



BE A PART OF PROTECTING THE LAND YOU LOVE



Trout Lily



One landowner is taking action to make the most of his property.

Spring signals to many rural landowners to get outside, enjoy the fresh air and tackle a project on their property. Tom Steller of Caledon is no exception. Motivated to do the right thing for the environment, he has been working on removing an invasive tree species called buckthorn. His efforts though, have been thwarted by the tree's resilience and the size of the infestation.

When a neighbour pointed out that CVC offers invasive species control services, he asked for a free site visit. What he got impressed him. In addition to advice on buckthorn control and removal, he also

learned about CVC's grant program and workshops to help landowners care for their properties.

Tom attended a Caring for your Land and Water workshop and applied for funding through the Landowner Action Fund. He notes:

Buckthorn is difficult and expensive to remove so the funding gave me an incentive to tackle this project.

An avid birder, Tom is also using the Landowner Action Fund to subsidize costs of replacing old bird nesting boxes. Over the past 23 years, he has counted 132 different species on his property including bluebirds, tree swallows, the occasional chickadee and countless wrens. By removing the buckthorn, the property will shift back to a more open meadow landscape. Tom is looking forward to seeing grassland birds like meadowlark and killdeer return to his property.

Tom shared his thoughts on his spring projects: "It feels good knowing I am removing an invasive species and helping

promote a healthier, native and natural environment."

Tom's advice for landowners: "Anyone interested in enhancing their property should look into what CVC has to offer. The workshop in particular was very informative, touched on so many topics and is relevant to any property owner who cares about the environment and what they can do to protect it."

If you are thinking about a project for your property from invasive species removal, to well maintenance or creating wildlife habitat, get in touch with your Countryside Stewardship Team at CVC. Ask for Alison Qua-Enoo at extension 438. We'd love to hear from you.

INSIDE STORY:

DANCES WITH... COYWOLVES?





DANCES WITH... COYWOLVES?

Coyotes are an important predator in our countryside. The eastern coyote, which you have probably seen running along fencerows or hunting prey in old fields, is actually a hybrid between the western coyote and the eastern wolf. That's why you may have heard them called "coywolves".

Coyotes didn't live in the watershed when European settlers arrived. After forests were cleared for agriculture, the open conditions attracted western coyotes to the area. Based on DNA analysis, we know the eastern wolf bred with the western coyote creating the hybrid species. Eastern coyotes are larger, have thicker fur and longer legs compared with their coyote ancestors. This explains why coyotes are often mistaken for wolves.

Eastern coyotes are highly adaptable and efficient predators. They can hunt large prey

such as deer but are opportunistic feeders and will eat different foods such as small mammals, insects, amphibians and berries. They have also adapted well to urban and highly populated areas.

The coyote's basic social unit is a mated pair. They often mate for life. Coyotes have territorial ranges from a few square kilometers with ample food, to over a hundred square kilometers where food is scarce. Coyotes are generally not pack animals. If you see a group together, it's likely a mated pair with their young pups.

It is common to hear coyotes, but you may not always see them. Their nighttime barks, yips and howls are their way of announcing their territory and communicating with members of their family. Coyotes are generally wary of humans, but have adapted well to living near

humans and development. Coyotes that don't show fear of humans or exhibit aggressive behaviour have likely become used to people. This is when conflicts may arise.

When humans intentionally or unintentionally feed coyotes, the coyotes come to associate food with people. This is the main reason why some coyotes become too comfortable around us. In some rare instances, they may be aggressive. They are very clever and adaptable, so coyotes only have to be fed by humans a few times before they come to expect it.

While coyotes make some people nervous, large carnivores play an important role in local ecosystems. They are key to controlling deer and other grazing animal populations as well as small rodents that cause farmers and homeowners endless trouble. In some areas of southern Ontario, over browsing by dense populations of deer causes trees and shrubs to die. Declining trees and shrubs negatively impact song bird populations. In Ontario, there is also an interesting relationship between the height of our provincial flower, the trillium, in spring and the number of deer in a forest. High numbers of deer lead to less healthy trilliums.

Remember, coyotes and other wildlife were living here before we started to call it home.

We need to take special care to create and protect natural areas where coyotes can live comfortably, with space to call their own, in our delicate dance with wildlife.



Create a Home for Wildlife CVC Habitat Structures Program



Enhance your property and attract wildlife with artificial habitat structures.

- Bird Nest Boxes
- Bat Boxes
- Bee Boxes
- Platform Nests and Raptor Poles
- Hibernacula
- Barn Swallow Structures

Buy a habitat structure and install it yourself or let us do the work for you. More information at www.creditvalleyca.ca/trm or call 647-963-2849



from the *Expert*

Melanie Kramer on woodland wildflowers and shrubs

As the snow melts away and sunlight starts to warm the forest floor, early spring wildflowers begin to emerge. You may have already spotted Ontario's iconic trilliums, clusters of yellow trout lilies or the large white bloodroot flowers that quickly drop their delicate petals days after blooming. By the end of May these short-lived wildflowers disappear. As the tree canopy fills, other perennials and shrubs leaf out. Flowering shrubs such as serviceberry, purple flowering raspberry and witch hazel take their turns carpeting the forest floor with flowers, berries and colourful fall foliage.

Wildflowers and shrubs are essential to forest diversity and health. Their nectar, pollen, seeds and berries are critical food sources for birds and pollinators, and their branches, leaves and roots provide shelter. Closer to home, you can add native woodland species that grow well in shady gardens. Here are a few favorites:



Wild Geranium

Add a splash of mauve by planting this showy early bloomer in large swaths or clumps in shaded gardens.



Wild Columbine

The red and yellow bell-shaped flowers of this unique perennial grow well in full and part shade.



Foamflower

This shade-loving perennial makes the perfect border or groundcover, growing well under pines or tall shrubs such as serviceberry.

For more woodland plants visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/landscaping

CARING FOR YOUR LAND & WATER

Landowner Workshop

FREE



CREATE A PLAN FOR YOUR PROPERTY

Saturday Jun. 18

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Terra Cotta Conservation Area
Halton Hills**

- Attract wildlife
- Care for septic and wells
- Improve pond health
- Grow a forest

- GRANTS AVAILABLE -

REGISTER AT WWW.CREDITVALLEYCA.CA/EVENTS
OR CALL 1-800-668-5557 EXT. 436

LANDOWNER ACTION FUND

Grants for environmental projects.
Up to 100% costs covered*

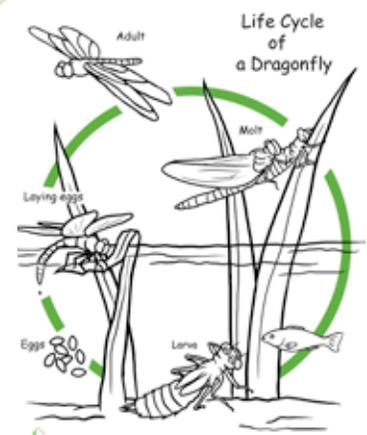


When you care for your property, it shows.

* conditions apply

DID YOU KNOW?

Dragonflies start and spend most of their lives underwater. Young dragonflies feed on aquatic life and in turn are eaten by other water bugs and fish. Over their lifetime, dragonflies are important predators and prey on land and in water. A healthy pond, with lots of plants in and around it, creates a place where dragonflies, fish, birds and insects can thrive.



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FARM GATE

PUT INSECTS TO WORK ON YOUR FARM



There's an old saying that you can attract more flies with honey than vinegar. Whether you operate a conventional or organic farm you will benefit by attracting predatory insects to your crops.

During the growing season, an insect war is constantly raging between crop pests who feed on and destroy crops, and predatory insects who prey on crop pests. You can stack the odds of winning in favour of important predatory insects by improving their living conditions on your farm. By doing this, you'll reduce pesticide use, provide a safer work environment and increase wildlife on your farm.

Predatory insects such as the tachinid fly and parasitic wasp need a consistent food supply of pollen, nectar and pests. With almost 100 per cent certainty, your crops attract pests.

As a farm manager, you can make your job easier by ensuring an abundant supply of blooming flowers throughout the growing season to provide the nectar and pollen needed by beneficial predatory insects.

To get started, plant a range of flowering plants such as dill, mustard, thyme, sweet clover, sunflowers, white clover, amaranth, rye and buckwheat. These species provide food for a wide variety of predatory insects which control many common crop pests. Plant these species in strips throughout your fields, along field margins or laneways, and in clumps in under-utilized areas of the farm. The closer the plantings are to your crops the better.

Once your predatory insect habitat is established, monitor your crops for insect activity. If you still get significant crop damage from a particular pest, modify your habitat to attract the right predatory insect.

For more information on how to identify and attract common local insect pests and predators, refer to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs Fact Sheet Series at www.omafra.gov.on.ca. Search for insects on the site.

Contact: Mark Eastman, Agricultural Extension at 905-670-1615 ext. 430 for more information.

COMING EVENTS

Register at: creditvalleyca.ca/events

Events are free unless otherwise indicated

Caring for your Land and Water

Saturday Jun. 18, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Terra Cotta Conservation Area, Halton Hills

TWILIGHT TOUR SERIES



Tour environmental projects. Meet the landowners. Learn from CVC specialists. Take home a new skill.

Compost on the Farm

Wednesday Jun. 29, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Trailwood Farm, Caledon

Tackle Invasive Plants

Wednesday Jul. 13, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Forks of the Credit Provincial Park, Caledon

Windbreaks: Trees at Work

Wednesday Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Trafalgar Rd, Hillsburgh

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

WHAT WOULD YOU ASK AN EXPERT?

Tell us what property management or nature topics you want answered. We'll get the expert on our online discussion forum for a live chat.

Share your ideas: www.csconnection.ca

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 more than 60 years with our partner municipalities and stakeholders to build a thriving environment that protects, connects and sustains us.

