



Friends of Lemoine Point

Newsletter

Fall, 2011

Renewed Challenges

The Board of the Friends recently assessed our progress in achieving our mandate of working toward preserving the natural character of Lemoine Point for the enjoyment of future generations of Kingstonians.

We decided to build on our achievements and to expand our goals for the next five years, including several key challenges described below that we will be working on in cooperation with the CRCA, which owns and manages this very special conservation area.

Reforestation

In addition to continuing our tree planting efforts, we will put greater emphasis on counteracting the negative impact of the predation by Lemoine Point's deer and voles that threatens the successful growth of the trees and shrubs that we plant; that includes seeking to use stock that is better able to withstand predation, and continuing to experiment with innovative methods of predator protection.

Native Plant Nursery

We will continue increasing our production of the nursery stock required for Lemoine Point's reforestation; that includes trying to develop effective predator protection methods especially against voles. Also, we will seek to increasingly fund the Nursery's operations through the sale of our stock to the public.

Conservation of Biodiversity

To further protect and enhance Lemoine Point's natural heritage, we will identify specific biodiversity issues that we can affect through appropriate actions and/or recommendations, always recognizing the complexity of such biodiversity issues and the importance of balancing conservation efforts with the needs and the reality of the significant public use of what is already a "degraded wilderness". Specific biodiversity projects will be identified.

User Education

We will explore opportunities to enhance the awareness by Lemoine Point visitors of the threats to its ecology and of how they can help protect its natural environment and maintain it as a great place to visit, e.g. treating it as a "place of nature" rather than a typical city park.



Friends Planting Trees and Bushes at South End of the Point

Notes from the Point



Coralroot

There are a number of interesting native plants found at Lemoine Point that are quite rare for this area. One that was recently spotted is the Coralroot, a simple orchid with small flowers on a leafless stalk; it's a parasitic plant that, instead of using chlorophyll to make its food, feeds on fungal or decaying matter in the soil, thus contributing to the recycling of organic matter. It was found by Margo McMurray when husband David almost stepped on it.

What's encouraging about it is that there's some suggestion that its existence is a sign of recovery of the forest.

Red Oaks

As part of our reforestation efforts, we have for some time been planting Red Oak seedlings in an area just south of the flat rock area on the Main Service Road. The intent was to try to restore a tree that was once quite common in that area. However, because of ongoing problems due to excess wetness and to predation by deer and voles, our tree planting had only limited success, and we have decided to leave the area as it now is, so that it is gradually returning to a mixed bush consisting primarily of Grey Dogwood and Green Ash with some Red Oak.

That will also allow us to focus our reforestation resources on other areas of the Point.



If you had come upon this scene when visiting Lemoine Point this September, you might have thought that it was being invaded by aliens or some other weird creature.

However, what actually happened that day at Lemoine Point is that our Jane Murphy, working alone at our Native Plant Nursery, heard a strange swooshing noise in the woods behind her. At first she thought it was a plane or something, but then realized it was a section of a large old bitternut tree being knocked over by the high winds that day.

Realizing that the tree was now a danger to any passer-by, Rick Knapton of the CRCA wanted to cut it down all the way, but on inspection noticed a massive swarm of bees in the hollow remnant of the tree that dissuaded him from approaching it lest he be attacked. Therefore he and Jane decided to call in a local beekeeper ... when she arrived, she estimated the swarm to contain about 40,000 bees, and then, rather than exterminating them, donned protective gear (see photo) and removed and saved part of the hive, causing the rest to flee and settle into a new home.

Just another interesting day at the Point!

Keeping It Native

At times as you walk the trails of Lemoine Point you see people working away in the woods on something ... most likely it's a work party of Friends members removing invasive plant species at the Point.

We're trying to control three species: Garlic Mustard, Dog-Strangling Vine, and European Buckthorn.

Of the approximately 300 varieties of wild flowers, shrubs, and trees at Lemoine Point, about 100 are not native to Ontario. While most of those co-exist with the native species, the three species that we've targeted are instead out-competing and replacing them and are expanding their range.

They also don't provide a food source for birds, animals, and insects. Garlic Mustard is avoided by birds and animals, because it tastes like its name: garlic and mustard. Dog-Strangling Vine is called that because dogs choke if they chew on the seed pods. And European Buckthorn berries are a laxative ... birds eat them only as a last resort in late winter. The result is that birds and animals eat more of the native species, while the invasive species become more predominant because nothing is eating them.

Most people say they want Lemoine Point to stay just the way it is. However, to keep it as it is, we need to control these invasive species. Otherwise the current variety of plants, birds and animals that people love, will be replaced by forests of European Buckthorn, an understory of Garlic Mustard, and fields of Dog-Strangling Vine, in which there will be few birds or animals since there is little food for them.

We have had considerable success against Garlic Mustard; this is partly because it does better in compacted soil than most native plants, and as it is removed, the soil gets loosened, which helps the native plants get re-established. We seem to have slowed the spread of Dog-Strangling Vine, compared to its expansion in other parts of the Kingston area. However, European Buckthorn is still a major problem, as Buckthorn seedlings grow vigorously where we have cut down mature Buckthorn trees.

In recent years we have focused our removal efforts on the area along Trail 2, near the North Parking Lot, and many people have commented on how much better it looks. We've been told it now contains the greatest diversity of native plants at Lemoine Point, and we are trying to keep it that way.

If you do see us as we work away at this, feel free to ask us to show you what we're doing.

Thanks for Your Support!

We greatly appreciate your membership and donations that make our programs and efforts possible.

Your membership renewal form for 2012 is enclosed – the charitable receipt for donations will be sent to you early next year.

Board of Directors (2010-11)

John Diemer, President
Peter Butler, Past President
Jane Murphy, Vice-President
Ron Bettney, Treasurer
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Chris Hargreaves
Larry McCurdy
Bill Stevenson

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Some of our volunteers at this fall's Volunteer Appreciation BBQ

Friends of Lemoine Point

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 pm

**Ongwanada Resource Centre, 191 Portsmouth Ave
(note our new venue)**

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

&

A PRESENTATION

“A PERSPECTIVE ON THE POINT”

**by Rick Knapton,
the Forestry Technician and the key
CRCA staff person at Lemoine Point,
about various initiatives & experiences there**

Fully Accessible

Everyone Welcome!