



Just Who Are the 'G5'?



In a nutshell - from Bob Duncanson, Executive Director of GBA

[GBA](#) – A not-for-profit **umbrella** organization **advocating** on behalf of all GBA member associations

[GBF](#) – A charitable organization focused on research and education on **water related issues**.

[GBLT](#) – A charitable organization focused on **land securement and stewardship**.

[GBBR](#) – A not-for-profit organization protecting and enhancing the **natural and cultural resources** of the UNESCO recognized Eastern Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve

[EGBSC](#) – A not-for-profit community group supported by MNR to focus on **native fisheries and fish habitat restoration**.

Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve - A Unique Celebration of Place

In 2004, the eastern coast of Georgian Bay, from Port Severn to the French River, was designated by UNESCO as a World Biosphere Reserve. We are one of 16 biosphere reserves in Canada, and one of almost 580 world-wide.

Each biosphere reserve is intended to be a "living laboratory" where research and education combine to support conservation and sustainable development. The [Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve](#) is fortunate to have significant protected areas (national and provincial parks, crown lands, and land trust holdings). It also faces pressure from shoreline development, new roads, water-based recreation and tourism, invasive species and climate change.



At-risk Monarch Butterfly

Based in Parry Sound, the non-profit GBBR works with dozens of partners to achieve its mandate of conservation, education and sustainable development. "The biosphere designation belongs to everyone," says Becky Pollock, manager with the GBBR. "It is a model for a region that is based on a sense of place and a shared concern for future generations. The role of GBBR is to facilitate projects that are priorities for our communities - all a mix of cottagers, boaters, residents and First Nations, as well as tourists."



Spotted Turtle Hatchling

Courtesy of Kenton Otterbein

GBBR's main program areas include: Education (Lessons-in-a-Backpack teaching units for area schools and camps), Conservation (Species at Risk outreach and training), Life on the Bay (property self-assessment guide) and Sustainable Development (Charter program and best practice workshops for businesses, Community Gardens and gardening workshops). Most of these resources are available at [gbbbr.ca](#).

In conjunction with the other "GB5" organizations: [Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council](#), [Georgian Bay Land Trust](#), [Georgian Bay Association](#), and [Georgian Bay Forever](#), a number of collaborative projects have been undertaken, including a Wetlands Strategy and a State of the Bay ecosystem health report card, scheduled for 2013.

With drastic federal funding cuts, the GBBR is trying to expand its base of members and supporters, involve more volunteers, and hold creative fundraisers. A number of government and foundation grants have helped the organization grow, with a staff team of five and a volunteer Board of Directors.

"As a cottager myself" says Pollock, "I feel immense pride about our international recognition as well as some collective responsibility for the stewardship of this special place. The Biosphere Reserve is an umbrella that links the whole region together to think about its future."

The Annual General Meeting of the GBBR is scheduled for August 21st at 5:00 p.m. at the Parry Sound Museum on Tower Hill. All are welcome!