

Living by the Lake

LAKE ONTARIO INTEGRATED SHORELINE STRATEGY - NEWSLETTER - ISSUE FIVE - MARCH 2014



Red-bellied woodpecker.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS: *Woodpeckers and nuthatches help in the fight against emerald ash borer*



You may have already heard about the emerald ash borer (EAB). It's an invasive beetle, meaning it's not native to our region and it has devastating effects on our environment. Originally from Asia, EAB is spreading throughout southern Ontario, into the Credit River watershed, killing North American ash trees. EAB infects and kills 99.9 per cent of all native ash trees, including green ash, white ash, black ash and others.

EAB IN RATTRAY MARSH CONSERVATION AREA

Over the past decade, EAB have migrated north-east into southern Ontario from the Detroit-Windsor area. EAB are capable of flying for many kilometres before landing in new areas with ash trees. They are attracted to Rattray Marsh Conservation Area because ash trees make up a significant portion of the local tree cover. These ash trees are important for the local environment and are now at risk.

EAB lay their eggs on ash bark during summer. Larvae burrow into the tree and consume the tree from the inside, disrupting its internal flow of water and nutrients, eventually causing death.

Fortunately, bark-foraging birds such as woodpeckers and nuthatches appear to play a role in reducing EAB numbers, slowing their spread and offering more time to consider management options. These birds have been spotted at Rattray Marsh.

In a recent study from Ohio, researchers found that roughly 37 per cent of the EAB larvae in a sample of 46 trees were eaten by bark-foraging birds. Researchers at Cornell University and the U.S. Forest Service found that the populations of red-bellied woodpecker and white-breasted nuthatch increased significantly in areas of southern Michigan heavily infested with EAB when compared to less impacted areas.

Our feathered friends are helping us fight EAB, but we cannot expect them to solve the problem entirely on their own. This summer, Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) will be inoculating healthy trees against the effects of EAB or removing trees that cannot be saved. Inoculating trees is dependent on tree health. Unhealthy trees or trees with signs of decline may not be able to be saved. Also, inoculations are costly and CVC can only treat a small number of ash trees.

CVC is calling on everyone who visits Rattray Marsh to do what they can to **save our ash**. Give today to help preserve our beautiful ash trees for years to come. Your gift will be used to inoculate ash trees at Rattray Marsh and plant new trees for the future.

Visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/eab to give today.

NESTING RED-NECKED GREBES:

Restoration success at Lakefront Promenade Park



In spring of 2013, CVC and the City of Mississauga installed nesting platforms for red-necked grebes in the waters off of Lakefront Promenade Park. Red-necked grebes breed in inland lakes, shallow marshy areas and bays in the Great Lakes. During winter, they usually move to the Atlantic coast, although some remain in the Great Lakes year-round.

Grebes typically build nests on thick mats of floating vegetation. Man-made wooden nesting platforms make nest-building easier because grebes only need to add a few sticks and vegetation to make it their own. It is increasingly difficult for grebes to find enough of the wetland vegetation they need to make their nests, which is why man-made nesting platforms can be a big help.

CVC's nesting platforms were a big success. A pair of grebes nested on platform two. A female grebe was seen sitting on the nest while a male brought branches to build it up. Unfortunately platform one was upturned by wave action and did not entice any grebes. A second pair of grebes was observed breeding in the area but chose to build their own nest out of natural vegetation rather than use a CVC platform.

Keep watch for nesting grebes this summer at Lakefront Promenade Park, along with their zebra-striped chicks.



LIVING BY THE LAKE E-CALENDAR

What's happening along our waterfront?

CVC has developed an electronic calendar with important dates and events taking place in the shoreline community.

View the calendar at www.creditvalleyca.ca/loiss/calendar. You can add it to your Google account if you have one.

Thank you to Dorothy Tomiuk of the Town of Port Credit Association for this great idea.

PLEASE JOIN US

Rattray Marsh EAB & Ash Tree Management Community Meeting

Monday April 28, 2014

CVC is hosting a community meeting on the invasive forest pest emerald ash borer and how it affects Rattray Marsh Conservation Area. CVC will also address ash tree management activities.

WHEN:

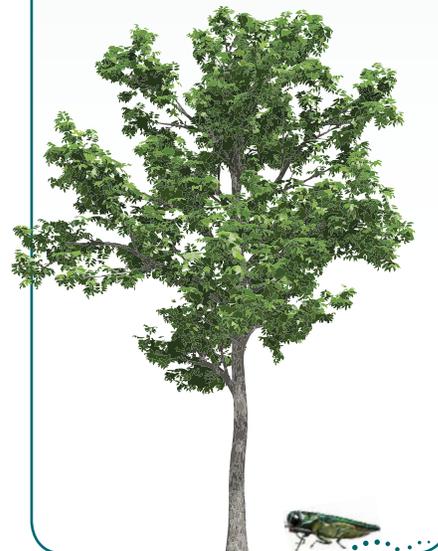
Monday, April 28, 7-9 p.m.

WHERE:

Green Glade Sr. Public School,
1550 Green Glade,
Mississauga, ON L5J1B5

AGENDA:

7:00 - Opening remarks
7:15 - Presentations
8:00 - Q & A Session



RATTRAY MARSH RESTORATION: *project update*



Removing sediment.

Phase One of CVC's restoration of Rattray Marsh is now complete. CVC would like to thank the local community for their ongoing support throughout the planning and restoration process.

CVC, with help from Harrington McAvan Ltd., RM Construction and GHD, developed a plan to remove sediment that has accumulated in the north-eastern portion of the marsh. The sediment built up due to years of upstream development around Sheridan Creek, which drains into Rattray Marsh. Sediment buried the native marsh ecosystem, caused low water levels and poor water quality. Invasive carp replaced native fish and destroyed the native plants that once populated Rattray Marsh.

PHASE ONE RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

Tracking Turtles (May - Oct, 2012 and 2013)

Turtles were tracked for two years before sediment removal to study their behavior and movement. This minimized impacts during the restoration process.

Wildlife Fencing and Enclosure (Aug - Oct, 2013)

Prior to the first phase of work, CVC isolated the work area with a wildlife enclosure fence. This kept wildlife out of the area that would be excavated while still allowing other areas of the marsh to be used by wildlife.

Carp Exclusion (Apr- July, 2013)

CVC used two carp barriers to protect the two main basins of the marsh from the damaging feeding and spawning activity of invasive carp.



Using a net to capture carp.

Sediment Removal to Reveal the Organic Peat Layer (Jan - Feb, 2014)

Sediment removal started in January and thanks to our extremely cold weather our contractor, RM Construction, completed the work in record time! Sediment for Phase One was trucked out via Bexhill Road. The exposed native organic peat layer will then form the basis for the restoration. To reduce costs, CVC partnered with the Region of Peel to construct a portion of a temporary road that overlapped with the Region's Bexhill pump house decommissioning project. The temporary road facilitates sediment removal and will be removed when the project is complete.

NEXT STEPS

CVC will plant a limited number of wetland plants in the marsh this spring. Seeds of native wetland vegetation have lain dormant under a layer of sediment for years. Now that they are exposed, they can take root and thrive. CVC will monitor the Phase One site over the coming months, managing invasive plants and taking notes on how well the site progresses. Lessons learned will

inform restoration efforts for Phase Two – the south-western portion of the marsh. The carp barrier and wildlife exclusion fence will be set up again during the summer of 2014.

ABOUT THE RESTORATION

The restoration effort at Rattray Marsh is partially funded by The Government of Canada through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Recreational Fisheries Partnership Program. The first year of carp control received funding support from the Government of Ontario. A portion of the temporary road used to facilitate sediment removal was generously funded by the Region of Peel. Private donors have also generously contributed to the restoration effort.

CVC developed the current restoration plan in 2010 with support from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Rattray Marsh Protection Association. The plan went through a formal environmental assessment. Restoring Rattray Marsh is part of CVC's Lake Ontario Integrated Shoreline Strategy (LOISS), a multi-year, multi-agency strategy that addresses environmental issues facing the Lake Ontario shoreline in Mississauga.

CVC, with help from the City of Mississauga, developed a watershed plan for Sheridan Creek that will help control upstream erosion and pollution entering Rattray Marsh. This will ensure that sediment levels in the marsh are kept in check.

Questions and comments about the restoration can be directed to Paul Biscaia, Program Coordinator, Wetland Restoration for CVC at (905) 670-1615 ext. 427. For more information on the project, visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/rattrayrestoration.

LAKEVIEW WATERFRONT CONNECTION: *project update*

Imagining the Lakeview Waterfront Connection, looking south at the new Serson Creek wetland. Illustration created July 16, 2013.



The Lakeview Waterfront Connection (LWC) project will transform a degraded and inaccessible area of our shoreline into an inviting naturalized park with public access and wildlife habitat. This vision is one step closer to reality. The Region of Peel and Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) are close to submitting their environmental assessment (EA) to the Ministry of the Environment for final review.

Over 130 residents attended a public meeting at the Oasis Catering & Convention Centre on November 20, 2013. The meeting was the third public information centre for the project's formal EA process. Attendees first heard from Charles Sousa, MPP, Minister of Finance and then from Councillor Jim Tovey, about the exciting plans for renewal along our waterfront. The

LWC project team then presented the refined plan for the future green space.

In the month leading up to public information centre, the project team engaged residents to get their feedback on plans for the future green space. The feedback helped the project team develop a more refined plan.

On December 12, 2013 the project team released the draft EA for public and agency review and comments in advance of the final submission to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE). Comments have been received from the public and agencies. These are now being reviewed, the draft EA is being updated and the final EA will soon be submitted to MOE.

Environmental assessments are usually done to reduce a project's impact on the environment. While there are some effects, the LWC EA is for the most part doing the opposite by looking at a degraded property and planning ways to improve it. It will provide public access while improving natural habitat in a fiscally-responsible way by seeking efficiencies with existing and proposed infrastructure projects.

The LWC is a project of The Region of Peel and Credit Valley Conservation, with on-going review and support from Toronto and Region Conservation, the City of Mississauga, the City of Toronto and Ontario Power Generation. More information is available at www.creditvalleyca.ca/lwc.



For more information visit:
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Credit Valley Conservation gratefully acknowledges financial support from our member municipalities for facilities, programs and services: the Regions of Peel and Halton; the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton; the Towns of Caledon, Erin, Halton Hills, Mono, Oakville and Orangeville; and the Townships of Amaranth and East Garafraxa.