



CAT TALES

FALL 2006 ISSUE

In This Issue

Find out what we've been up to this year so far and what our plans are for the fall.

- Conservation areas and dams are in the process of being spruced up! Read all about it on pages 1, 9 and 12.
- We like all sorts of creatures. Turtles are our Creature Feature on page 2. Amphibian crooners are also on page 2. Find out why snakes are in trouble on page 10.
- Not enough creature stuff? Get up close and personal with geese on page 10 and monitor hummingbirds on page 11.
 - Beware of alien invaders! More on page 9.
- Parrott's Bay Conservation Area is now complete. More on page 12.
- Go back to school with our friendly education staff on page 3.
- Try something new or enjoy one of our old favourites. Check out our What's Happening calendar of events on pages 6 and 7.
- Our updated regulations are now in effect. See page 3 for more details.
- The Cataraqui Conservation Foundation has been busy raising money and they plan to do even more. Read all about it on page 11.
 - Meet our new staff. See their smiling faces on page 5.
- The Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area celebrate 10 years of volunteering. See page 12.
- Also on page 12, the CRCA thanks good corporate citizens.
- **Plus updates on our plethora of projects...**
 - Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Master Plan on page 3
 - Source water protection and stream gauges – page 4.
 - Natural Heritage Study and Lemoine Point Conservation Area – page 8.
 - Wilton Restoration Project – page 10.



Ian Brown and Mike Ignas put the finishing touches on the roof of the new privies at Gould Lake Conservation Area.

New signs were also installed thanks to a grant from the Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation.



Gould Lake Receives A Timely Facelift

Thanks to a generous grant from the Frontenac Community Futures



Development Corporation, the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's (CRCA) popular Gould Lake Conservation Area received a facelift this summer.

"It was a two-part grant, explains CRCA Conservation Lands Coordinator Robert Gerritsen. "One part was for the Cataraqui Trail and the other was for the Gould Lake Conservation Area."

Approximately \$10,000 was spent for various sections of the Cataraqui Trail in Frontenac County, from west of Chaffey's Locks to the Harrowsmith area," says Mr. Gerritsen. "It was a significant portion of the trail."

The balance of the grant, \$8,350, was spent at the Gould Lake property.

"That was for various improvements including a solar panel, battery and related equipment for the gatehouse; this will supply power to the cash register," says Mr. Gerritsen. "We also bought two new canoes and two new kayaks and assorted safety equipment."

A portion of the grant was invested in material for new privies and also for new signage.

Visitors now are greeted by a four foot

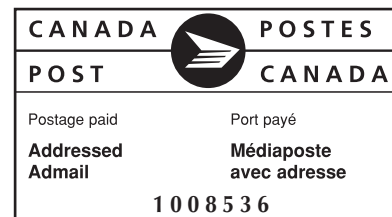
by eight foot sign at the gate and by other new signage at or near the gatehouse and by the parking lot.

Mr. Gerritsen is enthusiastic about the benefits to Gould Lake Conservation Area.

"Like any property that the CRCA owns, there is always degradation of equipment over time," he says. "It needs to be replaced but cannot always be accommodated in the current budget so any financial grant is greatly appreciated."



Cataraqui Region
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Creature Feature

Turtles: Nature's Armoured Submersibles

Six turtle species call the Cataraqui region home. The good news is that populations of snapping, stinkpot, painted, northern map and Blanding's turtles are healthy. Only the spotted turtle is classified as at risk.

Turtles spend winters burrowed in the muddy bank or bottom of ponds, rivers or lakes. Cold water and diminished activity allow them to reduce their metabolic rates and oxygen requirements. Their metabolisms function anaerobically, that is without oxygen from the atmosphere. Instead, they can absorb oxygen from the water through the lining of the mouth and cloaca. They surface in spring and resume normal metabolic activity.

In fact, turtles are among the early wetlands residents to welcome spring. They rely on sunshine to raise their body temperatures by basking, usually out of the water on a convenient rock or log. Snapping Turtles are

an exception; they rarely leave the water other than to lay and bury their eggs.

All turtle species living in the Cataraqui region bury their eggs, usually in sunny locations. The eggs of most species hatch late in summer leaving the young a few short weeks to establish fat reserves to nourish them through the winter. Many turtles lay their eggs in the same locations, year after year.

Spring hikers may discover turtle egg nests that show evidence of a raccoon raid. Shattered eggshells are indicative of predation and they lie scattered around the excavated nesting site.

Egg-laying activity is fatal for some female turtles as they cross roads to avail themselves of the soft earth near the shoulder. Should you assist a turtle to cross a road? Yes, but avoid snapping turtles. On land they are aggressive, fast and those powerful jaws can inflict a vicious bite.

Long necks enable them to reach to the back of their shell enabling them to harm would-be benefactors.

Snapping Turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*) are the largest of the region's turtles species. They measure as long as 45 cm in length and some specimens have topped 15 kg. Snappers are poor swimmers and seem to prefer walking on the bottom of the pond.

Snappers are largely nocturnal, feeding on carrion, small animals and aquatic vegetation.

Stinkpot turtles (*Sternotherus odoratus*) may reach 13 cm in length. They may be recognized by a narrow, domed shell; their heads bear stripes. Like snappers, they seem to prefer walking underwater rather than swimming. The inelegant name comes from a musky smell they produce if handled.

Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*) also have a high, domed shell like the stinkpot but with the added feature of yellow flecks on a black background. The head and legs are not marked but the chin is bright yellow. A Blanding's may reach 25 cm in length. They tend to live in shallow water in marshes where they prefer walking on the bottom to swimming.

Midland painted turtles (*Chrysemys picta*) average 15 cm although individuals may grow to 25 cm. This is Ontario's most widespread species, often seen basking on logs



Snapping turtles are one of the more common turtles in this area.

or rocks. Dark above and yellow or orange beneath, painted turtles bear bright yellow markings on their faces and necks.

Northern map turtles (*Graptemys geographica*) bear markings suggestive of a contour map. Females may reach 27 cm; males are smaller. A key identifying feature is the serrated rear edge of this turtle's shell. Northern map turtles favour larger water bodies. They are mollusk eaters and their jaws are large and powerful. The green skin bears bright yellow markings.

Only the spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*), Ontario's smallest at 12 cm, is classified as vulnerable. Spotted turtles are black and bear yellow spots on their limbs and shell. Not often seen, spotted turtles prefer smaller water bodies.

In Ontario, turtles fall under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Natural Resources. It is illegal to keep a wild turtle in captivity.

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More Than 100 Frog Fans Listen for Amphibian Crooners

The annual Frog Night Hike at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area attracted more than 100 people of all ages to hear several frog species croon on May 12.

"People seemed genuinely interested in things they can do at home to help frogs," says Education Officer Stana Luxford, who organizes the annual event. "People love frogs and I think that's what brings them out."

She was joined by CRCA staff members Holly Evans, Tom Beaubiah and Anne Bown to guide visiting families around the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area wetland to listen to the songsters. Ms. Luxford said four species were identified: grey tree frogs, chorus frogs, spring peepers and one leopard frog.

She says that some event participants expressed interest in creating frog habitat in their yards. Others expressed interest in becoming marsh monitoring volunteers. But more was involved than just a love of frogs.

"May is such a nice time of year and people want to get outside," Ms. Luxford adds.

The evening was divided into two parts, a family hike held early to accommodate youngsters and a frog-monitoring hike held after dark. According to Ms. Luxford, 90 people turned out for the family hike while another 19 participated in the night hike.

Participants were welcomed to the event with an introduction to frog calls and a quiz sheet featuring their different vocalizations.



Bullfrogs have a deep, distinctive call.

School Days Are Here Again!

September means back to the classroom for teachers and students, but it's also back to the outdoor classroom for CRCA education staff. Education Officer Stana Luxford and Education Assistant Angela McAneney advise that fall is a great time to bring your class to Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area for a conservation education program.

If you're planning a wetland excursion, insect program or soil program, you need to book right away. The last fall date for these programs is October 6. That's because after that, frost tends to kill the insects and small organisms that these programs need.

There are lots of other great programs that are offered throughout the school year and some can be delivered year-round. Ecosystem Tours, Home Sweet Home, Water Cycle Journey and our mapping programs can be

done during any season.

Our programs are all tied to the Ontario curriculum and we have programs for all ages — preschool, elementary, secondary and adult.

So what are you waiting for? You can book now for any of our programs, whether it's a snowshoe excursion in February, a trip to the sugar bush in March or a wetland exploration in May. Our friendly education staff would love to hear from you!

If you haven't received copies of our education calendars, call us at (613) 546-4228 ext. 251. We'll be happy to mail one to you. Or you can also get information about all of our programs on our website at www.catararegion.on.ca.



Our friendly education staff, Angela McAneney (left) and Stana Luxford, shown here in their Maple Madness costumes.

CRCA Updated Regulation Now in Effect

The CRCA's updated regulation came into effect on May 4, 2006. The regulation is designed to protect public safety, private property and the environment. Its formal name is *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses* (Ontario Regulation 148/06). It replaces our former *Fill, Construction and Alteration to Waterways* Regulation.

So what does this mean? It means that residents of the Cataraqui watershed require approval from the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) prior to starting work that might have an impact on natural hazards.

"Natural hazards include flooding or erosion that might increase as a result of development or site alteration," explains Environmental Technician Holly Evans. "To help property owners determine whether they need approval, the CRCA has developed an informative fact sheet."

"The CRCA's review process under the regulation ensures that no negative consequences relating to natural hazards will follow any proposed development," explains Ms. Evans.

Areas covered by the regulation are watercourses, shorelines, valleys (usually next to watercourses), wetlands and lands adjacent to these features. Anyone planning work in these areas must contact the CRCA for site specific permit requirements if the project is:

- in the channel of a watercourse or waterbody;
- within 15 m of floodplain associated with a watercourse or waterbody;
- within 50 m of the top of a bank of a watercourse or waterbody;
- in a wetland;

- within 120 m of a provincially significant wetland; and
- within 30 m of all other wetlands greater than 0.5 ha in area.

Permits are required to:

- place, remove or grade fill material;
- erect structures including buildings, docks, decks and retaining walls; and
- alter a watercourse or water body including bridge or culvert installation, cleaning, channelization or erosion control.

"Property owners are encouraged to contact the CRCA for a consultation to ensure their applications have all the required information," says Ms. Evans.

An application package is published on the CRCA website under the Resource Management section at: www.catararegion.on.ca.



Landowner Barbara Bradfield (right) consults with Holly Evans about a property.

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Master Plan Process Continues



This aerial view of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville shows the north end of the area adjacent to the Buells Creek Reservoir and wetland.

It's been a long, slow, process, but CRCA staff continue to make progress on the new Master Plan for Mac Johnson Wildlife Area (MJWA).

What exactly is a master plan? It's a plan that provides direction for the development, use, improvement and future direction for a property over a 20 year period. It looks at the existing and proposed facilities like trails, washrooms and picnic areas, but it also looks at the resources that exist on the property and how the property could be used.

As an example, if the CRCA found a rare plant or animal habitat, then trail development and human activity would be directed away from that area. It's a matter of balancing recreational use of the property by people and protecting the natural features that make Mac Johnson Wildlife Area a special place.

Despite juggling many projects and responsibilities, Watershed Management Coordinator Mara Shaw found time over the spring and summer to produce

a revised plan. This is currently being reviewed by the CRCA board and staff.

In preparing the revised plan, Mara took into account the comments received as a result of the December 2005 public open house, as well as comments from municipal and CRCA staff.

The revised plan was reviewed by the CRCA's Conservation Lands Advisory Board in August. They have made a number of suggestions to improve and focus the master plan. These changes have been made. The MJWA Master Plan will receive a final review by the Advisory Board and then it's on to the Full Authority at the end of September.

If the Full Authority is happy with the plan, there will be one last public meeting held later this fall. The date, time and location of this meeting are still undecided, so watch our website and the local media for more details.



Work on Source Water Protection Continues

The hot and dry days of the recent summer served to remind us of how important it is to have access to clean and plentiful supplies of drinking water. This summer was also the fifth anniversary of the Walkerton water tragedy. In May 2001 the small southwestern Ontario town of Walkerton was devastated by the presence of *E. coli* bacteria in its drinking water system. The contaminated water resulted in seven deaths and the serious illness of thousands of residents. The provincial government is taking action to help avoid a similar incident, and the CRCA is included in that effort.

Conservation authorities across Ontario have been asked to coordinate a process in which communities will develop a source protection plan to protect their sources of drinking water. The term *source water* refers to the lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater that we use for drinking water. The plans seek to protect the quality and quantity of such water for future generations.

The CRCA has been conducting background work on this initiative for almost two years, in advance of the *Clean Water Act* (see below). We expect that the source protection plan for the local area will be ready in several years. We intend to work closely with local



The CRCA recommends that the Clean Water Act include protection for wells, not just municipal drinking water supplies. This photo shows a new well being drilled.

municipalities, organizations, and landowners during the planning process.

Clean Water Act

Source water protection is expected to be guided by new provincial legislation called the *Clean Water Act*. The proposed act received first reading in the legislature in late 2005, and second reading in spring 2006. It is expected to be approved later this fall.

As part of the approval process, the provincial Standing Committee on Social Policy recently visited communities to hear comments

about the legislation. CRCA General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Steve Knechtel made a brief presentation to the Standing Committee in Bath on August 24. His comments are summarized below.

- source water protection is one component of watershed management, an area where conservation authorities have extensive experience;
- each plan should be prepared for an entire river watershed (or a grouping of watersheds), rather than only those areas that are close to a municipal water intake;
- all drinking water, not just

municipal water supplies, should be included;

- stewardship programs and education should be emphasized; and
- there is a need for long term, sustainable funding to implement this initiative.

Learning about Water and Local Communities

CRCA staff continue to advance the background technical work that will be used to develop source water protection plans. The government of Ontario is paying for 100 per cent of the cost of this work. Some of our current activities include measuring the amount of water that flows through local streams, identifying threats and issues to drinking water, analyzing existing information, and preparing maps and reports.

We are also working with municipalities to learn more about the water that supplies their drinking water systems. Research is ongoing at three locations:

- The Village of Sydenham Intake Protection Zone Study (in the Township of South Frontenac) is examining the movement of water in Sydenham Lake, which is the source for the new water supply in the village.
- The Village of Lansdowne Wellhead Protection Zone Study

Phase 2 (in the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands) is improving our understanding of the groundwater that supplies the two municipal wells in the village.

- The Eastern Lake Ontario – Upper St. Lawrence River Intake Protection Zone Study is examining how water flows in the Lake and the River, in order to assess how contaminants reach the public intakes in five shoreline municipalities. Together these intakes provide water for almost 175,000 people.

Meeting with organizations in the community is another important part of the early stages of our work. At these meetings we discuss our mutual interests in drinking water, and discuss how they can become involved in the process. Recent meetings were held with the Frontenac County chapter of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, with area lake associations, and with Ducks Unlimited Canada.

The Winter 2007 issue of *Cat Tales* will include a further update on this program. For more information about source water protection and the proposed *Clean Water Act*, please visit our website at www.catararegion.on.ca or contact Project Manager Rob McRae at (613) 546-4228 ext. 224.

Stream gauges aid in flood and drought forecasting; two are repaired and another new gauge is added

The addition of a new stream gauge and repairs to two existing gauges enhance the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's flood and drought forecasting ability.

"This completes our stream gauge rehabilitation project that was funded by the Ministry of Natural Resources," says Watershed Management Coordinator Mara Shaw.

Stream gauges record data about water levels. These data, gathered from eight sites across the CRCA's jurisdiction, enable Ms. Shaw to forecast flooding or drought conditions.

A new stream

gauge was added on Lyndhurst Creek in the Lyndhurst area. Other stream gauges are located on Wilton Creek, Buell's Creek, Little Cataraqui Creek, Collins Creek, Lyn Creek, Millhaven Creek and one, completed in 2005, at Sydenham, says Ms. Shaw.

"For every stream gauge, there is a weir just downstream that creates a pool of water," she explains. "The weir creates an invariable relationship between water level, which we measure, and stream flow, which we want to know."

A pressure transducer is placed at the pool's bottom. Water level, which is directly related to the measured pressure, is captured by a data recorder inside a steel structure resembling a dog house. Water level data are recorded hourly in a rural setting

and every half hour in an urban environment. Data are retrieved by telephone line and modem weekly, although the gauges may be accessed more frequently, to check on conditions.

Repairs were completed to the weirs controlling water levels at the Buell's and Lyn Creek stream gauges, Ms. Shaw says. This required building coffer dams to expose the leaky weir for repairs. Repairing these leaks improves the quality of flow measurements when water levels are low.

"Low flows are very important for telling us about drought conditions," says Ms. Shaw.

To complete the repairs, the CRCA obtained a permit from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

"The end result is the weir is

now controlling the water flow appropriately and we can return to the known correlation between water level and flow," she explains. "The data we collect are even more critical now because of a recent discovery of a rare mussel species in Lyn Creek."

CRCA stream gauges are integrated into Environment Canada's (EC) stream gauge network, says Ms. Shaw. EC maintains each gauge's internal equipment, modem and data logger. EC personnel also perform equipment calibration and checks every six weeks.

"This is a very collaborative project," says Ms. Shaw. "The data we get electronically tells us about

conditions in creeks across the region."

That enables timely flood advisories or drought warnings, an important aspect of the CRCA mandate.



CRCA Conservation Area Supervisor Stefan Foerster repairs the weir at the Lyn Creek stream gauge.



Another Successful Summer Camp Season

It was another summer of fun for children participating in the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's summer camps as attendance eclipsed 2005 numbers.

The CRCA operates two camps: the first is the Nature Explorers Camp held at both the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Gould Lake Conservation Area. This camp is for 6 to 11-year-olds.

Katie Speck was the Nature

Explorers Camp Supervisor responsible for running the day camp. She was assisted by Camp Instructor/Lifeguards Carolyn Lauzon and Whitney Kittner and Camp Instructor Michael Griggs.

This year, a total of 153 children attended the seven, week-long sessions compared to 141 in 2005. Each week had a different theme. In addition to fun themes, the camps featured water activities, guest speakers and adventures at Gould Lake.

Participants acquire a greater awareness about, and connection to, the natural world.

For the 12 to 14-year-olds, there was the Wilderness Backpacking Experience held at both the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Frontenac Provincial Park. This camp featured three, week-long sessions with a total of 24 youth attending compared to 19 in 2005.

The backpacking experience is for youth who love the outdoors

and want to learn camping and leadership skills. The experience includes four days and three nights backpacking in Frontenac Provincial Park.

Camp Supervisor Stana Luxford and Instructor/Lifeguard Julie Downes helped the backpackers learn about conservation and low-impact camping.

Both camps were also assisted by a number of dedicated volunteers.



CRCA Education Officer Stana Luxford, centre, instructs two campers on how to set up a tent.

Four new contract employees join the CRCA

Gordon Bell, Environmental Planner:

As a member of the planning team, Gord provides environmental reviews of severances, minor variances, draft plans of subdivisions, rezoning applications plus a lot more.

He also provides advice to the public and municipal staff for planning application reviews and assists with planning projects. Gord is replacing former environmental planner Kyle Munro.

Gord has a Bachelor of Environmental Studies from the University of Waterloo.

"I had considered switching to urban and regional planning before graduating; ironically, the conservation authority has provided an opportunity to pursue that area of interest," he says.

He spent 34 years with the Ministry of Transportation before joining the CRCA in May. Originally from Barrie, he has lived in Kingston since 1985 with his wife, Barbara, a teacher at a local elementary school.

They have one son, Graham, who is a member of the Canadian Forces Reserves, presently employed on contract with the Regular Forces.

Abdullah Hossain, Watershed Engineer:

Abdullah is replacing former Watershed Engineer Monir Moniruzzaman. He reviews development applications and provides technical advice on storm water management, natural hazards and other hydrology and hydraulics related issues to implement the watershed management plan.

Other duties include flood monitoring and forecasting; inspection, operation and maintenance of dams; maintaining the stream flow database and equipment and site inspections.

He earned a BSc. in civil engineering majoring in water resources engineering

from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology in 1992, then worked for 10 years in Bangladesh.

In 2001 Abdullah came to Toronto where he worked as a civil engineer for more than two years before joining the CRCA. In Canada, he has been involved in functional services such as design for subdivision development projects.

Abdullah is married to Nawshin Rumman, also a civil engineer who earned a Master's in Civil Engineering degree from Ryerson University in 2005. They have one son, Tameem, who is two and one-half years old.

Nicole Irvine, Source Water Protection Technician:

Nicole works with the source water team to identify and assess threats and issues to the quality and quantity of drinking water sources in the Cataraqui Region. She is replacing Sheri Burke.

Conducting research of previous reports and studies, field surveying and interviews with members of municipalities, she is involved in the collection process to create a realistic representation of current conditions. A database and report (including a series of maps) will be produced to summarize and evaluate potential hazards and known issues to drinking water sources. This will be one part of the source water protection plan.

Nicole says she sees source water protection as a worthy goal.

She earned her BSc. in zoology and evolution from the University of Western Ontario and hopes to continue to complete a master's degree.

After putting herself through university, Nicole left a career as an academic administrator to pursue her passion for environmental science.

"I am very pleased to hold (and learn) through my new position here at CRCA,"

she says.

Titia Praamsma, Hydrogeologist:

Also joining the source water protection team is Hydrogeologist, Titia Praamsma.

She will be coordinating a review of existing hydrogeology information across the watershed. Titia will also be conducting a scoped ground-water study of the Frontenac Islands, and a water table elevation exercise across eastern Ontario.

Titia recently finished her Master's Degree in Civil Engineering at Queen's University, with plans to continue on at Queen's to start her PhD in the spring of 2007. She received her undergraduate degree in Environmental Hydrogeology from the University of Waterloo in 2001, and then worked as a consultant in Ottawa for two years.



Gordon Bell



Abdullah Hossain



Nicole Irvine



Titia Praamsma

CRCA Employees Join Annual Pitch-In Event

Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) employees were among an estimated 15,000 people throughout the Greater Kingston area who participated in the annual Pitch-In event on April 28.

Pitch-In happens annually and volunteers scour roadsides and parks picking up trash.

Thirteen conservation authority employees worked their way south along Perth Road (Division Street) north of Highway 401, collecting trash and recyclables. After two hours of back-breaking labour, they were treated to a barbecue by event organizers.



Holly Evans bags trash collected from the ditch by Perth Road.



Luke Eades displays a functional gasoline container recovered from a ditch.



Fall is a fantastic time to visit our conservation areas! Cycle the Cataraqi Trail. Picnic at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. Go on a nature hike at Parrott's Bay or Gould Lake Conservation Areas. See the swans at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Or take in a great fall program at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area. Visit our web site at www.cataraquiregion.on.ca to find the conservation area closest to you.

Entry Fees

Gould Lake and Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Areas have a daily entry fee. The fee is:

- \$4.00 per person for adults and children over 12
- \$2.00 per person for children 12 and under
- maximum fee of \$10.00 per car.
- Annual passes are available for \$60.00 per year and provide unlimited access to both of these conservation areas.

Donation boxes are located at our other conservation areas and at our boat ramps. Your donations help to maintain these facilities, so please make a contribution each time you visit.

Hours of Operation

Conservation Areas

- 7:30 a.m. to dusk daily

Little Cataraqi Creek Outdoor Centre

- 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday
- 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Sundays and holiday Mondays
- Closed Saturdays during the fall

Cataraqi Trail

Cataraqi Trail Bike and Hike

Sunday September 24

- 47 km cycle — 9:30 a.m. — Sydenham to Camden East
- 32 km cycle — 10:30 a.m.



- Sydenham to Yarker
- 18 km cycle — 11:00 a.m. — Harrowsmith to Yarker
- 9 km hike (one way) — 10:00 a.m. — Harrowsmith to Yarker

Cycle or hike and raise money for the Cataraqi Trail. Choose from one of three bicycle trips or one hike. Pledge forms are available at the CRCA office, on the CRCA website and on the Cataraqi Trail website.

Collect \$25.00 or more in pledges and you will receive a free lunch coupon and a ticket for a prize draw. Lunch will be available at the Lennox and Addington Ridge Runners Snowmobile club building off Cutler Road in Yarker. Washrooms are also located here.

For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext.304 and leave a message with your name and address. Or visit the Cataraqi Trail website www.rideau-info.com/cattrail/. You can also register at the start of the ride/hike.

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Mac Johnson Wildlife Festival

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area - Brockville
Saturday, October 14
(11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

Admission is \$5 per car.

Enjoy a celebration of fall wildlife and the 10th anniversary of the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. We're featuring activities for children and adults, woodcarving demonstrations and wildlife displays. Try out a canoe or kayak courtesy of the CRCA. Bring a picnic lunch or buy some treats at the Friends' barbecue and bake sale. The winners of the Friends' Photo Contest will also be announced today. Try geocaching or see the fall colours from a tractor-drawn wagon ride. All the proceeds from today help to support Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Lemoine Point Conservation Area

Brown Bag Seniors' Program Late Fall at Lemoine Point

Thursday, November 16
(10:30 a.m.)

Meet at the north parking lot, Lemoine Point Conservation Area (off Coverdale) for a brisk walk before winter comes. Dress for the weather, bring water. For a change, let's pick an area restaurant for lunch.



Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area

Snake Man

Sunday, October 1 (2:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.)
Matt Ellerbeck is back by popular demand to share his love of snakes. Mr. Ellerbeck will be bringing a live snake for families to touch and learn to feel comfortable around them. He is passionate about educating people on how to live harmoniously with all wildlife.



Fall Harvest Celebration

Sunday, October 8 and Monday, October 9
(1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

Come and celebrate the Thanksgiving weekend at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area.

Join us for a wagon

ride (weather permitting) and guided fall colour tours back in the sugar bush. Enjoy the talents of a local balloon artist, musician, jugglers and face painter. Go on a self guided nature scavenger hunt. Grab a snack at our canteen or buy some local produce at the food stand.



Monarch Magic

Sunday, October 15 (2:00 p.m.)

Anne Powers will share with you the magic of Monarch Butterflies through her experiences in Mexico where she visited their wintering sites in February 2006. Come out and learn all about Monarchs through hands on activities and her slide presentation. Begin planning your butterfly garden for next spring after this event. Families are welcome.



Brown Bag Seniors' Program Fall Colours Walk

Thursday, October 19 (10:30 a.m.)

Meet at the Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area for a fall colour walk on the trails. Dress for the weather. Bring cameras, lunch and water.

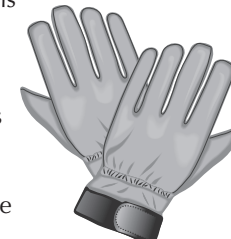


Volunteer for Nature — Open House Fall Trail and Garden Clean-up

Saturday, October 21 (9:00 a.m.)
Rain date: Sunday, October 22 (9:00 a.m.)

Free Admission

Come to the Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area and volunteer for nature by helping the Friends of Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area prepare the trails and butterfly gardens for winter. Bring work gloves, safety glasses, pruning shears, garden tools and water bottles, labelled with your name on it. We have extra if you need to borrow tools.



Halloween Haunted Hike

Saturday, October 28

5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Pumpkin Carving
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Campfire and Haunted Hike
The first 50 cars will get one free pumpkin per car to carve here. Additional pumpkins can be purchased at the Outdoor Centre. Please bring your own carving tools.



After your pumpkins are carved, join us for an early evening campfire and haunted hike from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The campfire is the starting point for our haunted hike. The haunted hike follows the service road to Trail 5, crosses the wobbly wooden bridge and ends at the Outdoor Centre. Activities are geared to younger children, but all ages are welcome. Be sure to come dressed in a costume!

The Real Bat Man

Sunday, October 29 (2:00 p.m.)

Bats are cool! Find out why as bat expert Matt Saunders introduces you to their fascinating world. Seating is limited, so be sure to come early! Bring your hammers and buy a bat house kit to build here or to take home.



Forever Green

Saturday, November 18 (6:30 p.m.)

Royal Military College — Senior Staff Mess

\$75 per person (tax receipt for a portion of the ticket price)



Raise funds and have fun at the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation's annual fundraising gala. Browse auction items to the soothing sounds of classical guitar music. Pick up some great items at the live auction and silent auction. Meet old friends and make some new ones. Proceeds will help support the CRCA's conservation education and land acquisition programs. For tickets and information, please call (613) 546-4228 ext. 221.

Nature Explorers P.A. Day Program

Friday, November 24
(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Ages 6 to 11

\$30 per child

Bring your children to Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area for an action-packed day of outdoor and indoor adventures that includes games, crafts and stories. Learn about wildlife, conservation and the environment.



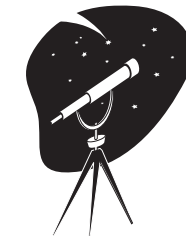
Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program ends at 4:30 p.m. Bring

a lunch, snacks, drinking water and extra clothes. Cost is \$30.00 per child and you must pre-register. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

Astronomy & Telescopes

Saturday, November 25
(7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.)

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada-Kingston Centre (www.rasc.ca/kingston) presents "Bring Your Telescope and Learn Workshop". Knowledgeable amateur astronomers will be on hand to help you learn how to use, maintain and observe with your telescope. Enjoy hours of fun looking at the universe.



Ski Waxing Clinic

Sunday, December 3 (2:00 p.m.)

Winter is almost here so get your skis ready for winter with the Canadian Ski Patrol.

Learn all about waxing techniques for different types of snow conditions. Bring your skis and be prepared for the first snow.



Christmas Coffee House

Sunday, December 10
(2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

Celebrate the Christmas season at our Christmas Coffee House, you can be part of the entertainment or be part of the audience. Everyone is welcome to share their musical talents or just enjoy a hot drink and some festive music.



Brown Bag Seniors' Program Christmas Potluck

Thursday, December 14
(10:30 a.m.)

Meet at the Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area on Division Street for a short winter's walk and to feed the chickadees. It's time for an early Christmas celebration so bring something to share for a potluck and enjoy lunch at the Outdoor Centre. Dress for the weather, bring water to drink. Bon appetit to all and Happy Holidays.



Christmas Party for the Birds

Sunday, December 17
(2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

Come out with your family and make a Christmas craft to decorate the trees outside and to help feed the birds at the same time. Materials used in the crafts may contain nuts. We will also be making seed mosaics for our feathered friends with Tracy Riley. They are lovely in a winter garden. If you have a small piece of wood you would like to make your mosaic on, please bring it along.



November Wellness Series

Beat the November blahs and join us for our Sunday afternoon wellness series or our Thursday night Salsa dance classes. All sessions are for beginners. Try tai chi, yoga, drumming and meditation. Or, join us for Thursday night Salsa classes. You must pre-register for Salsa.

Sizzling Salsa Dance Lessons

Thursday, November 2, 9, 16 and 23
(7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. for four sessions)

Ay caramba! It's our sizzling salsa dance lessons back by popular demand. Dust off your dancing shoes and sign up for four evenings of salsa with our Peruvian dance instructors, Natalia and Fernando.

Learn to Meditate

Sunday, November 26 (2:00 p.m.)
This workshop by the Kuluta Buddhist Centre in Kingston is suitable for people 12 years old and up. You will be introduced to basic meditation techniques that will help focus your mind and relax your body. We will guide you through a group meditation session, discuss why meditation is important, and give you tips on how to use your meditation practice to benefit your daily life.

Tai Chi

Sunday, November 5 (2:00 to 4:00 p.m.)

The Taoist Tai Chi Society is offering an introduction to the first 17 moves of the 108 move set at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area. Please come and get involved and learn some relaxing moves.

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Natural Heritage Study Will Benefit the Environment

A comprehensive natural heritage study, conducted by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA), will help the City of Kingston and Loyalist Township plan for the future and protect the environment today.

Since early 2005, the CRCA has been working on the Central Cataraqui Regional Natural Heritage Study with the City of Kingston and Loyalist Township. The study identifies:

- a system of natural features and areas such as woodlands, wetlands and significant wildlife areas; and
- recommendations to maintain these natural features.

"The planning-related recom-

mendations will be used to update the Loyalist Township official plan and zoning bylaw," explains CRCA Ecological Planner Christine Woods. "The recommendations will be incorporated into the new city official plan policies while the CRCA will use the data to augment our stewardship and forestry programs."

The study was completed by the CRCA acting as a consultant for the municipalities. Study recommendations, when incorporated into municipal planning documents, will generate consideration of natural features when planning decisions are made.

"Residents of both municipi-

palities will benefit because more consideration will be given to preserving natural features," says Ms. Woods. "This will be reflected in the ability to enjoy and appreciate these natural features."

Ms. Woods and CRCA Biologist Tom Beaubiah conducted the study. The extensive mapping required was done by CRCA Geometrics Technician Travis York.

Ms. Woods says she enjoyed working on the multi-year study.

"I learned a lot about natural heritage in general and our region in particular," she says.



From the left, CRCA employees Tom Beaubiah, Christine Woods and Travis York conducted public consultation meetings this past spring to get feedback about the natural heritage study.



In addition to two accessible trails, Lemoine Point Conservation Area features accessible washrooms and two picnic areas.

New Trail, New Cycle Policy at Lemoine Point

A second accessibility trail has been completed at Lemoine Point Conservation Area and is already in use.

"The accessibility trails are about 99 per cent finished at both the north and the south end of the property," says Forestry Technician Rick Knapton of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority that owns the property.

The north end trail requires minor work to fix an erosion problem where it parallels Collins Bay, says Mr. Knapton. This trail opened last summer. The new, south end trail was completed this year.

Both trails are sufficiently wide and adequately surfaced to accom-

modate wheelchairs. And there are new gates at the trailheads.

"These are designed to allow walkers and the widest types of wheelchairs through," explains Mr. Knapton.

Turning to cycling, he says the CRCA established a new policy on bicycles for the Lemoine Point Conservation Area.

"We are restricting bicycle access to the main service roads on the property," he explains. "This is because there was too much conflict on trails too narrow or too rough for both cyclists and walkers."

The new policy will eventually be reflected through new signage.

"We hope that people will understand our reasons for doing this, it's to keep the property safe for all users," he adds.

"We plan to install bike racks because we still want cyclists to park their bicycles and lock them and continue on a walk through the property," says Mr. Knapton.

Peter Milliken Opens Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery

The Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery is a cost-effective example of volunteerism for the public good, according to Frontenac and the Islands Member of Parliament Peter Milliken.

"This nursery operation may be unique because it is run entirely by volunteers," he said at the nursery's official opening on September 7. "I know of no other operation blending localized seed collection, nursery growing and volunteers operating the facility."

The nursery is the creation of a sub-committee of the Friends of Lemoine Point, and is owned by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA). The nursery exists to provide native reforestation materials for the CRCA and its conservation partners.

"This nursery is also good science: local, native plant materials adapt to local growing conditions over time," Mr. Milliken noted. "Genetically, they are best suited to local conditions; their seedlings are more successful in contributing to, and sustaining, biodiversity."

The nursery sub-committee volunteers, fewer than a dozen retirees, invested 2,200 hours of labour between April and November 2005. Statistics Canada says the average Canadian wage for natural and applied science and related occupations is \$23.07 per hour; so their collective contribution may be valued at a staggering \$50,754, Mr. Milliken noted.

These volunteers raised more than \$37,000 to build the nursery. They are: Peter Butler, Larry McCurdy, Myles McCabe, Jerry Zabel, Millie Belyea, Barry Robertson, Lou Mullin, Jane Murphy, Darlene Cullimore and Dave McGill. CRCA Forestry

Technician Rick Knapton also is a sub-committee member and link to the conservation authority.

Among the dignitaries joining Mr. Milliken to speak were: Gerry Mulder of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; John Conley, CRCA Chair; Floyd Patterson, vice chair of the CRCA's Lemoine Point Advisory Committee; President John Diemer of the Friends of Lemoine Point; and General Manager Steve Knechtel of the CRCA.

Among the invited guests were representatives of major donors to the project including: TD Canada Trust; City of Kingston Healthy Community Fund; Society for Conservation Biology, Kingston Chapter; Community Foundation of Greater Kingston; Friends of Lemoine Point; CRCA Potted Trees Program; Lennox and Addington Stewardship Council; Frontenac County Stewardship Council; Native Plant Nursery Committee; Lennox Fencing; Atkinson Home Building Centres; Vanden Bussche Irrigation Ltd.; Frontenac Institution; and Mulrooney Trucking Ltd.



Jane Murphy of the Friends of Lemoine Point gives Anthony Agostino of CKWS-TV a guided tour of the Native Plant Nursery. The interview and tour were featured on a segment of Agostino's Newswatch@5:30.



A New Look for the CRCA – Coming Soon to a Conservation Area, Boat Ramp and Dam Near You

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) is replacing property identification and regulatory signage with a contemporary design on new material.

The CRCA has installed new property and regulatory signage at Kingston's Marshlands Conservation Area. Next, site identification signage at Brockville's Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and Gould Lake Conservation Area were replaced. New regulatory signs were also included at Gould Lake.

These new signs are digitally printed on an aluminum composite material. Each sign is protected by a sheet of Lexan and is built into a timber frame. This same design will be used for CRCA

boat ramp signage as it is replaced, as resources permit.

The new signs feature bold, black lettering on a wood grain background symbolizing the natural resource focus of the conservation authority.

The CRCA owns several conservation areas; eventually each will have new identification signage. They are: Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, Kingston; Lemoine Point Conservation Area, Kingston; Lyn Valley Conservation Area, near Brockville; Parrott's Bay Conservation Area, between Amherstview and Bath and those mentioned above.

The same design has been incorporated for new dam identification signs.

The CRCA owns and operates seven dams within its jurisdiction and six of them will receive new site identification signs over the fall and winter. These are: Fred Grant Dam, Little Cataraqui Creek Dam, Marsh Bridge Dam, Millhaven Dam, Sydenham Dam and Temperance Lake Dam. A seventh dam, Brockville's Broome-Runciman, has a relatively new sign that will be replaced when and as required.

Further, another 48 warning signs will be installed at CRCA dams. These reflect various warnings using a combination of wording and pictographs that communicate specific risks.



The warning sign is typical of the style used on CRCA dams. Pictographs are used to convey specific threats.

This dam identification sign is typical of the six to be erected on CRCA dams throughout its jurisdiction.



Aliens Also Invade Waterways

By now we've all heard of the zebra mussel and how it's invaded our waterways. There are lots of other plants and animals that are alien invaders and they have also taken up residence in our lakes, rivers and streams. Where do they all come from?

We know that some invasive species, like the zebra mussel, have been introduced to the Great Lakes through foreign ships. From there they are spread into inland lakes and rivers mainly through recreational boating. However, other potential sources of invaders are aquariums and water gardens.

Most of us don't think much about proper disposal of plants and animals from our water gardens or aquariums, but these could potentially become the alien invaders of the future.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada are trying to determine how much of a potential problem exists. They are working on the following:

- compiling a list of the aquatic plants and animals in the Canadian trade
- determining the ability of these species to survive in the wild if released
- determining the handling and disposal practices of the average Canadian through an online survey.

To take the online survey for water gardens go to: www.surveymonkey.com/water_garden_survey. The online survey for aquariums is available at: www.surveymonkey.com/aquarium_survey. Links to these surveys are also available on the CRCA website (www.cataraquiregion.on.ca).

For more information about invasive species, visit www.invasivespecies.com.

Invaders Raise Concern at Lemoine Point Conservation Area

The Friends of Lemoine Point continue their ongoing effort to limit the spread of two invasive plant species, dog-strangling vine and garlic mustard.

These are aggressive and difficult to control although the Friends have accepted the challenge. Jane Murphy is one of those leading the charge and she provided the information for this article.

Dog-strangling vine, *Vincetoxicum Nigrum* syn *Cynanchum Nigrum* or black swallow-wort is found in abundance in this area. This plant is native to western Europe but appeared in Canada about 1889. It has become a problem here in the past 30 years. It belongs to the milkweed family and can be recognized in fall by milkweed-like seed pods.

Dog-strangling vine forms dense colonies, twining around other plants, out-competing native plants for water and nutrients. It can affect grassland plants on which certain birds depend for nesting. It has no natural predators and is known to devastate alvars.

First year plants can be pulled but you must remove the entire root; it can regenerate from a remnant. Cut off the seed pods before they are ripe and release their seeds then dispose of the pods by burning them, or bagging them for garbage pickup.

Second year plants are killed by cutting to the base and painting the cut with herbicide. You must treat the plant for two or three years to eliminate new seedlings. Dig up the crown and destroy it.

Dog-strangling vine is not limited to Lemoine Point. It also grows along the service road to the dam at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

The other significant invader is *Alliaria Petiolata* or garlic mustard, a European invader in Canada since 1879. It out-competes native plants and tends to replace spring ephemerals.

In its first year, it forms a rosette; the stalk and flowers appear in the second year. It's a biennial, but because an infestation has plants in three growth stages, there will be flower and seed production every year.

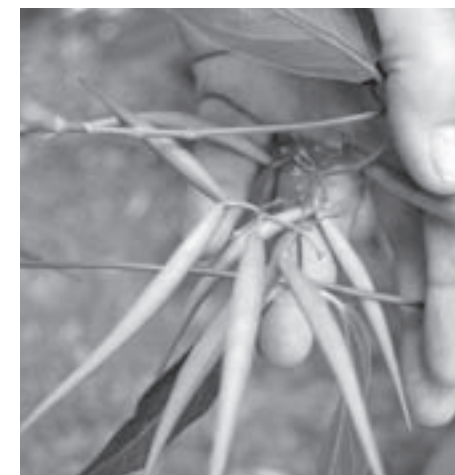
Its leaves emit a powerful garlic smell when crushed. Its seed banks hold three to seven years' worth of seeds so eradication will take at least that long. Garlic mustard, like dog-strangling vine, also has no natural predators. Its seeds are dispersed by animals and humans. Unfortunately it is a pretty plant and has been given a place in some local gardens.

Control of garlic mustard is aimed at preventing seeds from dispersing. Small plants can be cut close to the ground or pulled. Pulling has the unfortunate effect of disturbing the soil which may make it easier for seeds to germinate, but cutting is harder for the average person to do. Glyphosate is effective against garlic mustard. In some localities, controlled burns are used to destroy the plants and their seed-banks.

A word of caution about these invaders: don't compost the plants. Burn them

or dispose of them in the garbage. Most compost piles will not be hot enough to destroy the seeds. Controlling both species is a long-term project and requires many hours of effort.

Ms. Murphy reports there are several locations at Lemoine Point where garlic mustard had replaced wildflowers. After four years of aggressive control efforts, the wildflowers have returned. However, she adds that many areas remain infested and more work needs to be done.



Close-up of dog-strangling vine.



Wilton Restoration Project Seeks Landowner Participation

Wilton Creek from the air.

Scenic Wilton Creek meanders from Harrowsmith to Hay Bay. Holly Evans says she hopes those who live along its banks will support plans to improve the creek's health.

"My main goal is to increase the buffered area on either side of the stream through planting," says this environmental technician for the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA).

Project benefits are to improve water quality and to encourage residents to value the stream's natural aspects, she says. The first step is preparing a stewardship plan unique to each participating property.

"We'll look at the special features of your property and help you establish objectives," she explains. "I have already connected with a number of landowners through the stewardship planning process."

She collaborates with the Frontenac Stewardship Council and the Lennox and Addington Stewardship Council represented by Bret Colman and Steve Pitt respectively.

Stewardship involves planning as well as planting.

"We helped landowners by providing free seedlings," says Ms. Evans.

She tells of one property owner who intends to invite school groups to his property.

"He would like to have someone from the conservation authority there to teach the kids about stream health, what makes a healthy stream," she adds.

She calls this the Wilton Restoration Project and it has many facets. At Hay Bay, where Wilton Creek empties, she says she is planning shoreline restoration work at the CRCA boat ramp. This will include a demonstration project about erosion control and interpretive signage designed to inform people about good shoreline stewardship.

If you live along Wilton Creek and would like to learn more about this project, call Ms. Evans at (613)546-4228 ext. 244



CRCA Environmental Technician
Holly Evans.

Up Close and Personal With Geese at Little Cataraqui Creek

Early in July, Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area's resident flock of Canada geese are flightless because of a seasonal feather moult. That's why the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) chose to round up the 80-odd geese and band them.

CWS staff were assisted by Rick Robb of Ducks Unlimited and John Williamson of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

Canoes were used to gently herd the flightless geese into a narrow bay. CWS staff, wearing chest waders, entered the water and continued herding the birds to shore.

Meanwhile, an enclosure constructed from poles and netting, was erected near the shore. The birds were herded from the water and guided into the open side of the enclosure which then was closed.

Each goose was examined to determine its sex then banded and released.



John Williamson, right, of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Canadian Wildlife Service waterfowl biologist Jack Hughes, left, collaborate to band a honker.

Snakes are in Trouble Around the World

By Matt Ellerbeck (The Snake Man)



Garter Snakes are a common snake found all across Canada from the east coast to the west coast.

Snakes are in trouble. Over 60 species of snakes are now listed on the World Conservation Union's red list of threatened species, and all these snakes could be facing global extinction. This is not the whole of it though, there are still many more threatened and endangered snakes all over the world, and certain snakes are already thought to be extinct.

In Canada things are not much better. There are now 19 snakes listed as a Species at Risk under the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. This is well over half of all the snake species in Canada! Two of these snakes are now extinct in Canada (extirpated) and more of these snakes are also in trouble.

There are a few main contributing factors to snakes becoming endangered. The biggest factor to snakes is the loss of natural habitat. Many areas that were once suitable for snakes are now heavily settled by people, and these areas are densely populated with buildings, developments, and highways. Even cottage country habitats are being affected by lake-shore cottage development, boat houses, and the degradation of wetlands and shorelines.

Habitat loss is also a huge problem for snakes that live in climates that experience cold winters. In the winter snakes hibernate in dens known as hibernacula. When these dens are destroyed through construction or development the snakes are left without a winter shelter and may freeze to death and die. If this doesn't happen the snake may take up refuge in a basement, infiltrating through a broken window or cracked foundation. This once again puts the snake in danger of coming in contact with people, and thus setting themselves up to be needlessly killed! Almost all surprise encounters between snakes and humans end with the snakes dying.

This is another contributing factor to snakes becoming endangered, direct persecution, due to fear and ignorance. I cannot tell you how many times people have come up to me and told me how they have killed a snake that they have seen in their yard.

Many people who see snakes on the road (where they go to soak up heat) will purposely swerve to run the snakes over. In Australia a study found 109 dead snakes on a 9,000 km stretch of road. It is estimated the tens of thousands of snakes die on the road every year worldwide.

So why are people killing snakes? The main reason is probably fear. Many people simply do not like snakes and associate them with being evil or dangerous. This is simply not true! There are close to 3,000 kinds of snakes in the world and only around 400

are equipped with toxic venom which can be potentially dangerous to people. The fact is though most snakes (including venomous ones) are very secretive and try to avoid people.

Snakes have venom as a way to subdue their prey and as part of their natural digestive process (snakes don't chew their food, so the venom breaks the food down). Their venom can be used for defense as a secondary function. Proof of this is many people that are bitten by venomous snakes receive dry bites (a bite from a venomous snake in which no venom has been injected. Most snake bites that happen to people, happen when someone is trying to capture or kill the snake, and the snake is merely defending itself. Snakes do not purposely go out of their way to harm humans. The same cannot be said about us!

The final factor contributing to the death of snakes is money. Hundreds of thousands of snakes are killed every year for their skin and for snake products. Many more snakes are captured for the pet trade, including critically endangered snakes like the San Francisco Garter Snake.

People who want to buy pet snakes should make sure their pet was bred in captivity. Many of these pet snakes ultimately end up dead. Over 60,000 Ball Pythons (one of the most popular snakes kept as pets) die in the US every year due to improper care from their owners.

When you combine all of the above factors, it makes for an astounding number of snakes killed either directly or indirectly by humans. This is in sharp contrast to the good things snakes do for us.

The so called scary venomous snakes are helping save the lives of millions of people every year.

Snake venom is being used in the medical field to treat all sorts of ailments like heart and stroke disease, cancer, blood clots, and more.

Snakes help control rodent populations. Without snakes, rodents would run rampant, spreading disease, destroying crops, and affecting health and food industries.

Despite all they do for us, we as people go out of our way to kill snakes, and most people that are harming snakes have never even had a bad experience with one! We must all do our part to educate others about the good things snakes do, as snakes do not have many supports, so everyone counts in snake conservation. Together we can make a difference for nature's most misunderstood creature.

To find out how you can help snakes go to <http://www.savethesnakes101.tk>



Foundation News

As summer quietly loses steam and we drift into the crispness of fall, the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation celebrates recent accomplishments and looks forward to our key fundraising event of the year.



Lynne Kenny, Foundation President, chairs the annual general meeting held in June 2006.

Gala Fundraiser Forever Green

The **Forever Green** gala evening is scheduled for **Saturday, November 18, 2006**. This key fundraising dinner and silent/live auction will take place at the Staff Officers' Mess, Royal Military College. Funds attracted through sponsorships and attendance at **Forever Green** help the Cataraqi Region Conservation Authority to acquire environmentally significant land, and educate the public, especially school children, about the importance of the environment.

Invitations to the **Forever Green** gala evening go to a broad spectrum of the Kingston community, including individuals and local businesses. Through this gala evening, the Foundation aims to raise a significant sum for CRCA land acquisition and education programs.

Foundation Names New Board

A board of directors guides the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation. We thank our retiring board members for their dedicated service to the Foundation. Retiring board members include Don Beckett, Harry Cleghorn, Pamela Dodd, and Susan Miklas.

A new board was elected at the Foundation's annual general meeting. New members of the Foundation board include Dr. Michael Bell, Christine Cannon, Diane Bradley-Smart, and Bill Warwick. This year the executive includes Lynne Kenny, president, Dr. John Morse, vice president, Jean Churchill-Wilson, treasurer, and Barbara Bradfield, secretary.

AGM Tells us Where the Money Went

Over the past year, the Foundation raised funds for several critical activities:

- \$5,500 toward purchase of the Cowan property near the Bayview wetland;
- \$1,521 toward land transaction fees for this acquisition;
- eight bursaries for children to attend summer camps at the Little Cataraqi Creek and Gould Lake Conservation Areas.

The Foundation celebrated these successes at a June 6, 2006 annual general meeting featuring musical entertainment from Susan LeBaron on flute and Judy Wolfe Labbe on clarinet.

Lynne Kenny, the Foundation president, identified a goal of raising an additional \$10,000 toward completing the purchase of the Bayview wetland. Lynne proudly announced that the Foundation raised a record amount at the 2005 gala evening, with net profit of \$30,000. The bulk of these funds support the CRCA's conservation education programs.

Through the Foundation's *Partners in Outdoor Education* drive for 2005, the CRCA also received \$12,000 toward education programs at the Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area in Kingston and the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville.

The Cataraqi Conservation Foundation thanks everyone for their continuing support.

Exploring the Night Sky

Terence Dickinson led the audience through an exciting evening in early May 2006. Mr. Dickinson, an internationally known astronomy writer, took attendees on a fascinating tour of the spring sky with an exciting talk and slide show.

This Foundation-sponsored event took place at the Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area Outdoor Centre. Mr. Dickinson capped the evening with star watching from the lawn of the Outdoor Centre.

Conservation Award Given

The Cataraqi Conservation Foundation annually recognizes a member of the community or group who has made a real difference in our area through voluntary efforts to promote conservation through education,



Vicki Schmolka (right) receives Conservation Award from Pamela Dodd.

direct action, or advocacy.

This year the Foundation honoured Vicki Schmolka with its Conservation Award. Pamela Dodd chaired the award selection committee and worked together with Harry Cleghorn and Graham Lodge to choose this year's award recipient.

Vicki Schmolka has contributed significantly to the Kingston area community through her tireless advocacy and leadership on environmental issues facing our local area. Vicki is a founding member of the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, and is active in a number of local civic and community organizations.

Partners in Outdoor Education Campaign

We are once again gearing up for our annual *Partners in Outdoor Education* campaign. Every September we ask our members, past donors and people interested in conservation to donate to the CRCA's conservation education programs.

These programs are supported, in part, by fees paid by the students when they attend education programs run by the CRCA at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area or by Environmental Connections at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. However, the fees alone don't cover the costs of the program. The Foundation considers conservation education to be a priority and raises funds every year to assist with these programs.

One of the ways that we do this is through *Partners in Outdoor Education*. You can sponsor one student or a whole class to attend one of the wonderful outdoor education programs. It is often the first opportunity that children have to connect with the natural world and it's a lesson that stays with them forever.

So watch for our *Partners* letter in your mailbox. If you don't receive one and would like to contribute, please call us at (613) 546-4228 ext. 231 and leave a message or visit our website at www.cataraqiregion.on.ca/foundation.

Wanted – Hummingbird Monitors

The Ontario Hummingbird Project is looking for volunteers to participate in a hummingbird monitoring project.

The project was started by Cindy Cartwright in 2005 to learn more about the life cycle of Ontario's hummingbirds. The project is trying to answer a number of questions including:

- When do hummingbirds arrive in the spring?
- When do they leave to go south?
- How many hummingbirds are in Ontario?
- How far north do hummingbirds go?

There are a number of ways that you can participate. It can be as easy as reporting the first hummingbird you see in the spring or as involved as allowing research to take place on your property.

Findings can be reported online, by e-mail or by mail. Details about the project are available on their website: www.ontario-hummingbirds.ca.



Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Celebrate 10 Year Milestone



Fencing along Centennial Road has been a major project of the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

It's hard to believe, but the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area are celebrating

their 10th anniversary this year. They're celebrating this milestone at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Festival on Saturday, October 14.

In addition to a photo contest, which wraps up that day, the Friends are planning games, displays, story tellers, a hawk demonstration and horse-drawn wagon rides. From 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., you can bring the whole family out to Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and enjoy a great day of activities in the outdoors.

One of their objectives is to promote Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and one of the ways that they do this is by hosting special events like the Wildlife Festival. However, the Friends are about more than special events.

Over the past 10 years, they have contributed thousands of hours of volunteer labour at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. If the CRCA needs extra hands and don't have staff available, the Friends organize a work bee by telephone and e-mail. Some of their projects include: fencing along Centennial Road; trail maintenance and brushing; installing signs; and building and structure repairs and maintenance.

They also provide eyes and ears on the property and help to patrol trails, speaking to visitors about all of the great features of the property as well as providing a place to warm up after skating. The Friends are great ambassadors for Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

The Friends are always looking for more

members and volunteers. If you are interested in making a contribution or becoming a member, visit their website at www.cybertap.com/macjohnson/.



Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area special events always include great food served up by smiling volunteers



Procter & Gamble employee Heather Gardiner builds a box for firewood at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Procter & Gamble employee Jason Visser applies stain to a building at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Procter & Gamble Employees Help CRCA

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) welcomed some free extra labour compliments of Brockville's Procter & Gamble employees on June 23.

"The benefit for the conservation authority is that we accomplished a lot of work in a short time period," said CRCA Conservation Areas Supervisor Stefan Foerster.

Almost 30 Procter & Gamble employees worked at a variety of projects at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville. These included: installing fencing; installing a new sign at the north entrance; painting; landscaping and some miscellaneous tasks.

This is the second time P&G's corporate generosity has assigned employees to help the conservation authority. Six years ago, P&G sent 250 employees to the Mac Johnson site and donated \$15,000 toward the cost of project materials. This year, P&G sent 28 employees and donated approximately \$1,300.

"Another benefit for us is that some of the employees were unfamiliar with the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area before they came to work at the site," said Mr. Foerster. "Now, they are regular visitors and bring their families."

The Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area provided lunch for the workers although the cost was underwritten by P&G.



CRCA Completes Parrott's Bay Acquisition



Steve Knechtel, General Manager of the CRCA

acquisitions for this Conservation Area in Loyalist Township.

"There was a plan, about 20 years ago, to acquire all the land fronting on Parrott's Bay," recalls CRCA General Manager Steve Knechtel.

"This most recent acquisition, the Lewis/Bos property, completes the plan to acquire those lands so we've reached a milestone and that's why we're organizing this donor recognition event."

Significant donors include: Loyalist Township, the John M. Parrott Foundation, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation, Kingston

The Parrott's Bay Conservation Area land acquisition is finally complete! The CRCA and partners are planning to recognize donors who made possible key property

Field Naturalists, Lafarge Canada, AES Kingston, Ducks Unlimited, the M. Davies Foundation plus hundreds of other smaller donations.

Mr. Knechtel also notes there have been significant contributions from the Loyalist Chapter of the National Turkey Federation. This organization adopted a trail, is making it accessible and is building a 12 by 20-foot viewing pavilion.

"These property acquisitions represent the best way to protect this unique ecosystem – through public ownership by the CRCA," says Mr. Knechtel.

Parrott's Bay Conservation Area now occupies 117 hectares of land with beautiful waterfront vistas. It fronts on Highway 33, The Loyalist Parkway; its northern boundary is defined by Taylor Kidd Boulevard. It includes another 19 ha of water and five ha of provincially significant wetland.

"In fact, this property is a provincially significant coastal wetland and an area of natural and scientific interest (ANSI)," says Mr. Knechtel. "Parrott's Bay is important because it's home to provincially significant species."

The event's date, probably dur-



A view of Parrott's Bay Conservation Area from Taylor-Kidd Blvd.

ing October's second week, will be announced once a commemorative bronze plaque is cast to honour the memory of the Parrott family that colonized the area.

Work on the final property acquisition was handled by Loyalist Township. The municipality acquired the land then transferred it to the CRCA "so they were very actively involved with the process," says Mr. Knechtel.

The CRCA has five other major conservation areas throughout its jurisdiction.

Invista Makes Donation to Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

Invista, based in Maitland near Brockville, has made a major donation to the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. A cheque presentation will take place during the Mac Johnson Wildlife Festival on Saturday,

October 14.

The funds will be used to replace trail markers, signs and map kiosks at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. It will also be used to purchase new tables and chairs for the Nature Centre,

allowing more flexibility in the use of the facility for school programs and other events.

Thank you Invista! Stay tuned for more details in the Winter 2007 edition of *Cat Tales*.