

On the Don Don

This publication can be viewed online at www.trca.on.ca/don_newsletter

Waterfront Toronto's Lower Don Lands selected for climate program

New Clinton Climate Initiative program to demonstrate economic, environmental strategies for sustainable urban growth

Waterfront Toronto's Lower Don Lands development has been selected as one among 16 founding projects of the Climate Positive Development Program, a Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI) program developed in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) that will support the development of large-scale urban projects that demonstrate cities can grow in ways that are "climate positive." Climate Positive real estate developments will strive to reduce the amount of on-site CO₂ emissions to below zero.

The Climate Positive Development Program was launched by President Clinton, Founder of the William J. Clinton Foundation, on May 19, 2009, at the C40 Summit in Seoul, South Korea. Along with the other founding projects, Waterfront Toronto's Lower Don Lands will demonstrate Climate Positive strategies, setting an environmental and economic example for cities to follow.

Chair David Miller, Toronto Mayor and Waterfront Toronto board member, said, "We're proud to support the participation of the Lower Don Lands in the Climate Positive Development Program. This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase Toronto's experience in livable, sustainable and diverse neighbourhoods, and help create a network of leading edge 'climate-positive' communities around the world."

To reduce the net greenhouse gas emissions of their Climate Positive Development projects to below zero, property developers and local governments will agree to work in partnership on specific areas of activity. This includes implementing economically viable innovations in buildings, the generation of clean energy, waste management, water management, and transportation and outdoor lighting systems.

"Waterfront Toronto is thrilled to be part of the Clinton Climate Initiative program that will advance the innovation and profile of important sustainable city building projects like the Lower Don Lands," said John Campbell, President of Waterfront Toronto. "The Lower Don Lands project proposes an approach to an urbanized river that few cities have taken before. We are working to re-locate the mouth of a river, restore the river to a condition that nature would applaud, create new parks along its edges and build the most carbon neutral new urban neighbourhoods possible."

Waterfront Toronto's plans include transforming the Lower Don Lands, a 125-hectare (308-acre) under-utilized industrial area located south of the rail corridor in the east end of Toronto's harbour into new sustainable parks and communities. Plans include re-naturalizing the Don River mouth, re-routing it to address flood protection, and the creation of wetland and natural green space creation in an urban estuary. The river will be the centerpiece of a new mixed-use sustainable community.

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“Toronto and Region Conservation is committed to supporting our communities and partners in addressing climate change through sustainable development,” said Brian Denney, CAO, Toronto and Region Conservation. “We have been working to revitalize the Don River since 1980 and are pleased that the Lower Don Lands development was chosen as one of the 16 founding projects of the Climate Positive Development Program. The global recognition will bring awareness to the importance of reducing our region’s ecological footprint and the work being done to achieve this.”

The project is globally unique in size, scope and complexity. The integrated design approach with landscape architects, urban designers and leading sustainability experts brings together infrastructure, public realm and scientific approaches to connect the city, lake and river in a dynamic and balanced relationship.

By combining CCI’s business and finance expertise with the technical knowledge of the USGBC, the Climate Positive Development program will support the planning and implementation process for each real estate development and establish the standards and metrics by which the sites can measure climate positive outcomes.

When the initial 16 projects are completed, nearly one million people will live and work in Climate Positive communities. These communities will be located in Melbourne, Australia; Palhoca, Brazil; Toronto, Canada; Victoria, Canada; Ahmedabad, India; Jaipur, India; outside Panama City, Panama; Pretoria, South Africa; Johannesburg, South Africa; Seoul, South Korea; Stockholm, Sweden; London, UK; San Francisco, USA and Destiny Florida, USA.

To learn more about the work of the Clinton Climate Initiative and the William J. Clinton Foundation, please visit www.clintonfoundation.org/cci. For more information about development plans for Waterfront Toronto’s Lower Don Lands, please log on to www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEQiNXXgu4g. For more information about the U.S. Green Building Council, please visit www.usgbc.org.



A New Fish for the Don!

Add another species to the list of native fish found in the Don River! During a routine monitoring session in the Lower Don River this June, TRCA crews were pleasantly surprised to capture a quillback sucker (*Carpionodes cyprinus*). This fish is native to Ontario but has never before been reported in the TRCA’s jurisdiction.

According to records at the Royal Ontario Museum, the fish has been found near Prince Edward County and, in the 1970s, in the Niagara River, but had not yet been recorded in the Toronto area. Quillbacks are a cool water species and live in the backwaters or slow-moving pools of streams and rivers or in lakes and reservoirs. They will favour a gravel bottom and silt in the water.

You might ask yourself, “Why is finding a new species important?”. Biologists often use the presence of particular fish species to track and assess fish populations, aquatic habitat conditions and water quality. The recent quillback capture and the numerous walleye captures over the last five years within the Lower Don River is an indication of a less degraded environment and improvement in fish community compared to previous years.

Other native fish found in the Don River include Northern pike, walleye, long-nose dace and redbreast dace – an endangered species only found in the headwaters.

11th Annual Richmond Hill Mill Pond Splash, May 31, 2009



Photos provided by: Alfred Dynavong

Looking for a local hike this fall?

Check out our Walk the Don self-guided interpretive walks.

The Don Watershed Regeneration Council has posted a growing series of self-guided walks at www.trca.on.ca/walkthedon and encourages you to hit the trails in the Don. Walks include Lower Bartley Smith Greenway, Wilket Creek, Burke Brook and the Lower Don. Simply download the print-friendly trail guide complete with maps, detailed directions and numerous points of environmental and cultural interest. Your feedback as the series grows and suggestions for new walks are welcome.

Paddle the Don 2009 – Best Year Yet!

On Sunday May 3, a record of over \$50,000 was raised by approximately 440 individual paddlers and 19 corporate groups.

A great day was had by all as the weather cooperated and new stream bank work helped paddlers manoeuvre around Weir #1. This year also saw a simultaneous Pedal the Don bike ride, lead by John Wilson, chair of the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, and assisted by the U of T Mountain Bike Team. Cyclists rode from Yonge and Lawrence to the mouth of the Don to join in the celebration with the paddlers.

Congratulations to Chris Phibbs, the winner of the Chair's Challenge for the most funds raised by an individual. Chris raised \$2,200 and she and a guest

won an Oyster Dinner at Rodney's Oyster House with Phil Goodwin, Don Watershed Regeneration Council Chair. Congratulations also to Terrapex, the winner of the Banrock Station Corporate Canoe Challenge for the second year running!

This year, funds from Paddle the Don events will be put towards detailed designs for the Maple Nature Reserve Quonset Hut Site Regeneration project to help kick start the implementation of this Don Watershed Regeneration Plan concept site. See Hot Don Issues and Updates for more information.

Congratulations and thank you to all paddlers and volunteers for a successful event. See you next year on the Don!



EcoAction funding will see kids get active in wetland restoration



A \$24,500 grant will get students in the Don River watershed out of the classroom and into local wetlands over the next two years.

Thanks to the EcoAction Community Fund Program, 800 students will have the opportunity to get their hands dirty growing aquatic plants in the classroom and planting them at a local wetland restoration site on a half-day field trip.

This excursion will not only get students outdoors, but will also help to extend their classroom learning about the value and function of wetland ecosystems

and to solidify the connection between the water that they see in the wetland and local river and the water that comes out of their tap and is used for washing and drinking.

If you happen to be passing through E.T. Seton Park behind the Ontario Science Centre, you will see the hard work of 400 local students who planted over 1000 plants this June.

EcoAction Funding will also support the development of an educational activity guide created to aid teachers in communicating to students the importance of our local water resources before and after the field trip.

For inquiries about this project please contact Kasey Livingston, Community Stewardship Coordinator at 416-661-6600 x 5639 or klivingston@trca.on.ca

Hot Don issues and updates

Don River Watershed Plan nearing completion

Toronto and Region Conservation and its partners thank everyone who have attended open houses and contributed input to the draft Don River Watershed Plan. Comments have been reviewed and the final draft edited. The final plan is expected to be presented at a September meeting of the TRCA Board with a recommendation for approval. For more information please visit www.trca.on.ca/donwatershedplan or contact Julie Hordowick (email: jhordowick@trca.on.ca; tel: 416-661-6600 ext. 5780).

Funding received for Maple Nature Reserve Quonset Hut Site Regeneration - a Don Watershed Plan Concept Site

Responding to a call for applications for funding for 'shovel ready' projects earlier this year, the City of Vaughan has received \$578,500 from the Federal Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, for construction of one of the Don Watershed Plan Concept Sites – regeneration of the Maple Nature Reserve Quonset Hut Site. This project on the East Don River will transform a former Ministry of Natural Resources forest research and storage facility to forest habitat including wetlands, trails and interpretive signage. The Quonset Hut Site is located adjacent to the Maple Uplands Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) and the restoration will assist in expanding the core forest to over 10 hectares. Wetland creation and forest enhancement will help to support amphibian breeding grounds, rare plants and sensitive bird species.

The Don Watershed Regeneration Council and TRCA are partnering with the City of Vaughan on the project with support and funds from Paddle the Don to develop the detailed designs required to take the project from conceptual plans to in-the-ground construction.

Stay tuned for updates on this exciting project in the months to come.

RAP Report

On the evening of Wednesday May 27, 2009, the Toronto and Region Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Team hosted *Moving Forward: Restoring Toronto's Waters* at the Gladstone Hotel. This event marked the release of the 2007 RAP Progress Report of the same name. The 2007 Progress Report provides an overview of existing conditions of the surface waters, sediments, habitats and wildlife in the Toronto and Region, measures progress made and key actions, including remediation, education and science initiatives undertaken since 2001, and identifies the key actions the RAP will pursue between 2007 and 2012. Copies are available from Stephanie Hawkins at shawkins@trca.on.ca, or online at www.torontorap.ca

Don Watershed events September – November 2009

COMMUNITY ECO-GARDEN

Thursdays, May to September, 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden, 200 Eglinton Ave West
Help plant a beautiful garden of organic vegetables and native plants.

Contact Toronto Green Community at 416-781-7663 or garden@torontogreen.ca

THE 25TH ANNUAL VEGETARIAN FOOD FAIR

Friday, September 11, 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.,

Saturday, September 12, 12 p.m. – 9 p.m. and

Sunday, September 13, 2009, 12 p.m. – 7p.m.

Harbourfront Centre, 235 Queens Quay West

Toronto Vegetarian Association's annual fair. Themes include health and wellness, vegetarian cuisine, the environment, animal welfare and community-building activism.

BEAVER CREEK WALK WITH RICHMOND HILL NATURALISTS

Saturday, September 19, 1:30 p.m.

Bayview Avenue and Major MacKenzie Drive East

Enjoy a 2.5km fall walk with the Richmond Hill Naturalists along Beaver Creek. Meet north of the Wal Mart parking lot at the entrance to the pond. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy footwear. For more information, please email joe.agg@hotmail.com or phone 905-884-5012.

GROWING MARKHAM'S URBAN FOREST ONE YARD AT A TIME

Thursday, September 17, 2009, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Thornhill Community Centre Library, Auditorium
7755 Bayview Ave, Thornhill

Learn about environmentally friendly gardening from the Town of Markham, free of charge. Space is limited. Register using the Town's online registration system at <http://econnect.markham.ca> or by calling 905-477-5530.

(Events continued on page 5)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE Wildlife species found in the Don

1. I am a mammal with hooves.
2. I eat grass, leaves, and twigs.
3. Gardeners consider me a nuisance.

What species am I?

Answer on page 6.

Don Watershed events

September – November 2009

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FALL WILDFLOWER WALK

Sunday, September 20, 2009, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Meet at the Cummer Avenue Bridge between Bayview and Leslie
East Don Parklands Partners walk on wildflowers, trees and salmon spotting.

GREEN BUILDING FESTIVAL

Thursday, September 24 to Friday, September 25, 2009

Direct Energy Centre, Toronto, ON

This year's event will highlight cutting edge ideas that are revolutionizing the way we think about building; from new concepts for planning and development, to technological and material breakthrough, to how we can live in greener, healthier spaces. For more info, see: www.greenbuildingfest.com

EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS SUSTAINABILITY FAIR

Saturday, September 26, 2009, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Evergreen Brick Works, 550 Bayview Ave, between the Prince Edward Viaduct (Bloor/Danforth) and Pottery Road
Free Saturday Shuttle Bus between the site and Broadview Station
Leading conservation organizations will be on hand with the latest in green innovation and community initiatives. Come out for workshops, activities and hands-on demonstrations.

FALL TREE PLANTING

Saturday, October 17, 2009, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

East Don Parkland Partners' third planting at the newly restored wetland
Planting to be at the newly restored wetland south of the Cummer Avenue Bridge between Bayview and Leslie. Parking on the side streets nearby.

PLANET IN FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

Wednesday, October 21 – Sunday, October 25, 2009

Various downtown venues

Planet in Focus produces Canada's largest international environmental film and video festival. Environmentally themed films/videos by Canadian and international filmmakers. In 2009 the festival celebrates its 10th anniversary. For more info, call 416-531-1769 or visit www.planetinfocus.org

THE 16TH ANNUAL CHARLES SAURIOL ENVIRONMENTAL DINNER

Thursday, November 12, 2009, 7 p.m.

Pearson Convention Centre, 2638 Steeles Avenue East, Brampton
The Charles Sauriol Environmental Dinner is an annual event celebrating the great conservationist and visionary Charles Sauriol. The dinner not only aims to raise funds to protect environmentally significant lands, but also to raise awareness of just how important conservation is. Every year brings a new and exciting keynote speaker with vision and passion to inspire the conservationist in all of us. For more details, see www.charlessauriol.ca

TORONTO BRUCE TRAIL CLUB HIKES

Saturday, September 26, 2009, 1 p.m.

Meet at Eglinton West subway station

A brisk 12 km walk along the Beltline to Mount Pleasant Cemetery and Moore Park Ravine. The hike ends at Yonge and St. Clair with a stop for refreshments. A suggested donation \$1 - \$2 to the Escarpment Legacy Fund is most appreciated. For details, contact Noreen Azoulay, 416-782-8787, 6 p.m.- 8 p.m. or noreen1818@sympatico.ca

Sunday, September 27, 2009, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Meet at NE corner of York Mills and Yonge Street

Starting and ending at York Mills subway station, a walk through scenic streetscapes, ravines and parkland to Earl Bales Park. For details, contact Sophie Chuchra, 416-482-9843.

Saturday, October 3, 2009, 11 a.m., Don Valley

Meet outside Allen Gardens, Carlton and Sherbourne SW corner
An 11 km walk through the backstreets of Cabbagetown and Riverdale Park to the Don River. No dogs, please. Walk south beside the river and see the new reforestation areas before approaching the Martin Goodman Trail to Harbourfront. For details, contact Jacqueline Holmes, 416-487-8929 or jacktotheworld@hotmail.com

Sunday, October 4, 2009, 11 a.m., Taylor and Wilket Creeks

Meet at Victoria Park subway station, east side of Victoria Park Ave outside the station.

Explore Toronto's ravines on this 15 km walk through Taylor Creek, up the Don Valley, through Wilket Creek and Edwards Gardens, and finishing at the Lawrence subway station. Bring lunch and \$1 for the Escarpment Fund. No dogs, please. For details, contact Sophie Chuchra, 416-482-9843.

Saturday, November 7, 2009, 1 p.m.

Meet at Davisville subway station

Explore ravines and unexpected alleyways in the Rosedale and St. Clair area on this 10 km walk. This is a circular hike with the option of a pub stop at Davisville and Yonge afterwards. No dogs, please. For details, contact Jacqueline Holmes, 416-487-8929 or jacktotheworld@hotmail.com

For more hikes, please visit www.torontobrucetrailclub.org

For other Fall events, see

www.toronto.ca/greentoronto

www.thetmp.org/calendar.htm

www.lostrivers.ca/WalkSchd.htm

www.fode.ca (Click on "Calendar")

For information on TRCA events and activities, visit www.trca.on.ca/events

ANSWER: White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

White-tailed deer are the most numerous and widely distributed large mammal in North America. They can adapt to a wide range of habitats but are drawn to abundant food sources typical of forested or bushy areas in the summer. Their characteristic white underside of the tail is flashed as a sign of alarm when turning to escape potential danger.

At the time of European settlement, white-tailed deer were found largely in southern Canada and were not found at all in Nova Scotia. Today, white-tailed deer are found from Cape Breton Island to south-central British Columbia. Human activities such as forest cutting, agricultural crop seeding and the reduction of competitors such as bison, elk and moose have allowed deer ranges to expand.

Fawns are typically born in late spring and weigh two to four kg at birth and can stand within a few minutes. They are nursed by their mother for as long as three months and may stay with her for the first year. Does will leave fawns unattended for long periods of time, and people may sometimes find a fawn in secluded hiding places and believe it has been abandoned. However, a doe will rarely abandon her young. The fawn's white spots and relatively scentless condition protect it from being detected by predators.

One should not be surprised to see a deer in the Don. The river valley parkland and open space provide a corridor through which the animals may travel relatively unimpeded. Keep a look out for signs of deer next time you are in the Don, including tracks along the trails after a rain, or nibbled stems of young trees and shrubs. Tracks can range from 8.75 cm long for a buck, to four cm for a fawn's prints.

Deer can also be found wandering through your garden and may eat almost any vegetation within their reach. However, you can discourage them from nibbling in your yard by making some simple species choices. Deer as well as rabbits tend to skip plants with a sticky, rough or fuzzy texture and plants with a spiny protection like cacti and American holly. They also avoid plants with fragrant leaves. Coreopsis, geraniums, blazing star and rosemary will look and smell great, and keep the deer at bay. Please visit TRCA's Healthy Yards program at www.trca.on.ca for a full list of deer and rabbit resistant plants for your garden.

With information from Canadian Wildlife Service.



A white-tailed deer fawn at a wetland in Pine Hills Cemetary near Taylor Massey Creek. Photo provided by: Marg McCrae

Please note: Photo credits were missed for the front page of the Spring 2009 newsletter. The colourful photos were taken by Janice Palmer for the Dream in Technicolour article.

On the Don is a newsletter about the Don River watershed and the efforts to rehabilitate its waters and lands. This newsletter is published by Toronto and Region Conservation in partnership with the Don Watershed Regeneration Council.

Toronto and Region Conservation

With over 50 years of experience, Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) helps people understand, enjoy and look after the natural environment, for a cleaner, greener and healthier place to live, for you today and for your children tomorrow.

Don Watershed Regeneration Council

The Don Watershed Regeneration Council is a volunteer, watershed-wide advisory committee established by Toronto and Region Conservation in 1994 to help restore the Don River watershed to a healthy, sustainable natural environment.

Please send an email to donlist@trca.on.ca with the message "subscribe" or "unsubscribe" if you wish to be added or removed from the *On the Don* mailing list.



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