which in this case is NE. The Red Pine (*Pinus resinosa*) plantation comprises the largest portion of the property (31.84 acres (12.9 ha)). The pine found growing here at the base of the western slope of the drumlin are quite healthy in comparison to those found in the lower areas of the property.

8. Rock Pile: These structures can be found throughout the area and provide excellent habitat for sunbathing reptiles and amphibians. The small crevices and cracks provide shelter and nesting sites for snakes and other small creatures.

9. Cedar Forest: These areas of cedar are often used by White tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and other wildlife species for cover. Since cedar can create very dense areas, allowing very little sunlight to penetrate to the forest floor, very little other vegetation can be found growing in the understory.

Dog Strangling Vine: During the growing season, the surrounding area is covered with Dog Strangling Vine (*Cynanchum louiseae*, *C. rossicum*). This plant is found extensively throughout the pine plantation and will continue to spread. This plant is extremely difficult to control. These herbaceous perennial vines can grow from 1-2m (3 – 6.5 ft.) in height and form dense colonies. The vines twine around each other and onto other trees appearing to “strangle” these other plants.



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185 Douro 5th Line

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