

# Hiking along the escarpment

May 6<sup>th</sup> dawned such a perfect day that we dropped everything and set out to go hiking. How could we not? A brilliant day, not a cloud in the sky with more than pleasant 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit) temperatures – perfect for hiking.



Such a brilliant day, how could we stay indoors?

We climbed in the car and drove the 40 minutes or so to a small place called Rock Chapel that rests across a small portion of the top of what is called '[The Niagara Escarpment](#)' and overlooks Hamilton. The part of Southern Ontario that we live in is very rich in history and

natural beauty, so we took the back roads to our destination, which took a bit longer but was well worth the time.

The Old Mill in Crooks Hollow near Greenville Ontario. Just one of the many historical sites we passed on our drive to Rock Chapel.



The escarpment follows the green line extending from the northern tip of central Ontario to southern Ontario and down under the belly of Lake Ontario.



Early May has to be one of my favorite times of year here in Southern Ontario. I love the fresh look and feel of the trees in bud and the many spring flowers, how everything seems to just come alive all at once.



There were trees in bud everywhere we looked.



Butterflies coming out to play in the sunshine.



Insect larva, like those of the tent worm begin hatching to start the season.

One male and one female jack-in-the-pulpit blooming side by side.





I feel so alive in the woods, especially in the spring after a long winter indoors.

Apparently so does pepper. One of the many beings we met on the trail.



The beautiful Trillium. Ontario's flower emblem.

Turkey Vultures were flying over our heads. We stood in one place for a good 15 minutes watching these magnificent creatures do their air dance while searching for food. According to our good friend Jackie Lee when a vulture graces your presence it means that a struggle





is about to be resolved. Well I am left wondering if we will have any struggles at all going forward since there were so many Turkey Vultures.

We meet a lot of beings along the trail. Often the human variety is reluctant to allow us to take their picture however; their 4 legged companions never seem to have a problem. We enjoy taking these pictures because dogs always look so happy, no matter what they are doing. What a great example!!

Wayne looks so relaxed he seems to belong in the forest.



One of the most stunning features of the escarpment is the layers of rock and beautiful patterns left when the



rocks break or slide.

Babies of all kinds are wonderful to look at and be near. Here is a budding baby maple tree.





One of the many plants that carry the common name of Purslane. (I couldn't find information on this exact variety so if you have any additional information, please email me. The address is at the bottom of this article.)

as the escarpment. (Approximately a 300 foot drop from the top of the cliff to the basin.)

At the head of the trail sits a plaque with some information about the trees along the escarpment. The tree above is a red cedar but most of the cedar trees along here are white cedar.

The plaque reads: "Take a second look at the cedar trees growing along this cliff: a tree trunk the diameter of a dollar coin may be 2 or 3 hundred years old!

Though white cedar rarely lives for more than 100 years, the Escarpment is home to many that are 2 or 3 times that age. Though the harsh environment slows their growth, some have even managed to survive for over 1000 years."



It was too early in the season and access to the trails down the side of the cliff was restricted, so we were unable to see any of these amazing little giants. (For more information about the nature reserves along the escarpment that are under the supervision of the Royal Botanical Gardens, please visit their website: <http://www.rbg.ca/>)



Wayne playing a game of 'Where's Waldo.'

We had such a wonderful afternoon I am sure we will remember it for a long time. We strolled through the forest along the trail for more than 2 hours reveling in the smells of damp earth and beauty of fresh green leaves budding on plants awaking after the long cold winter. It was hard to leave and make the drive home so we once again took the back roads.

The back roads home.



In Gratitude

**Kat McCarthy**

[Email Kat](#)

PS. From Wayne:

There is nothing better than being on a stroll in the forest, being tapped into source energy. The wildlife, the trees, the smells, the flowers, the plant life and of course the universe above and the earth below you, setting up that perfect conduit for the energy to flow through you.

What a day.....

Peace and Love

**Wayne Parker**

[Email Wayne](#)