

Press Release: For Immediate Release
Tunnels and Trauma Campaign -
The Land Between and the Ontario Turtle
Conservation Centre Declare a State of
Emergency!



The Land Between, along with the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (OTCC; formerly the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre) has declared a state of emergency for all turtles in the region. So far this year the OTCC has received over 450 injured turtles as of June 21st. Last year from May to October, the OTCC helped 370 turtles in total. Leora Berman, the CMO and co-founder of The Land Between charity dropped off turtle #300 and counted over 70 freshly killed turtles in a 100km stretch of road. It's likely that even more injured or killed turtles were present, but could not be seen from the vantage of a car. "If this continues, turtle populations that are already at risk, will not have a hope of rebounding at all." Berman noted. Leora, through the Land Between, has been working with the OTCC, Ontario Nature, Toronto Zoo and local groups for over ten years to assess threats to turtles, mark crossing areas with signs, and to support the testing of new models of underpasses. The Land Between has provided municipal road crews with mapping of potential underpass/crossing sites, and created a best-management guideline for road maintenance to mitigate harm to turtle nests. Over 900 potential turtle tunnel sites have been identified in the region; areas where turtles can go safely under roads. Now the race is on to choose sites and install underpasses at minimal cost (models at less than \$2000 are possible). Now too, increasing numbers of injured turtles admitted to the OTCC impose a greater demand on their resources. Stay tuned as we launch a campaign to save Ontario's turtles. We will be

aiming to raise \$3,000,000.00 (M) for the OTCC to expand operations and for TLB to oversee and install over 500 underpasses. Money raised will also be used to match grant applications to support the biologists and experts needed to oversee underpass installation. For now, The Land Between and the OTCC are doing all they can.

Please help by spreading the word and donate at www.turtleguardians.com

Turtle Facts:

1. Turtles clean water. They scavenge and eat dead matter at the bottom of lakes and other wetlands.
2. Some species, such as snapping turtles, are known to live to be over 200 years old.
3. Turtles shared the earth with the dinosaurs, and have not changed much since that time!
4. Turtles take decades of laying eggs to replace themselves/to have one successful offspring. This is because of an unnatural loss of breeding adults from populations, mostly due to human-related issues.
5. Turtles play a significant role in native theology, as is said that turtles were witnesses to Creation, and so they carry the 7 Grandfather Teachings (the equivalent to the 10 commandments; how to live a good life).
6. Each turtle has 28 ridges around its shell for the 28 days between moons; each turtle has 13 scutes/triangles on its shell for the 13 full moons in a year.
7. Turtles peak nesting time is on the first full moon in June; the strawberry moon
8. Many turtles crossing roads in the month of June are females searching for nesting sites.
9. Turtles return to the same nesting sites year after year.
10. Threats to turtle populations include habitat destruction and fragmentation, road mortality, persecution, global climate change, and collection for the pet trade.