

# On the Don

This publication can be viewed online at [www.trca.on.ca/don\\_newsletter](http://www.trca.on.ca/don_newsletter)

## In this issue:

1. Beyond forty steps - a new watershed plan for the Don
2. Charles Sauriol environmental dinner
3. Test your knowledge
4. Hot Don issues and updates
5. Don watershed events

## Beyond Forty Steps – a new watershed plan for the Don

What does it take to resurrect a river that faces as many challenges as the Don? The new Don River Watershed Plan sheds light on the answer with updated science and strong direction from the community for the next phase of regeneration of the Don.

The plan's vision is a revitalized urban river, flowing with life-sustaining water through regenerated natural habitats and sustainable urban communities, from its headwater tributaries to the mouth of the Don River and into the receiving waters of Lake Ontario. We envision the watershed as an integral contributor to the Living City, where human settlement can flourish forever as part of nature's beauty and diversity.

The Don River Watershed Plan's science shows that hard work is paying off. We are holding the line on watershed health and now is a crucial time to make gains. Three strategic themes guide the management recommendations and actions:

1. Build, re-build and retrofit our communities to restore water balance and improve the sustainability of the urban model.
2. Regenerate the aquatic and terrestrial landscapes.
3. Engage the attention, enthusiasm and support of the people of the Don.

Five concept site plans bring to life the watershed plan's recommendations at a neighbourhood level. As projects are implemented, progress will be highlighted in upcoming issues of On the Don.

- Regenerating natural heritage - Maple Nature Reserve - Underway!
- Building sustainable neighbourhoods - Warden Woods residential area
- Ravine challenges - Mud Creek
- Sustainability makeover - a generic commercial/industrial example
- Bold steps - The Mouth of the Don, lead by Waterfront Toronto

The Don River Watershed Plan represents a combined effort from many organizations and individuals. Many thanks to the Don Watershed Regeneration Council, the Municipal Technical Advisory Committee, TRCA staff and consultants and members of the public who contributed time, energy and ideas to the completion of this plan.

To learn more about the plan or obtain a copy, please visit [www.trca.on.ca/donwatershedplan](http://www.trca.on.ca/donwatershedplan) or contact Julie Hordowick at 416-661-6600 ext. 5780, [jhordowick@trca.on.ca](mailto:jhordowick@trca.on.ca).



*Maple Nature Reserve Quonset Hut Site Regeneration Project in Vaughan. Implementation is underway on this project through funding provided to the City of Vaughan from the Federal Infrastructure Stimulus Fund. Credit: Plan developed by Schollen & Company, Inc.*

theDon

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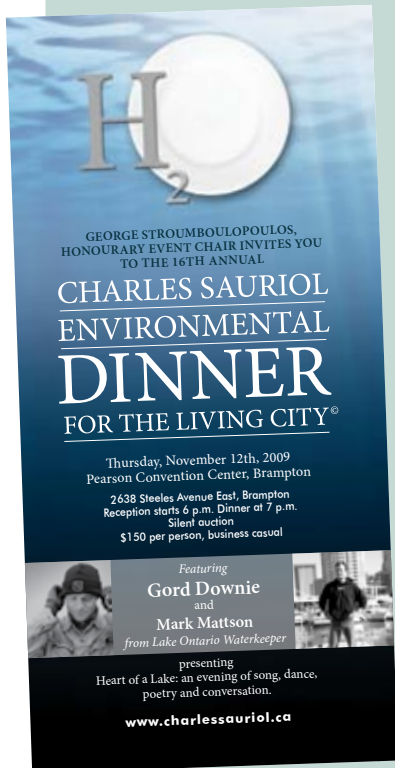
## Charles Sauriol environmental dinner

On November 12, one of Canada's largest annual environmental events will be held in Toronto, celebrating the work of conservationist and visionary Charles Sauriol (1904-1995). Charles began his journey towards conservation long ago when the Don was still brimming with fish, farmland rolled alongside its banks, and the Don Valley Parkway was decades away. As time went by, he watched much of the valley he loved become engulfed by development and realized that "something must be done or Canada will be paved from shore to shore!" Charles dedicated his life to the conservation of nature, authored several books and has received awards including the Governor General's award for Conservation and the prestigious Order of Canada for a lifetime devoted to keeping our country green!

The Charles Sauriol Environmental Dinner brings together leaders from business and the public sectors and their guests for an entertaining evening of environmental learning that raises funds to protect conservation lands in the Greater Toronto Area. The event gathers close to 1,000 guests every year and more than \$789,000 has been raised. The funds raised are put towards the Conservation Foundation of Greater Toronto and the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust to save thousands of acres of environmentally critical lands for the health and well being of future generations.

This year's 16th Annual Charles Sauriol Environmental Dinner will be chaired by George Stroumboulopoulos, well-known TV host of the show "The Hour", and will feature guest speaker Gord Downie, a supporter of the Waterkeeper Alliance, and Mark Mattson, the president of Waterkeeper of Lake Ontario. Each will offer their own unique wisdom and insight on environmental stewardship.

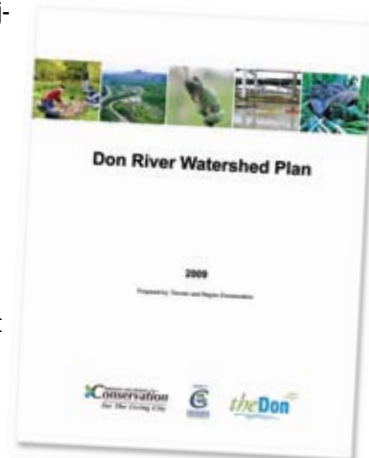
For more information, please visit [www.charlessauriol.ca](http://www.charlessauriol.ca) or contact Helen Lee at 416-661-6600 ext. 5276.



# Hot Don issues

## Don River Watershed Plan approved by TRCA Board

At the September 25, 2009 Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Board meeting, the new Don River Watershed Plan was approved along with recommendations for implementation, including a directive that staff work with watershed municipalities and other partners to develop work plans and budgets for top priority projects as identified in the Implementation Guide. The Implementation Guide is a working document that identifies a 10 year work plan of proposed implementation projects addressing all recommendations of the watershed plan, and organized according to primary implementation mechanisms such as Policy, Regeneration, Stewardship and Outreach, Enforcement and Monitoring. The proposed projects contained in this Guide are intended to serve as a basis for discussion among implementing partners and as a source for the further development of individual partners' own long term work plan and budget preparations.



## Don Mouth Naturalization Project EA

Toronto and Region Conservation is continuing work on the Environmental Assessment for the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project (DMNP Project) on behalf of Waterfront Toronto. Ultimately this project will transform the existing mouth of the Don River into a healthier, more naturalized river outlet to the lake, while at the same time, removing the risk of flooding to urban land to the east and south of the river. This project is a central component of Waterfront Toronto's Lower Don Lands plan.

The DMNP Project is nearing completion and a final Open House is in the planning stages for early winter 2010. Please visit [www.trca.on.ca/protect/environmental-assessment-projects/](http://www.trca.on.ca/protect/environmental-assessment-projects/) for event details to be posted shortly, or call 416-661-6600 ext. 5280.



Property of Waterfront Toronto

# and updates

## Interested in making a difference to your local environment?

TRCA is seeking members for a new term of the Don Watershed Regeneration Council (DWRC), the volunteer committee established to achieve TRCA's vision for The Living City within the Don watershed. The Don River flows from the Oak Ridges Moraine through Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham, continuing through the heart of Toronto before reaching Lake Ontario.



Established in 1995, the Don Council has contributed to an impressive list of accomplishments including:

- Development of the new Don River Watershed Plan, approved in September 2009.
- Creation of watercourse crossing signs installed along major roads crossing the Don and its tributaries in Toronto.
- Holding dozens of community events to celebrate stewardship and educate people on Don issues.
- The modification or removal of five weirs to allow for fish passage, leading to the first large scale migration of salmon in over 100 years.
- Completion of many regeneration projects wide, including: Don Valley Brick Works project in the Lower Don, Little German Mills Creek in Markham, the Bartley Smith Greenway in Vaughan, and Milne Hollow in Toronto.
- Provision of community leadership on environmental issues such as the Oak Ridges Moraine, the City of Toronto Official Plan and the York region Greening Strategy.

For further information on the Don Council please visit [www.trca.on.ca](http://www.trca.on.ca) or call TRCA at 416-661-6600, extension 5283.

## Don watershed events

### TORONTO BRUCE TRAIL CLUB HIKE

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

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 at 416-487-8929 or [jacktotheworld@hotmail.com](mailto:jacktotheworld@hotmail.com).

For more hikes, please visit [www.torontobrucetrailclub.org](http://www.torontobrucetrailclub.org)

### EDWARDS LECTURES: SILENCE OF THE SONGBIRDS

**Wednesday, November 11, 2009, 7:30 p.m.**

Join Dr. Bridget Stutchbury at Toronto Botanical Garden to learn the fascinating characteristics and behavior of songbirds and why they are threatened by habitat loss and pesticides. She will also illustrate the challenges of songbird migration and how we can make the world safer for songbirds.

Fee: Public \$20 / Students \$15 / Members of TBG or Reciprocal Gardens free.

For further details, visit [www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca) or call 416-397-1362

### THE 16TH ANNUAL CHARLES SAURIOL ENVIRONMENTAL DINNER

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

Pearson Convention Centre, 2638 Steeles Avenue East, Brampton  
Join honorary Chair, George Stroumbouloupoulos and guest speakers Gord Downie, a supporter of the Waterkeeper Alliance, and Mark Mattson, President of Waterkeeper of Lake Ontario, for an entertaining evening of environmental learning that raises funds to protect conservation lands in the Greater Toronto Area.

For more details visit [www.charlessauriol.ca](http://www.charlessauriol.ca)

### WINTER TREE IDENTIFICATION

**Sunday, November 15, 2009, 1 – 4 p.m.**

Toronto Botanical Garden, 777 Lawrence Ave. East.  
Join Sean Fox from University of Guelph for a lesson on winter tree identification. Gain hands-on experience identifying trees by looking at their bark, twigs, location and structure. The workshop involves indoor learning sessions and outdoor activities. Fee: \$35 non-member / \$30 members.

For further details visit [www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca) or call 416-397-1362

(continued on page 4)

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

### Geology of the Don

1. I am 12,000 years old.
2. Casa Loma sits upon me.
3. I resemble a beach, but am far from water

## What am I?

Answer on page 4.

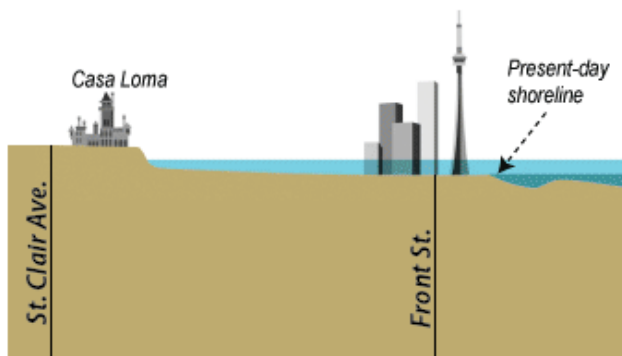
## ANSWER: Glacial Lake Iroquois Shoreline

At the end of the last ice age 11,000-13,000 years ago, the climate warmed and the Laurentide Ice Sheet retreated northward from the Great Lakes area. Glacial ice in the St. Lawrence valley blocked the meltwater from flowing to the sea. As a result, the meltwater pooled in the Lake Ontario basin creating the glacial Lake Iroquois. Lake Iroquois was larger and deeper than Lake Ontario is now and its natural shoreline ran east-west in a position just south of where Casa Loma is today. Downtown Toronto is built on the old Lake Iroquois lakebed.

Evidence of this former lake shore can be found in many places across the city today. You may have noticed the old shorecliff just below St Clair Avenue West between Caledonia Road and Yonge Street, and eastwards toward the Don Valley. Cyclists heading north up Spadina or Bathurst towards St. Clair Avenue are sure to feel the hill as well! The old shoreline is also marked by the escarpment running from Victoria Park Avenue to the mouth of Highland Creek, where the old shoreline meets the present shoreline at the Scarborough Bluffs.

The Toronto area has been swept by many glacial events, dating back over 140,000 years. Every time ice sheets retreated, they left behind boulders, cobbles and tills. In the warmer times between glacial events, gravels, sands, and silts were deposited along river valleys and in lakes. A ridge of sand marks the edge of glacial Lake Iroquois.

The Don Valley Brick Works, in operation from 1889 to 1989, excavated clay from the inter-glacial lake sediments and shale from the underlying bedrock to make bricks. Materials from the Brick Works were used in the construction of well known Toronto landmarks such as Queen's Park, Massey Hall, Casa Loma, Toronto General Hospital, and several University of Toronto buildings, including Convocation Hall, Hart House and Trinity College.



Glacial Lake Iroquois water level  
Credit: Copyright of Natural Resources Canada

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### BEAVER CREEK WALK AND BIRD WATCHING

**November 21, 2009, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Join the Richmond Hill Naturalists on a walk to explore the lower portion of Beaver Creek. Participants will learn about local wildlife and may have a chance to spot beaver, rabbits, foxes and muskrats as well as birds that inhabit the area. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy footwear. Meet at Weldrick Road and Spadina Road.

For further details visit [www.rhnaturalists.ca](http://www.rhnaturalists.ca) or call 905-884-5012

### MIRACULOUS MIGRANTS: WHY SONGBIRDS CONSERVATION BEGINS AT HOME!

**Wednesday, November 18, 2009, 1 – 3 p.m.**

Toronto Botanical Garden, 777 Lawrence Ave. East.  
Join Christina Sharma of Canadian Wildlife Federation and Project CHIRP! for an informative and inspirational talk on songbird conservation and planting with native species. Discover how to certify your garden with the Canadian Wildlife Federation and how to help our feathered friends through the long winter ahead! Fee: \$35 non-members / \$30 members.

For further details visit [www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca) or call 416-397-1362

### LAKE ONTARIO EVENINGS: INAUGURAL TRCA EVENT ON LAKE ONTARIO ISSUES

**Thursday, December 3, 2009, 6 p.m.**

Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. West.  
Attend the first in a series of events addressing Lake Ontario issues and associated local initiatives. This inaugural session will feature guest speaker Peter Annin, author of *The Great Lakes Water Wars*, provide updates and information about local projects, as well as introduce the Lake Ontario Evening series and future roles for community involvement. All are welcome. Free admission.

For further details, visit [www.torontorap.ca](http://www.torontorap.ca) or call 416-661-6600 ext. 5576; [www.ctcswp.ca](http://www.ctcswp.ca) or call 416-661-6600 ext. 5392

### COMING SOON - 2010 STEWARDSHIP FORUM!

Stay tuned for details on the 11th annual Stewardship Forum hosted by Toronto and Region Conservation and the City of Toronto, in the works for February 2010. The Stewardship Forum is an annual event that provides a venue for learning, information sharing and networking for community based environmental stewardship groups active in the GTA. Details will be posted on the TRCA Events Calendar at <http://www.trca.on.ca/events/>, or contact Kasey Livingston at 416-661-6600 ext. 5639 for more information.



*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 1995 to help restore the Don River watershed to a healthy, sustainable natural environment.

Please send an email to [donlist@trca.on.ca](mailto: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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