



COUNTRYSIDE stewardship REPORT

WINTER EDITION, 2016

BE A PART OF PROTECTING THE LAND YOU LOVE



The Credit River watershed has many special natural places and rural landowners don't need to go very far to explore them. When you live in the countryside, nature is your backyard. What you may not realize is that you have something so special hidden in plain sight.

Our watershed is home to many plant and animal species, some of which are rare. If you're lucky enough to have a mature forest or wetland on your property, you may come across a species that many people don't often see.

Rare species often require unique habitats and ideal environmental conditions. The

maidenhair fern is a rare species found in the Credit River watershed that requires moist, shaded environments. It is only found in deciduous forests with nutrient-rich, well drained soils. The maidenhair fern needs undisturbed habitat, free from invasive species and foot traffic, both human and livestock. A mature sugar maple forest is ideal habitat and is the most likely place to come across this delicate-looking fern.

The maidenhair fern is easily recognizable because it looks different than other ferns in the Credit River watershed. The distinctive fan-shaped green leaves emerge from a dark purple-brown to black stem. If you

look under the leaflets towards the tip of the leaf, you will see spores. Ferns are ancient plants and reproduce using spores instead of seeds.

You can help protect maidenhair ferns by protecting their habitat. Stay on trails, keep your dog on a leash, fence out livestock and dispose of garden waste responsibly. Avoid dumping garden waste in forests.

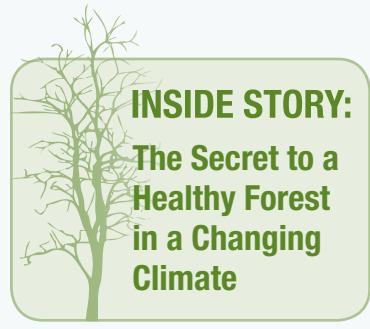
Enjoy the outdoors in your own backyard this year. Keep an eye out for something new - and possibly rare - behind each tree, under every rock and around the river bend.



Bird-Friendly
CERTIFIED HAY
INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR
FARMERS AND RURAL LANDOWNERS

Learn about grassland birds and their habitat. Find out how to rent your land for hay production and offset your rural property taxes, expand your farm acreage and add value to your farm business.

- Feb. 29, 7 p.m. - Caledon Village Place
- Mar. 1, 7 p.m. - Orangeville Fair Grounds
- Mar. 2, 7 p.m. - Terra Cotta Conservation Area
- Mar. 3, 7 p.m. - Erin Centre 2000





GROWING FOREST RESILIENCE

THE SECRET TO A HEALTHY FOREST IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Winter is a wonderful time in the forest. In the quiet calm, trees come into focus. This is the best time to appreciate the “bare bones” of the forest, when its basic structure is revealed. The differences between a pine plantation, a cedar swamp and a maple-beech forest are more pronounced. Some of the differences are easy to spot while others are hard to find. What makes a forest healthy or how well it might withstand disease, pests or severe weather aren’t immediately noticeable.

The 2013 ice storm damaged countless street trees. Trees with periodic pruning are less susceptible to structural damage from severe weather. It was easy to see which street trees received better care. Similarly, woodlots without improvement thinning showed major structural damage following the ice storm. Many trees are still dying today as a result. Proper thinning of poor quality trees allows healthy trees to flourish. It’s an important management practice for a resilient forest.

Forest resilience is the ability of a forest to maintain or restore its ecological function through the stresses of major change. Of course, forest conditions have always changed, but in a changing climate trees must face these changes faster than they are able

to adapt. Forecasts for climate change point towards increased daily temperatures. These temperature changes may seem minor to us, but even a slight change has a big impact on a forest community. Rapidly increasing populations of invasive forest pests such as emerald ash borer and asian longhorn beetle are just two devastating examples. These invasive insects have negative effects on tree species diversity and affect all levels of the forest from the canopy to the understory.

Important management decisions today will be defining factors in how well our forests withstand future threats. Proper management decisions that encourage healthy, diverse forests are the secret to

growing and maintaining resilient forests that can endure these threats, including impacts from climate change.

CVC staff can help. We are available to answer questions and provide technical expertise to landowners. Eligible landowners can apply for funding assistance through CVC’s Landowner Action Fund. After all, your healthy forest is not just a benefit to you, but to all of us.

For more information on forest management and other forestry services offered by CVC, visit creditvalleyca.ca/forestry.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Source Protection Plan for the Credit Valley Source Protection Area came into effect on December 31, 2015. Policies from this plan are meant to protect municipal drinking water sources and may affect land use activities on your property.

Visit ctcswp.ca to find out if your property lies within a policy area and to learn how your actions can help protect drinking water.



from the *Experts*

Rod Krick, Manager of Terrestrial Restoration and Management on EAB

Most people have heard about emerald ash borer (EAB), the invasive beetle killing ash trees. Even if you are not directly affected by it, you may know someone who is. CVC is no exception. We are currently managing ash trees at Rattray Marsh and Terra Cotta Conservation Areas.

Since 2014, CVC has been felling infested ash trees that pose a safety risk to park visitors and a hazard to adjacent infrastructure such as buildings and fences. Managing these areas also includes forest regeneration. Both before and after ash felling, CVC staff control invasive plant species to prepare the ground for planting native trees and shrubs. Currently 1,880 trees and shrubs have been planted back into Rattray Marsh Conservation Area. 128 suitable healthy ash trees have been inoculated with the

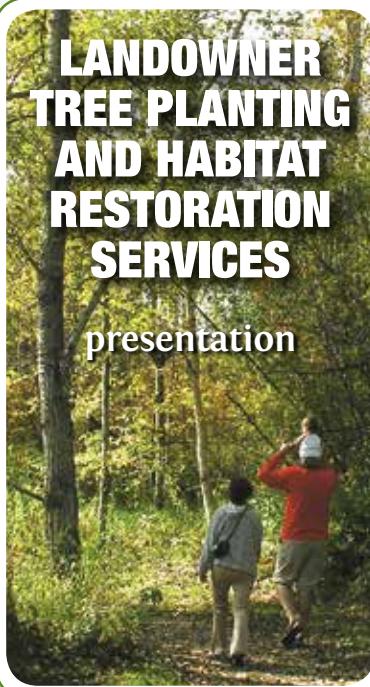
bio-insecticide TreeAzin at Rattray Marsh and Terra Cotta. This systemic insecticide protects ash from EAB for two years.

As the impacts of EAB continue to spread, CVC will continue these management actions on our properties. You may want to consider what similar actions are needed for your own property. For more information, please contact CVC's Rod Krick at 905-838-1832.



LANDOWNER TREE PLANTING AND HABITAT RESTORATION SERVICES

presentation



Hear from the experts about:

CVC Restoration Services for Private Landowners

- Seedling Reforestation Planting Projects
- Potted Planting Projects
- Grassland and Prairie Habitat Restoration Services
- Invasive Species Management
- Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)
- Habitat Structure Enhancements



Get the inside scoop on protecting your property, helping the environment and how CVC can help you do it.

Saturday Apr. 2, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

CVC's Forestry Operations Centre
15526 Heart Lake Road, Caledon
Refreshments will be served.
Register by Mar. 29. Space is limited.

Contact Andrea Morrone at 1-800-668-5557 ext. 436 or visit creditvalleyca.ca/events

Caring for your **LAND & WATER**

free workshops for rural landowners



Saturday Feb. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Caledon Village Place
Register by Feb. 19

Saturday Apr. 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Limehouse Memorial Hall
Register by Mar. 31

CREATE A LANDOWNER ACTION PLAN AND QUALIFY FOR THE LANDOWNER ACTION FUND

**Attend a workshop, assess your
property and take action to
protect your land and water**

Get your projects done with grants and technical assistance*

**Projects include:
well abandonment
stream restoration
tree planting
invasive plant control
native plant gardening and more**

Register at creditvalleyca.ca/events

Landowners should own one acre or more of rural property in the Credit River watershed.

*Subject to available funding sources and eligibility requirements for grants.



FARM GATE

WETLANDS DON'T ONLY BENEFIT DUCKS

Wetlands are incredible. Depending on the type, up to seven breeding pairs of ducks benefit annually from the habitat created in every 100 acres of restored wetland. The benefits don't stop there. One hundred acres of restored wetland remove and/or prevent up to 4.5 tonnes of nitrogen, one tonne of phosphorous and 660 tonnes of unfiltered soil from reaching streams, rivers and lakes each year. These are huge quantities of harmful pollutants kept out of our waterways. Also, up to 2,500 tonnes of carbon are sequestered and 120,000 cubic metres of flood water is stored, which protects our homes, roads, bridges and lands.

Local farmer, East Garafraxa Mayor and environmental steward, Guy Gardhouse, from Watershed Farms Ltd., has a rich history of restoring wetlands on his farm. With assistance from Ducks Unlimited, over 10 acres of wetland have been created to capture and filter field runoff and provide habitat for wetland species.

"It feels great knowing that we are responsibly managing water quality on the farm and

providing habitat for wetland species. Our family enjoys maintaining the wood duck nesting boxes and skating on the wetland in the winter," said Guy Gardhouse.

The Credit River watershed has lost 48 per cent (13,331 acres) of its wetlands since 1954. This loss is most obvious during large storm events when major overland flooding occurs. To combat flooding, CVC has formed a partnership with Ducks Unlimited to quantify the flood water storage benefit provided by wetlands and to forecast where in the watershed restored wetlands would have the greatest benefit. With this information, CVC will work with municipalities, corporations, farm businesses and rural landowners to restore wetlands on their properties to reduce the amount and degree of flooding.

If you're interested in having a free wetland restoration assessment on your property, please contact CVC's Mark Eastman at 905-670-1615 ext. 430.



Not all wetland types contain permanent open water, but all wetlands are valuable .

CVC Countryside Stewardship programs are available to residents and landowners within the Credit River watershed. Our neighbouring conservation authorities offer similar programs. We would be pleased to direct those who live outside the Credit River watershed to the appropriate agency.



COUNTRYSIDE
stewardship

CVC was established in 1954 with a mandate to protect natural resources in the Credit River watershed. We have been working for 60 years with our partner municipalities and stakeholders to protect and enhance our land and water for present and future generations.

COMING EVENTS

Register at: creditvalleyca.ca/events

Events are free unless otherwise indicated

Caring for Your Horse and Farm

Saturday Feb. 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Caledon Village Place, Caledon

Caring for Your Land and Water

Saturday Feb. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Caledon Village Place, Caledon

Bird Friendly Certified Hay Information Sessions

Monday Feb. 29, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Caledon Village Place, Caledon

Tuesday Mar. 1, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Orngeville Fair Grounds, Mono

Wednesday Mar. 2, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Terra Cotta Conservation Area, Halton Hills

Thursday Mar. 3, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Erin Centre 2000, Erin

Tree Planting and Habitat Restoration Presentation

Saturday Apr. 2, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
CVC's Forestry Operations Centre
(Warwick), Caledon

Caring for Your Horse and Farm

Thursday Apr. 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Limehouse Memorial Hall, Halton Hills

Caring for Your Land and Water

Saturday Apr. 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Limehouse Memorial Hall, Halton Hills

Funding in support of Credit Valley Conservation programs, workshops and events is generously provided by our regional and municipal partners.