

Conservation Corner October, 2024 by Julia Wither

On Wednesday, August 28th, Conservation Committee members and a few SOOS friends drove out to Presqu'ile Provincial Park near Belleville to view blooming ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes* spp.). These native orchids are late summer bloomers that love open, sandy areas of the park (we had the most luck spotting them along roadsides and parking lots) and we often found them partnered with fall obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*), fringed and bottle gentians (*Gentianopsis crinita* and *Gentiana andrewsii*), false foxglove (*Agalinis* sp.), and grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia glauca*).

[Biologically diverse Presqu'ile](#) is a great place to see native plants and migratory birds, but we also saw significant encroachment by invasive plants such as phragmites and autumn olive, which are difficult to control and threaten native biodiversity. The spread of these destructive plants is often unwittingly helped along by humans - so whether you're taking advantage of the cooler weather to do some [hiking](#) or [a little fall gardening](#), take a moment to consider your impact on the habitats around you!

The Friends of Presqu'ile Park

<https://www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca/>

Ontario Invasive Species Action Plans

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/invasive-species-action-plans/>

The Ontario Invasive Plants Council

<https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/>



Images clockwise Ladies' Tresses (spp.), Fringed Gentian, Grass of Parnassus, Bottled Gentian, Fall Obedient Plant
(All photos taken with cell phones by either Julia Wither or John Alexander)



Participants enjoying a picnic lunch.