



Friends of Lemoine Point

Newsletter

Spring 2009

Status of Conservation Plan

As an urban conservation area and "place of nature" with a rich diversity of fauna and flora and a variety of habitats, Lemoine Point needs the long-term conservation plan that the CRCA is currently developing for it. It will only be available for future generations to enjoy if its managers now develop and implement effective actions for conserving it.

The area has already lost some of its natural qualities through the impact of considerable human and agricultural use, but much can be done to keep it viable as a conservation area, keeping in mind the need for a balance between its ecological needs and the fact that it is an important source of enjoyment and nature appreciation for many Kingstonians, with an estimated 300,000 visits per annum. We will continue to work with the CRCA towards keeping Lemoine Point as natural as possible while also providing the best possible experience for its visitors.

The Friends board and others involved with Lemoine Point are providing input into the development of the Conservation Plan, and it is expected to be ready by this fall.



Coming Events

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| Wednesday, April 15 | - Invasive Species Workshop |
| Saturday, April 18 | - Spring Cleanup |
| Saturday, May 9 | - Tree Planting |
| Tuesday, May 12 | - Start of Garlic Mustard Removal |
| Sat./Sun, May 16-17 | - Plant Sale at Nursery |
| Sunday, June 7 | - June Wildflower Walk |
| Saturday, October 3 | - Tree Planting |
| Wednesday, Nov. 18 | - AGM |

See Newsletter items for details

Invasive Species Control Workshop

The Friends and the CRCA are organizing a workshop for people from across Eastern Ontario, and you are invited to join us!

The morning will be spent discussing successes and failures in controlling Garlic Mustard, Dog-Strangling Vine, and European Buckthorn.

In the afternoon we will have several presentations on related issues:

- *What's Happening across Ontario?* by Rachel Gagnon of the Ontario Invasive Plant Council;
- *What's Happening in the Water?* by Hayley Anderson of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters; and
- *The Role of Squirrels and Deer in Spreading Invasive Species!* by Emily Gonzales, of St. Lawrence Islands National Park.

The workshop will be held on Wednesday April 15, from 10am to 4pm in the Outdoor Centre at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

There is no charge for the workshop, but participants should contribute \$5 for lunch, or bring a contribution to a snack / salad / vegetable / dessert buffet.

To register, call the CRCA at 613-546-4228 ext. 221, or email crca@cataraquiregion.on.ca.

For more information, check our website, or call Chris Hargreaves at 613-389-8993.

Aside from that, our Invasive Species Control Group will have its first 2009 meeting on Tuesday evening, May 12th. We will meet in the North Parking Lot, and clear Garlic Mustard from 6.00 to 8.00 pm. We will then meet for the rest of May on Tuesdays from 6.00 to 8.00 pm, and on Saturdays from 2.00 to 4.00 pm.

For more information, and for meeting times during the rest of the summer, call Chris at 613-389-8993.

Reforestation

The reforestation of Lemoine Point continues to be one of our primary activities. Last year we undertook one tree planting event in the spring and three in the fall, with all the stock planted having been produced at our Native Plant Nursery. We now have five

Heritage forest plantation sites, as well as the red oak plantation, one site planted by the Community Foundation for Greater Kingston, and one by the Girl Guides, plus several smaller experimental sites.



We have just inspected all sites and it is obvious that we will need to spend much more time and effort protecting the trees and shrubs after planting. We have been increasing our efforts to protect the plantations, but we are still not successfully resisting the deer, rabbits, voles, and other predators, which are destroying a significant proportion of previously planted and new stock.

Some areas fared better through the winter than others. For example, Heritage Site #1 has had a bad winter with extensive deer and vole damage, including major damage to the trunks of larger trees caused by male deer tearing off the bark with their antlers; whereas in the south, the newest Heritage site, #5 (along the airport fence), has done well and the shrubs are settling in nicely.

This spring we have received offers of tree planting assistance from several organizations and we will continue to work with partners such as the Community Foundation and other corporate and community groups, in the coming year. We will likely in the spring extend Heritage Site #3 to the north, and in the fall add more shrubs to Heritage Site #5. We are grateful for the efforts of our volunteer planters, who come out year after year and for the support of Rick Knaptin and the CRCA.



Spring Clean Up

On Saturday April 18th, everyone who loves Lemoine Point is invited to help look after it.

We will be meeting in both the North and South Parking Lots, starting at 9am.

We hope that by combining our efforts, we will be able to remove litter from along most of the trails, and from around the parking lots and picnic areas.

Garbage bags will be provided, from 9am to 11am.

Please bring your own gloves.

Children will be very welcome, as well as adults.

For more information, contact Pat Chamberlain, at 613-384-9024.

As well as a Spring Cleanup, spring is also the time to assess the state of our accessible trails. Our Trails Committee will undertake a complete audit of them, and the hope is to reconstruct parts of the trail along Collins Bay that have suffered serious erosion. We'll also be looking to fix any other obstacles that prevent visitors with reduced mobility from benefiting to the full from Lemoine Point.

2009 Board of Directors

John Diemer, President
Peter Butler, Past President
Jane Murphy, Vice-President
Chris Hargreaves, Treasurer
David McMurray, Secretary

Members at Large

Millie Belyea
Darlene Cullimore
Larry McCurdy
Marie Surridge

Mailing address: Friends of Lemoine Point
c/o Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority
P.O. Box 160, Glenburnie, ON K0H 1S0

Phone messages received at 546-4228 Ext. 306

E-mail: lemoine@cataraquiregion.ca

WebSite:

www.cataraquiregion.on.ca/lands/friendsoflemoine.html

Lemoine Point's Wildflowers

One of the joys of Lemoine Point for much of the year is to see and appreciate the beauty of our wildflowers, starting with the Coltsfoot in the spring and ending with the various Asters in the fall.

Because many of you share that enjoyment, we have since 2005 held May wildflower walks exclusively for members of the Friends. This year we are also opening it to interested members of the public. The walks are led by David and Margo McMurray, who for the past few years have been studying and developing an inventory of Lemoine's wildflowers, and they demonstrate the amazing variety and beauty of wildflowers to be found at Lemoine Point!

For this Spring's walk, see details below.



June Wildflower Walk

Sunday, June 7, 1:00 a.m.



For the Annual Wildflower Walk at Lemoine Point, David and Margo McMurray will again lead the tour of trails that display a wealth of spring wildflowers and other interesting plants. This year the hike will be open to members of the public as well as members of the Friends.

It starts at the North Parking Lot, and should last about 1 ½ hours although you can leave the hike at any time.

Binoculars are suggested if you'd also like to view and identify our spring birds.

Mark it on your calendar and plan to join us.

The Native Plant Nursery

The Nursery will soon be in full operation for 2009. This year, we will complete the gravel paths and build a compost bin and a hoop house; the latter will be used to over-winter seedlings and potted stock, protecting them from predators and drying winds, and to start wildflower seeds. Volunteers will continue to collect and propagate seeds and cuttings, and we will continue to provide all plants needed for Lemoine Point reforestation projects.

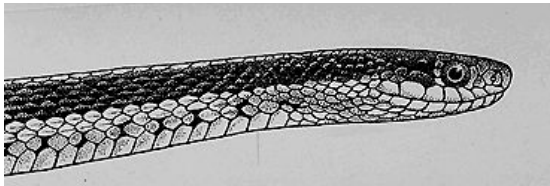
We meet Wednesdays at 9:00 am. All are welcome – come join the fun and do your bit for the environment. It's also a great opportunity to learn plant identification and growing techniques. Contact Millie Belyea at 389-8944 or at millie.belyea@sympatico.ca.

Our **Spring Plant Sale** will be on Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17, 10:00 to 2:00.

Lemoine Point's Snakes

Many of the snake species that inhabit eastern Ontario can be found at Lemoine Point, even though their habitat has been affected by urban encroachment and human traffic. And they are there in large numbers, though you may not see them because they blend so well into their surroundings and generally try to avoid contact. Sometimes you'll see one sunning itself on a path or trying to escape your footsteps, and at this time of year you may even see them in groups after having left a winter den. Even though many of us have an automatic startle reflex when we suddenly see one, they are harmless, and play an important role in Lemoine's ecosystem, both as a consumer of small prey and a food source for other animals.

Our most common snake, and usually the first to come out in the spring, is the **Garter Snake**. Of medium length, averaging about 2 feet in length, it has three noticeable



stripes running along its body from head to tail, one along its back and one on each side, typically yellow, sometimes with reddish-orange markings. A pattern on its sides resembles that of fancy garters once worn by men to hold up their socks, giving it its name. It feeds and shelters in moist

areas and among piles of logs or leaves, and finds its food largely by scent by flickering its tongue in the air testing for prey.

A snake that you will rarely see but is quite abundant at Lemoine Point is the **Brown Snake**, also known as DeKay's Snake. It's a small (9-13 inches) snake, grayish brown with two rows of parallel dark spots running along its back. It is very timid and generally lives under leaf litter and rocks or underground. It eats slugs and worms and has specialized teeth and jaws that allows it to pull snails out of their shells. Its predators include large frogs and toads, larger snakes, crows, hawks, and weasels.



Another of our snakes is the **Northern Water Snake**. It is a heavy-bodied snake and quite long, averaging about 30 to 40 inches in length, and is generally dark gray in colour with a blotched back, which fades to plain black or brown as the snake gets older. It is likely to be encountered near or in water, because that is where it finds its food such as small fish and frogs, and it is an excellent swimmer. Like our other snakes it is harmless and non-venomous, but if restrained or otherwise threatened, it can be very aggressive and strike and bite.

An even larger snake that may be found near water and marshy areas is the **Eastern Fox Snake**. It has a yellowish-brown body with dark blotches down the back. It can be fairly aggressive when threatened, and will vibrate its tail as a warning which, when rustled against dry leaves, can even be mistaken for a rattlesnake. It too is best just to leave alone and to appreciate it as part of Lemoine Point's natural diversity.