



# March

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## Celebrate Earth Day in Goderich!

### Learn in the Morning

Start your morning with a earth day celebration happening from **9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at Lakeshore United Church**. This free event brings together organizations and individuals who care deeply about the environment. Enjoy guest speakers discussing topics like the health benefits of spending time in nature, native plants, and active transportation. There will also be hands-on arts activities for children and youth, as well as a snack bar. It's a great opportunity to connect, learn, and be inspired alongside others who share a passion for protecting the natural world. **This event is hosted by local community stewards.**



### Take Action in the Afternoon

Keep the momentum going in the afternoon by joining the Lake Huron Coastal Centre for the Earth Day Beach Clean-Up from **1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at St. Christopher's Beach in Goderich**. This is a hands-on way to give back to Lake

Huron and help protect the shoreline we all enjoy. Participants are encouraged to sign up in advance and if possible to **bring extra gloves and a buckets.**

Make a day of it — learn, connect, and take action for our environment right here in our community.

Beach Clean-up Sign-up

## Thank you to our beach clean-up partners and sponsors!



Become a sponsor by contacting us at [coastalcentre@lakehuron.ca](mailto:coastalcentre@lakehuron.ca)

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### Kettle Point (/Wiiwyaaksinoong / Kikonong) A Geological and Cultural Landscape Description

The eastern shore of Lake Huron has many points of land that protrude into the lake. Blue Point, Stoney Point, Dewey Point, Rocky Point, Black's Point, Point Clark, McCrae Point, and Chief's Point are just a few to consider. However, Kettle Point is one of the most prominent and arguably one of the most interesting and important, especially from a geologic and cultural point of view. This article explores both the indigenous and western science perspectives.



Photo #1: Kettle exposed from the shale shoreline south of point

## **Protecting Wiiwyaaksinoong, “the Round Stone Place”**

*by Jordan George, Communications Specialist / Language Revitalization Coordinator — Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation*

As Anishinaabe people of the **Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation**, our relationship with **Wiiwyaaksinoong**—“the Round Stone Place,” known in English as **Kettle Point**—is rooted in both science and spirit. This place is more than a geological formation; it is a living part of our identity and history. The shoreline, dunes, and kettle stones are woven into our teachings, our origin stories, and our responsibilities as stewards of the land.

Protecting the lakeshore and the Point is not only an act of environmental conservation—it is an act of cultural continuity. The concretions, or “kettles,” that rest along this shore remind us that creation is ongoing and that the forces shaping this landscape mirror the cycles of life, change, and renewal. Our ancestors have lived, hunted, traded, and prayed along this shoreline since time immemorial. Preserving it means preserving the stories, languages, and spiritual balance that sustain us as **Anishinaabeg**.

### **Living Stone, Markers of Time, and Sacred Responsibility**

At Wiiwyaaksinoong, the kettle stones—sometimes spoken of in Anishinaabe teachings as **Thunderbird eggs (Nimkii waawaanoon)**—carry meaning that extends beyond their striking geological form. These round stones are understood not simply as objects shaped by deep time, but as markers of relationship: between sky and water, between ancestors and future generations, and between Indigenous law and natural law.



Photo # 2: Jordan with Kettle repatriated from Western University (see [CBC news coverage](https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/kettle-stony-point-rocks-9.6968406)) <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/kettle-stony-point-rocks-9.6968406>

Within Anishinaabe worldview, **Thunderbirds (Nimkii bnesiiyag)** are powerful beings associated with the upper realm, storms, and renewal. Their presence in story and teaching reflects the immense forces that shape the world—forces that are visible at Kettle Point where wind, waves, and lightning meet stone. Speaking of the kettles as **Thunderbird eggs (Nimkii waawaanoon)** does not reject geological explanation; rather, it affirms that creation is both material and spiritual, and that places shaped by great forces demand respect, restraint, and protection.

Because eggs represent life, continuity, and responsibility, the kettles remind us that this shoreline is not a resource to be extracted, collected, or commodified. Removing or disturbing these stones disrupts not only the physical landscape, but the cultural and spiritual balance that has existed here since time immemorial.

### **A Sacred Place within a Sacred Network**

Wiiwyaaksinoong is one of many sacred Anishinaabeg places across the Great Lakes basin. Similar responsibilities are carried at sites such as ancient rock and red ochre pictograph sites depicting beings like the Water Panther (Mishipizhiw), vision sites, burial grounds, portage routes, and ceremonial landscapes found throughout Anishinaabeg akiing—Anishinaabe land. These places are interconnected, forming a living map of law, memory, and spiritual practice that predates colonial borders and settler expansion.

For the Anishinaabeg of the Three Fires Confederacy—Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa, and Potawatomi—Wiiwyaaksinoong is also part of a wider diplomatic and cultural landscape shared with long-standing allies, including the Shawnee, Lenape, Huron/Petun/Neutral and Haudenosaunee (Six Nations Iroquois). These relationships were governed by Indigenous law long before European arrival and were later acknowledged—though imperfectly—through treaty agreements.

### **Treaties, Land Back, and Living Agreements**

The treaties signed in southwestern Ontario were not simply dissociated land sales, nor were they intended to erase Indigenous sovereignty. They were agreements to share land and resources while recognizing that Anishinaabeg peoples retained inherent rights, responsibilities, and jurisdiction over their territories and sacred places. These treaty relationships remain constitutionally protected in Canada and are recognized under international law.

In this context, the contemporary “Land Back” movement is not about exclusion or displacement—it is about honouring treaties as living agreements, restoring decision-making authority to the people, and respecting Indigenous stewardship systems that have sustained places like Kikonong-Kettle Point for thousands of years. Protecting the kettle stones, including those understood as **Thunderbird eggs (Nimkii waawaanoon)**, is part of fulfilling those original promises.

The Point and surrounding region are known by several **Anishinaabemowin** place names, each carrying a specific meaning and memory:

- **Wiiwyaaksinoong** — “Round Stone Place” (Kettle Point)
- **Wiiwkwedong** — “By or at the Bay” (referring to the larger region)
- **Kikonong** — “Kettle Place”
- **Aazhoodenaang** — “At or belonging to Stony Point”

Together, these places form the **Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation**, one of the **Huron Tract Treaty Nations**, whose governance is recognized both under **international law** and the **Canadian Indian Act**. The Nation governs these connected lands as one community, united in purpose and responsibility to uphold **Anishinaabe laws (Inaakonigewin)** alongside modern governance frameworks.

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## Geology and Geography of Wiiwkwedong

*by Patrick Donnelly, Coastal Science and Stewardship Advisor, Lake Huron Coastal Centre*

In geomorphological terminology, **Kettle Point** forms a natural barrier to sand and sediment movement southward along the shore driven by **northwesterly winds** along Lake Huron. This disruption creates two distinct shoreline environments.

To the **north** of the point, sand is plentiful carried by longshore currents that accumulate to form the vast **Ipperwash Beach and dune complex**, extending northward to **Pinery Provincial Park**. These dunes contain some of the finest-grained sands along the Lake Huron coast due to the sorting action of water and waves. These particles may have begun their journey over a hundred kilometres north eroded from the **eroding bluffs near Goderich**.

To the **south** of the point, the shoreline transitions to a ‘sand depleted’ zone and into low stratified shale bluffs, containing the region’s most iconic geological features: the kettles, or spherical concretions. These were formed over millennia as mineral-rich waters percolated through sedimentary layers, depositing minerals around a central core until they hardened into near-perfect spheres. This is one of the few locations in North America where kettles are found. The geology of the point also provided deposits of **flint**, a resource once used by **Anishinaabe hunters and traders** for making arrowheads and tools—evidence of the deep continuity between the land and the people who inhabit it.

## Ecology and Biodiversity

The wetlands and nearshore habitats of Kettle Point are among the few remaining along this stretch of Lake Huron. These ecosystems are vital resting and feeding areas for migrating waterfowl, monarch butterflies, and other species. Unfortunately, over recent decades, these fragile wetlands have been inundated by *Phragmites australis*—a tall, invasive reed that chokes out native vegetation and disrupts the natural hydrology of the shoreline.



Photo #3: Kettle Point with the offshore shoal in the background

The point extends about four kilometres into Lake Huron, with a shoal extending several kilometres farther underwater. This feature is noted on navigational charts as a hazard to boaters. Its prominence in both ecological and navigational terms has led to its recognition as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and a Biodiversity Area, designations that emphasize its ecological value and the need for continued stewardship.

## Summary

To the visitor, **Kettle Point** may appear as a geological curiosity or a picturesque landmark—but for the Anishinabek people, it is a place of **origin, balance, and responsibility**. The thunder rolls over the lake, the waves carve the stones, and the winds shape the dunes—all reminding us of the living relationship between the elements and our role in protecting them.

By protecting **Wiiwyaaksinoong** and **Wiiwkwedong**, we safeguard not only the physical landscape, but also the **spiritual, linguistic, and ecological balance** that defines who we are as **Anishinaabe**. At the Lake Huron Coastal Centre, we share in the common notion of helping with the protection and wise stewardship of this unique coastal community.

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Donations directly support Lake Huron Coastal Centre's conservation programs. These programs help provide shoreline communities with unique ways to connect with nature while working to protect the health of Lake Huron.

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