



CAT TALES

Winter/Spring 2013 Issue

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- Lots of improvements completed and more planned in our conservation areas. Read all about it on pages 8, 9 and 10.
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- Conservation education is an important program for the CRCA. Find out about our fall teacher workshop, our school programs, nature programs and our summer day camp on page 12.
- Looking for things to do this winter and spring? Come outside and play! See pages 6 and 7 for our events calendar.

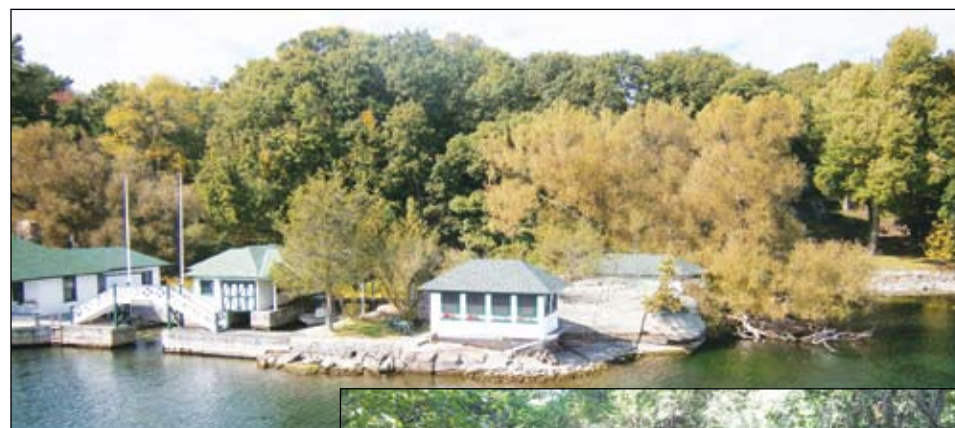
Low water conditions persist in 2012

2012 proved to be a very dry year in the Cataraqui Region watershed. We started off the year with a warmer than average winter with very little snow. Minimal snow cover meant sparse spring runoff into lakes and streams in the spring, which caused below normal water levels. Warm weather and increased evaporation in March and little rain in April further contributed to decreasing water levels.

A Level 1 Low Water Level Condition was declared in May 2012, and a notice was sent to the watershed media asking residents to reduce their water usage by 10 per cent. A Level 1 low water condition is the first of three levels and reflects concern. Level 2 suggests a potentially serious problem. Level 3 indicates a failure of the water supply to meet demand.

A dry summer intensified the conditions and a Level 2 Low Water Level Condition was declared in July 2012. The CRCA requested that residents reduce their water usage by 20 per cent and also sent letters to local Permit to Take Water holders, such as golf courses, encouraging water conservation measures.

During this time, the ecosystem of the watershed showed significant signs of stress due to the dry conditions. Many trees and shrubs



Dry streams and low water levels persisted throughout most of 2012. One of the areas affected by low water levels was the St. Lawrence River. Normal high water levels can be seen along the dock and the shoreline in this photo.



showed droopy leaves while some went into early dormancy. Streams were reduced to shallow pools, and some dried up completely, which caused strain on fish and other aquatic species. The dry conditions also had an impact on the residents of the watershed as many landowners with wells saw a sharp decline in their water supply and boaters had to be careful of shoals that were closer to the surface of lakes and rivers.

The watershed got some relief in September when we saw above average precipitation levels. Most streams and

inland lakes responded with increases in water levels in early fall (though not back to normal levels). This relief was temporary, however, as in November, precipitation levels dropped off, causing lake and stream levels to again fall. According to Environment Canada records for the CRCA area, November was the driest it has been in about 100 years. The long-term forecast for this upcoming winter (December-January-February) is for above normal temperatures and average precipitation so it is possible this cycle may repeat itself next year.

Any residents or business-

es throughout the watershed that experienced difficulties during the dry conditions were asked to call the CRCA so that we were able to track the impacts of the low water conditions. We did receive some calls from residents whose wells went dry over the summer. We also heard from a number of residents concerned with people removing water from streams and lakes. In most cases, these small local users were allowed to take water, though some concerns were passed on to the Ministry of the Environment for follow-up.

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**Cataraqui Region
Conservation Authority**
P.O. Box 160,
Glenburnie, Ontario
K0H 1S0



Creature Feature

The Common Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)

The Common Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) is anything but a common creature. This large rodent, which can grow up to two feet long including its tail, has evolved over time to become a cunning aquatic creature with a number of unique skills. It can hold its breath underwater for 15 minutes, it can chew underwater plants with its mouth closed, and it can swim up to five kilometres per hour thanks to its webbed feet and long rudder-like tail.

Despite its exceptional water talents, it looks just like a very large field mouse. It has a stocky body with a thick coat of reddish-brown fur, with small beady eyes, long whiskers and tiny ears. One difference from the field mouse is it has a thick coat of fur

under its exterior fur that is waterproof. It also has specially evolved teeth that protrude ahead of the cheeks and lips so that the mouth can close behind them.

You can usually spot muskrats in freshwater marshes, swampy areas of lakes, and slow-moving streams; often with growths of bulrushes, cattails, pondweeds, or sedges. The water must be deep enough so that it will not freeze through to the bottom during the winter, but shallow enough to permit growth of aquatic vegetation—between one to two metres.

Muskrats build a house called a lodge, out of aquatic plants, such as cattails. It can be up to eight feet across and five feet high to provide shelter from wind and

waves. A muskrat lodge looks very similar to a beaver lodge. Muskrats will burrow holes in stream or pond banks as entrances to their lodges but at least one entrance will always be above the water line. The muskrat also builds feeding platforms with the same types of materials as the lodge, only smaller. When muskrats eat large numbers of cattails, they open up areas of shallow water. This provides good hiding places and nest sites for water birds, and allows other water plants to grow.

The muskrat, along with the beaver and some other aquatic mammals, is capable of remaining submerged up to 15 minutes if in a relaxed state. Non-aquatic mammals cannot do this because they need a



Photo/Alan D. Wilson, Wikipedia commons

The common muskrat gets its name from the two musk glands on its rear under its tail that it uses to mark its territory.

constant supply of oxygen and must continually exhale carbon dioxide. The muskrat is able to partially overcome this problem by slowing its heart rate and relaxing its muscles when underwater; this reduces the rate at which oxygen is used. Also, it stores a supply of oxygen in its muscles for use during a dive and is less sensitive to high carbon dioxide levels in the blood than are non-aquatic mammals. This ability for extended dives is important for escaping enemies, digging channels and burrows, cutting submerged stems and roots, and travelling long distances under the ice. It can find food during the winter under up to a metre of ice and snow, in frigid water and almost total darkness—a truly a remarkable feat.

The muskrat breeding season starts in late winter and ends in September. A

female muskrat may have up to five litters per year, with up to 10 young in each litter. Baby muskrats are born without fur. After about two weeks, they grow their fur and begin swimming. Muskrats live in large family groups within a territory, which are marked with scent posts, a small pile of leaves and grass blades mixed with body fluids.

The muskrat is a vicious fighter when provoked. It stands its ground fearlessly if an escape route to deep water is not available, and can inflict significant damage on an attacker with its long incisor teeth. In spite of this, it is often preyed upon by many other species. The mink occupies much of the same habitat as muskrats and can be the cause of heavy mortality among juveniles. Mink can dig into muskrat lodges, and can enter lodges through plunge

holes. The snapping turtle and the northern pike also inhabit marshes and prey on the muskrat. When muskrats wander on dry land in search of new habitat, they are vulnerable to members of the dog family, such as wolves and coyotes, as well as by other predators such as badgers, wolverines, fishers, raccoons and lynx.

The muskrat has long been hunted by humans, undoubtedly the major predator of this species. Prior to the colonization of North America by Europeans, it was hunted occasionally for food. With the coming of the early settlers and the introduction of guns and traps, the muskrat was hunted intensively for its fur. This activity has persisted to the present day—muskrat fur is still in demand due to its natural colour and durability.



Provincial stewardship program helped local people with over \$360,000 in upgrades

Over the past five years the CRCA delivered over \$360,000 in provincial stewardship dollars to people in local communities across the Cataraqui Source Protection Area.

The money was used for landowner projects that will help to protect local sources of drinking water. It was provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment as part of the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. The most recent phase of the program ended in December 2012, and no new funding

has been announced at this time.

Participants applied to the CRCA for the funding, and the work was completed on a proactive, voluntary basis. Most of the funds were provided to homeowners. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association delivered some additional funding to the agricultural community.

The program focused on the vulnerable areas around municipal water treatment plants. Projects were completed at Amherst-

view, Bath, Brockville, Gananoque, Kingston Mills, Lansdowne, Mallorytown, Sandhurst Shores and Sydenham.

The provincial government provided up to 80 per cent of the cost of eligible work. Among the types of projects funded were upgrades to septic systems and wells, environmentally-compatible erosion prevention along lake and river shorelines and the replacement of heating oil tanks. Over 60 projects were completed, as outlined in the table below:

	Septic systems	Wells	Oil tanks	Erosion prevention
Number of projects	35	15	13	3
Provincial funding shared (rounded)	\$289,500	\$20,000	\$16,500	\$35,500
Total provincial funding	\$361,500			

The completed projects have helped to ensure that household systems are in good repair, and not harming the source water around them. In some cases this will help landowners comply with existing and anticipated inspection requirements. The Ontario Building Code now requires septic

systems to be inspected every five years in some locations (in portions of Kingston Mills, Lansdowne and Mallorytown). The forthcoming Cataraqui Source Protection Plan is expected to include a requirement for heating oil tank inspections in portions of those same communities. The proposed plan

is available at: www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca/sourceProtectionPlan.html.

The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program has been a good news story for the Cataraqui area. The CRCA will continue to seek opportunities to deliver similar funding programs in the future.



Septic system upgrades were one of the most funded projects under the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. This photo shows a new septic system being installed.

Queen's planning students explore options along the CRCA coastline

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority has nearly 1,000 km of Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River shoreline within its jurisdiction. This includes the shoreline of the Thousand Islands, which actually has about 1,800 islands in the St. Lawrence River.

Rob McRae, Watershed Planning Coordinator for the CRCA, worked closely with a group of second year Queen's students from the School of Urban and Regional Planning over the fall 2012 semester. They have been working

on a project to assess the links between the environment, tourism and the economy.

As part of their project, they held a workshop with local municipal and tourism staff to do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the Great Lakes shoreline. A presentation of their recommendations was held in early December at Queen's. Some of the recommendations included:

- developing a prioritization toolkit for natural and cultural assets

- improving shoreline policies and co-

- ordination among the eight shoreline



Queen's School of Urban and Regional Planning students worked with CRCA Watershed Planning Coordinator Rob McRae (right) on a project to assess the CRCA Great Lakes shoreline. The students are (left to right) David Gundrum, Marika Atfield, Brandon Williams, Mladen Kukic, Angus Robertson, John Stuart and Sahar Aghabozorgafteh.

- municipalities in the CRCA watershed strengthening linkages and networks between organizations, e.g. municipalities and tourism groups
- improving tourism marketing by offering themed packages and special group marketing
- protecting the integrity of natural coastal areas – three suggested areas included Nicholson's Point Woods, Madoma Marsh and Landon's Bay
- promoting lo-

- cal research and development of water resources and green infrastructure technologies
- making sure that existing and future public waterfront areas are accessible to as many people as possible.

The final report will be presented to the CRCA board early in 2013.



Landowner workshops being held for the 50 Million Tree Planting Program

The CRCA will be holding two landowner workshops on the 50 Million Tree Planting program this winter. The workshops will explain to landowners the details of the planting program and how it significantly reduces landowners' costs of large-scale tree planting on their lands by

landowners. Currently, the CRCA is looking for private tree planting sites for spring 2013 and beyond. The landowner workshops will be held at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area Outdoor Centre on February 26, 2013, and in Athens at the

Details about the landowner workshops will also be available on the CRCA website www.cataraqueiregion.on.ca and on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

More about the program
The minimum site requirement is 1 hectare (2.5 acres).

acres). The CRCA plants at a density of 800 seedlings per acre, so 2.5 acres would hold 2,000 seedlings for a total cost to the landowner of \$400.00.

The price is reduced to \$0.15 per tree for sites 2 hectares (5 acres) and up. Five acres would hold 4,000 seedlings for a total landowner cost of \$600.00. The actual cost to provide the program is approximately \$1.50 per tree, so for a five-acre property at 4,000 trees, this large-scale planting would normally cost a landowner \$6,000.00. Costs to the landowner are scheduled to increase in 2014.

Upon site approval by the CRCA, the landowner is responsible for the preparation of the site (generally by mowing the area in the fall previous to the spring tree plant). The landowner also must sign a 15 year contract, agreeing not to remove trees without permission from the CRCA.

The Ontario government has committed to plant 50 million trees by 2025 to help fight climate change with the 50 Million Tree Program. Just this past spring 2012, over 200,000 trees were planted in the Cataraqui watershed.

The program provides the landowner with an initial site visit and soil evaluation, seedling costs, planting, pre or post-planting tending, a small sign on site, and first, second, and five-year assessments. Costs to landowners are \$0.20 per tree for sites between 1 hectare (2.5 acres) and 2 hectares (5



Community tree plantings, such as this one at Lemoine Point Conservation Area, are also part of the 50 Million Tree Program. Large-scale plantings for private landowners with 1 hectare or more of land are usually planted by machine, not by hand.

providing a subsidy. The CRCA, which is the planting agency for the Cataraqui watershed, works directly with landowners to arrange and complete the plantings. This is also an incentive for

Joshua Bates Centre on February 28, 2013. If you are interested in the tree planting program or would like to attend a workshop, please call Rick Knapton at (613) 389-3651, or e-mail at rknapton@cataraquieregion.on.ca. There is still time to get in on the 2013 planting year, if you call soon.



Low water conditions persist in 2012

(Continued from Page 1)
Here's a few more details about precipitation and the effects on our water levels in 2012. As *Cat Tales* goes to press, December 2012 precipitation data weren't yet available.

Winter 2011-2012 was warmer than average with precipitation in the form of rain instead of snow. This meant that there was very little spring run-off due to the lack of snow.

Unusually warm weather in March increased evaporation of what little water was available. This was followed by a drier than usual

April. May and June had near average precipitation while July and August were well below average. The rain that did fall came in only a few major rain events. Warm temperatures also increased evaporation from streams, rivers and lakes. In September there was above average precipitation with October being below average. November was the driest it has been in about 100 years. Here are the precipitation details rounded to the nearest 5 mm.

Month (2012)	Actual Precipitation (mm)	Normal Average Precipitation (mm)
January	90	75
February	30	65
March	45	70
April	60	80
May	70	80
June	80	80
July	45	70
August	50	80
September	115	90
October	65	85
November	15	95

What is the Permit to Take Water Program?

In Ontario, any individual or organization that takes more than 50,000 litres of water a day from a lake, river, stream or groundwater source, must obtain a Permit to Take Water (PTTW) from the Ministry of the Environment (with a few exceptions). These permits contribute to the conservation, protection, sus-

tainable management of Ontario's water.

50,000 litres is a large volume of water (a typical water-hauling tanker truck, is in the range of 10,000 litres) and most people wouldn't use that amount of water in a month, let alone a day.

The ministry evaluates each water-taking proposal to ensure it

meets the principles of the PTTW program including protecting the natural ecosystem, fair sharing and conservation of water, and preventing inappropriate interference with other water users.

Applicants must also outline the water conservation measures and practices that they have undertaken, or

will be undertaking, for the duration of the permit. By using water more efficiently, every permit holder helps ensure a sustainable supply of water for the future.

Usually, a PTTW is needed for larger commercial users, such as golf courses, agricultural operations (crop irrigation, livestock watering

storage), and municipal water production. In the Cataraqui watershed, most of the permits are for golf courses, municipal water systems, or dewatering at quarries/construction sites. There are very few agricultural PTTW, as most users don't withdraw enough water to require a permit or they have direct live-

stock watering.

Large industrial users also have PTTW. In the Cataraqui watershed most take water from Lake Ontario, which is of minimal impact to water in streams, inland lakes, and groundwater.

For more information on PTTW, please see the Ministry of Environment's website at www.ene.gov.on.ca.

Some new additions to the CRCA

The CRCA is pleased to welcome Amanda Mallory to the team, as GIS Technician, replacing Erin Oogarah on maternity leave. Amanda has a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in Human Geography from Brock University as well as a GIS-Geospatial Management post graduate certificate from Niagara College. Amanda's past GIS work experience includes the completion of a project with the City of Hamilton which modelled the creation of natural areas and the process of naturalization within maintained city parkland.

Amanda's role at the CRCA is to assist with the compilation, analysis, maintenance and map preparation of data in support of all Conservation Authority

programs. Amanda is also responsible for updating floodplain mapping and evaluating legal inquiries.

Another new face at the CRCA is Tom Brooke, Operations. He is a Bachelor of Science graduate from Trent University and also has a Master of Science degree from Queen's University. Most recently Tom worked as a field biologist for the Ministry of Natural Resources and before that worked as a fire ranger and a trail maintenance technician.

At the CRCA, Tom will be focused on all aspects of maintenance and operations including making the conservation areas safe and enjoyable spaces for the public. His duties will include conservation area maintenance, helping out with public

programs, as well as maintaining and operating dams and water control structures.

Congratulations to Christine Woods, Resource Planner, who left for maternity leave to have her second child in December 2012. We are sure that Christine is enjoying this time to spend with her growing family.

We also congratulate Erin Oogarah, GIS Technician, who gave birth to her first child, baby Alicia in October 2012. We can't wait to meet her little bundle of joy!

We bid adieu to Christie MacIsaac, Environmental Planner this fall as she moved on to join the planning department at the City of Peterborough. We wish her all the best in the future.

Changes to our watershed management operations

The CRCA has introduced some changes to the day-to-day operation of its watershed management program. As always, our goal is to help people and organizations safeguard water resources, conserve fish and wildlife habitat and avoid natural hazards, such as flooding and erosion. Under the leadership of Rob McRae, Watershed Planning Coordinator, our team of professional and technical staff work together to find solutions to the conservation challenges that we face in our watershed.

The most notable change to our operations is the integration of our development review work for property and landowners. Andrew Schmidt, Development Review Manager, now oversees a group of staff that focus on this aspect. They have expertise

and qualifications in biology, ecology, civil engineering, geographic information systems, planning and related disciplines. They work together to comment on environmental planning matters, issue permits for land and property owners, and provide advice on how to work in and around water. To streamline the response to development proposals, the CRCA has assigned a lead staff person to each municipality in the Cataraqui Region, as follows: For planning applications, regulation permits or development inquiries:

- call Andrew Schmidt, Development Review Manager at (613) 546-4228 ext. 244 (Greater Napanee and Loyalist)
- call Michael Dakin, Resource Planner at ext.

228 (Brockville, Elizabethtown-Kitley, Front of Yonge, Gananoque, Kingston, and South Frontenac)

- call Jason Messenger, Resource Planner at ext. 286 (Athens, Leeds and the Thousand Islands, and Rideau Lakes).
- For shoreline and in-water works (e.g. docks, shoreline retaining walls) and inquiries:
- call Tom Beaubiah, Biologist at ext. 240 (all of the above-mentioned areas).

The CRCA also has a toll-free number available for the 613 area code – 1-877-956-CRCA (2722).



Amanda Mallory



Tom Brooke



Christie MacIsaac



Enjoy the great outdoors this winter and spring in one of our conservation areas. Visit our website at www.cataraquiregion.on.ca. There are special winter activities at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville and winter and spring programs and events at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston. We also have spring events at Lemoine Point Conservation Area in Kingston and Gould Lake Conservation Area near Sydenham.

Fees
Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas have a daily entry fee of:

- \$5.50 per person for adults and children over 12
- \$3.00 per person for children 12 and under
- maximum fee of \$14.00 per car.

Annual passes are available for \$80.00 per year and provide entry 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 Cataraqui Creek Outdoor Centre

- 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday
- 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends from January 5 to March 31
- 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends from April 6 to April 28
- Closed Good Friday and Easter Monday
- Closed weekends from May to September except during scheduled programs. Available for room rentals.

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

Take Highway 29 north from Brockville to Tincap, turn east on Debruge Road and drive for 2 km to the main entrance. Enjoy 11 km of hiking and cross-country ski trails, a Nature Centre, picnic facilities and a skating rink.

Saturday Skates
Saturdays in January and February (11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)
The Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and community volunteers will be serving hot chocolate and coffee at the skating shelter on Saturdays in January and February (weather permitting). Come out and enjoy an outing with your family and friends.

Winter Fun Day
Saturday, January 26 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
Enjoy the festivities at our 11th annual Winter Fun Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Enjoy dog sled races by the Mush Larose Association-Training Division, skating on the pond, cross-country skiing, free snowshoeing for children, lunch and refreshments. Admission is just \$5.00 per car.

Family Day Skate
Monday, February 18 (11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)
Join us for a special day of family activities. Bring out your skates and skis and skate on the pond or ski on the cross-country ski trails. The ice slide will be open. You can bring your lunch or buy something at the barbecue hosted by the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Community Clean-up
Saturday, April 20 (10:00 a.m.)
Come out and help give Mac Johnson Wildlife Area a good spring clean-up with a focus on the area along Centennial Road in Brockville. Meet at the canoe launch or the south entrance parking lot on Centennial Road at the map kiosk. Gloves and garbage bags will be provided.

Spring Tree Sale and Tree

Identification Hike
Saturday, May 11 (Tree Sale 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Hike 10:00 a.m.)
Come out and support our annual spring tree sale just in time for Mother's Day. All trees and shrubs are native stock grown at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area nursery. The sale takes place in the Centennial Road (south entrance) parking lot. Jack Henry, former Grenville Stewardship Coordinator, will also lead a tree identification hike. Learn more about the trees that grow in the Wildlife Area and which trees might be suitable for you to plant in your own backyard.

Stargazing
Friday, June 7 (7:00 p.m.)
Come out for a presentation and an evening of stargazing with local Brockville astronomers. Our evening gets underway at the Nature Centre at 7:00 p.m. with a presentation of what you can expect to see in the night sky. Then, weather permitting, we'll head outside to look at the stars and planets including Saturn. Please bring binoculars and portable telescopes if you have them.

Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area

Try out a new winter sport! We have great facilities including 13 km of groomed cross-country ski trails, a natural ice rink, warming huts and an Outdoor Centre with lots of great programs for the whole family. In the early spring, plan a visit to our sugar bush to enjoy the sweet taste of maple syrup. As the snow melts and nature awakens, join us for great spring activities. We're located just north of Highway 401 and Division Street in Kingston.

Winter Activities

Cross-country Ski Lessons
Learn how to ski or improve your technique. Cross-country ski lessons are offered on Saturdays from January 5 to March 2, weather permitting. Register in advance, or on the day of the lesson, at the Outdoor Centre. Cost is

\$18.00 per person. Group lessons are one-hour in length. Lesson times are 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Equipment Rentals
Cross-country skis, skates and snowshoes are available for rent at the Outdoor Centre. Rentals are available from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All rentals must be returned by 4:00 p.m.

Ice Rink Rental
Host your own evening skating party! Rink rental includes access to the warming huts. Call (613) 546-4228 ext. 222 for more information or to make a booking.

Little Ray's Reptile Zoo
Sunday, January 20 (2:00 p.m.)
The wildlife educators from Little Ray's Reptile Zoo will take you on a trip around the world, showing animals from around the globe and in our backyards. Expect to see a variety of animals including snakes, lizards, turtles, tortoises, amphibians and crocodilians. Don't miss this fun and educational opportunity for the whole family. Sponsored by Union Gas.

Snowshoe Demonstration
Saturday, January 26 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)
Snowshoeing is a fun and easy sport with no experience needed. Staff from Kingston's outdoor store Trailhead, will be providing a hands-on demonstration on how to snowshoe. You can also check out some of the equipment that they have available in their store.

Owl Hoot and Coyote Howl
Saturday, January 26 (6:00 p.m.)
Bring your family out on a night walk to learn a bit more about owls and coyotes. We will be hooting for owls and howling for coyotes. We will not see these animals, but if we are lucky, they might call back.

Winter Sports P.A. Day
Friday, February 1 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
Ages 6 to 11
Give your child(ren) an opportunity to have a P.A. Day full of winter adventure

and fun. We'll be cross-country skiing on the trails and snowshoeing through the fields, forests and wetland areas of Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your lunch, snacks, drinks, and warm and extra clothes. The program will run regardless of weather; we have alternate plans for interactive games and activities if there is not enough snow. Cost is \$40.00 per child and includes equipment rentals. You must register in advance. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

Little Cat Classic Ski Loppet (Alternate Date)
Sunday, February 10
This will be our alternate ski loppet date if the weather doesn't cooperate on the original date of Sunday, January 13. See our website for details.

Valentine's Evening Skate
Thursday, February 14 (6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.)
Enjoy a romantic evening skate on Kingston's largest natural ice rink (weather permitting). The rink lights will be on and the fire will be lit in the warming hut. We will also have live and recorded music at the Outdoor Centre where you can warm up and purchase a hot drink and a snack. Skate rentals will also be available at the Outdoor Centre.

Family Day Skate
Monday, February 18 (9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
Bring the family out for a skate on Kingston's largest natural ice skating rink (weather permitting)! We'll have the fire going in the warming hut by the rink or you can drop by the Outdoor Centre for a cup of hot chocolate or coffee. Skate rentals will also be available at the Outdoor Centre.

Moonlight Snowshoe Ramble
Saturday, February 23 (7:00 to 9:00 p.m.)
Join Trailhead staff for an easy trek under the light of a full moon, followed by

a chocolate fondue. Cost is \$30 per person includes guide, park entrance fee, showshoes and fondue treats. Come on out, it's snow much fun!! Register by calling or visiting Trailhead at (613) 546-4757 or 262 Princess Street in Kingston.

Bird Presentation by Wild Ontario
Sunday, February 24 (2:00 p.m.)
Join wildlife educators from Wild Ontario for an interactive presentation and display that includes live, non-releasable birds. Learn about owls, hawks, kestrels, crows and turkey vultures. Sponsored by Union Gas.

Maple Madness

March 9 to 17 (March Break)
March 23 and 24
March 30 and 31 (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
March means maple syrup at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Take a tractor-drawn wagon back to our sugar bush to see how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Enjoy pancakes with real maple syrup and buy some maple syrup or sugar to take home.

The sugar bush is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day of the Maple Madness program. Be sure to check out some of our special activities like puppet shows, sugar bush demonstrations, our annual Bake Sale and Olde Thyme Sugar Bush Chores. Check our schedule below for the times and dates for these activities. You'll want to visit us more than once!

We welcome volunteers for this program. Please visit our website for more information about volunteering.

Puppet Shows
Saturday, March 9 (11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.)
Take in one of our fun puppet shows at the Outdoor Centre. Meet some of our new and favourite puppet friends that share with us the secrets of the sugar bush.

First Nations Presentation
Saturday, March 9 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
Join Paul Carl for an interactive presentation at our First Nations maple syrup display in the sugar bush. Paul will explain how his ancestors harvested and used sweet water in ceremonies to make maple syrup and sugar.

Sugar Bush Demonstrations
Sunday, March 10
Visit our displays in the sugar bush and learn about sweet water. See how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Be sure to visit our new tapping demonstrations from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn how to identify a sugar maple tree, measure it and use a brace and bit hand drill to practice your tapping skills on a log.

Foundation Bake Sale Puppet Shows
Saturday, March 16
Pick up some sweet treats at the annual Foundation Bake Sale at the Outdoor Centre. We have puppet shows at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. See Saturday, March 9 description for more information about our puppet shows.

First Nations Presentation
Saturday, March 16 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
See Saturday, March 9 description for more information.

Sugar Bush Demonstrations
Sunday, March 17
See Sunday, March 10 description for more information.

Puppet Shows
Saturday, March 23
We have puppet shows at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. See Saturday, March 9 for more information.

First Nations Presentation
Saturday, March 23 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
See Saturday, March 9 description for more information.

Sugar Bush Demonstrations
Sunday, March 24
See Sunday, March 10 description for more information.

Olde Thyme Sugar Bush Chores Puppet Shows
Saturday, March 30
Try your hand at some "olde thyme" sugar bush chores today. You can try log sawing, emptying sap buckets and tapping trees. We'll also have taffy-making demonstrations with samples. We have puppet shows at the Outdoor Centre at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. See Saturday March 9 for more information.

First Nations Presentation
Saturday, March 30 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
See Saturday, March 9 description for more information.

Sugar Bush Demonstrations
Sunday, March 31
See Sunday, March 10 description for more information.

The Flying Squirrel - Canada's Least Known Mammal
Sunday, April 7 (2:00 p.m.)
Bring your family to learn all about the secretive Flying Squirrel with Mammologist, Steve Patterson. The presentation includes live music, skits and even an actual gliding demonstration by Scooter, the Flying Squirrel. The presentation is best suited for ages 8 and older. Sponsored by Union Gas.

Save the Salamanders
Sunday, April 14 (2:00 p.m.)
Salamanders are among the most endangered animal groups in the world. Several Ontario salamanders are now listed as Species at Risk. Come out and learn about the conservation and protection of salamanders. This presentation by local expert Matt Ellerbeck includes live salamanders, both local and exotic species.

Stargazing
Saturday, April 20 (7:30 p.m.)
Begin with an energetic 45 minute presentation by acclaimed local outdoor educator Walt Sepic. Topics will include our solar system, galaxies, the universe, comets, shooting stars, asteroids,

eclipses and auroras. This will be followed by a 30 minute outdoor night sky tour with a laser pointer and 8-inch Dobsonian telescope. You can also bring your binoculars and portable telescopes from home.

Enjoy Trail Walking with Urban Poles
Thursdays from April 25 to May 30 (1:00 to 2:00 p.m.)
Take your walking to a new level. Add urban poles and you'll get more fitness, stability, muscle toning and confidence on the trails. Over 6 weeks, you'll master the technique and enjoy great trail walks with less impact on your joints. The fee is \$80 for 6 sessions, \$65 per person for annual pass holders. Poles are provided. For more information or to register contact Kari Galasso at karigalasso@gmail.com or go to www.fittothecore.org.

Watercolour Landscapes and Botanicals
Saturday, April 27 (10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
Join watercolour artist and teacher Marta Scythes for a one-day workshop. This workshop will give participants the opportunity to experience the spring colours while exploring techniques in watercolour painting. The workshop will take place at the Outdoor Centre and on location, weather permitting. Instruction will include several painting techniques, the study of value, composition and atmospheric perspective. You will be encouraged to explore and develop your own creative potential. Advance registration is required by Tuesday, April 16. The registration fee is \$50.00 per person. Registration forms are available at the Outdoor Centre, CRCA Administration Office and on the CRCA website.

Spring Fling P.A. Day Program
Friday, May 24 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
Ages 6 to 11
Give your child(ren) a P.A. Day full of spring adventure and fun. We'll be exploring the fields, forests and marshes of the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Our activities will include searching for salamanders, making friends with frogs, singing with the birds, playing games, and having wonderful experiences in the great outdoors. Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your own snacks, drinks and lunch as well as suitable outdoor

searching and sneaking. Wear running shoes and, if you're really into it, camouflaged clothing!

Frog Night Hike
Friday, May 3 (7:30 p.m.)
Bring everyone in the family out to our annual frog hike. You'll learn about the different frogs that live at Little Cataraqui Creek and go on a short walk to listen for frog calls.

Fly Casting for Beginners
Saturday, May 11 (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
The Kingston and Area Fly Fishing Club is offering a one-day beginners fly casting course. The emphasis will be on casting technique with hands-on instructions. Some time will be spent on related concerns such as equipment, safety, useful knots and other topics associated with fly fishing in the Kingston area. The course is limited to 10 participants so register early. The cost is \$25.50 per person (ages 12 and up), \$20.00 for annual pass holders. Equipment will be provided but you may also bring your own. Bring a lunch and wear weather appropriate clothing. A hat is a good idea. Participants under age 15 must be accompanied by an adult. Advance registration is required. Registration forms are available at the Outdoor Centre, the CRCA Administration Office, on our website or by calling (613) 546-4228 ext. 221.

Explore 20 km of easy to rugged hiking trails and enjoy the crystal clear waters of Gould Lake Conservation Area. You can enjoy a picnic and a swim in the day use area. Rent a canoe or kayak or bring your own to enjoy a paddle on the lake.

Gould Lake Conservation Area

Canoe Workshop
Saturday, May 25 (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)
Join outdoor educator Walt Sepic for an Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association (ORCKA) workshop on canoeing basics. Learn about canoes, lifejackets, PFDs and paddles. You will also learn canoeing skills like carrying, launching, maneuvering and exiting a canoe. The workshop finishes with a short game of canoe tag.

clothes. The program will run regardless of the weather. We have alternate plans which include interactive games and activities. Cost is \$30.00 per child. Advance registration is required. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Registration forms are available on our website, at the CRCA Administration Office and the Outdoor Centre. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

Nature Explorers Camp

Register your children (ages 6 to 11) for our week-long summer day camp during July and August. Registration forms and details are available on our website.

Canoe and Kayak Rentals

Get out on the water at Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas. Rental rates begin at \$8.00 per hour and include paddles, lifejackets and safety kits. Rentals are available at Gould Lake Conservation Area from May 18 (Victoria Day weekend) to September 2 (Labour Day weekend). Rentals are available at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area on weekdays from May 21 to October 14. See our website for details.

Gould Lake Conservation Area

Explore 20 km of easy to rugged hiking trails and enjoy the crystal clear waters of Gould Lake Conservation Area. You can enjoy a picnic and a swim in the day use area. Rent a canoe or kayak or bring your own to enjoy a paddle on the lake.

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The cost is \$40 per person or \$35 per person for annual pass holders. Advance registration is required. Registration forms are available on the CRCA website.

Lemoine Point Conservation Area

Lemoine Point Conservation Area is located in the west end of Kingston on the shore of Collins Bay. There are entrances off Front Road and Coverdale Drive. Join the Friends of Lemoine Point in their efforts to keep the environment of Lemoine Point Conservation Area healthy. Volunteers are needed for trail maintenance, forestry, invasive species control and in the native plant nursery. If you are interested in volunteering please call (613) 546-4228 ext. 306 and leave a message.

Spring Clean-up Day
Saturday, April 20 (9:00 a.m. to Noon)
Come out and help the Friends of Lemoine Point give the Conservation Area a good spring cleaning. Volunteers will be in both parking lots handing out gloves and garbage bags to people who want to participate in the clean-up.

Spring Tree Planting
Saturday, May 4 (9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)
Our annual spring tree planting will take place at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. Meet at the south parking lot (Coverdale Drive) to help plant trees. Bring your shovel, work gloves and your energy. For more information call Peter at (613) 389-4187 or Rick at (613) 389-3651.

Native Plant Sale
Saturday, May 25 (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
Buy some trees, shrubs or wildflowers for your home garden. All plants are grown at the Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery. Proceeds from the sale help to support the nursery and the tree stock grown to support local forestry programs.



More trail improvements made at Parrott's Bay Conservation Area

CRCA operations staff were busy making more trail improvements at Parrott's Bay Conservation Area this fall. The improvements are in keeping with the approved Master Plan for this Conservation Area.

Two projects were identified as a priority in 2012. The first was to continue surface improvements along the main north-south trail on the west side of the bay between the footbridge near Taylor-Kidd Boulevard and the main entrance parking lot. Approximately 600 metres of trail surface improvements were completed by CRCA staff.

This was the third phase of trail surface upgrades since the adoption of the Master Plan.

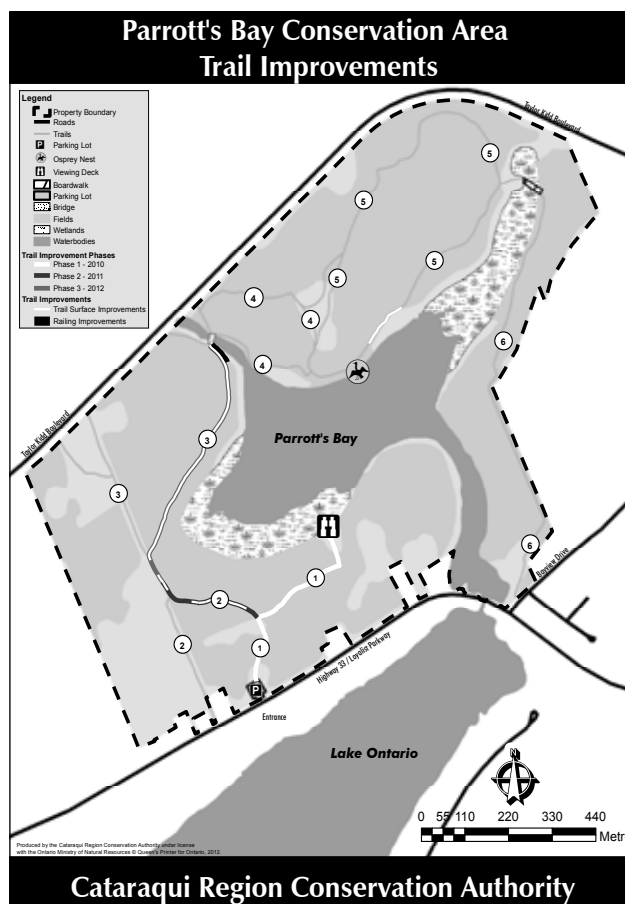
The second project was to install a railing along Trail 3 south and west of the footbridge near Taylor-Kidd Blvd. This work was identified through user comments on a potential safety issue along the trail and staff evaluation

of the site. Trail 3 near the intersection of the bridge is located near a steep area adjacent to Parrott's Bay. Approximately 185 feet of railing was built and installed by Witters Welding based in Harrowsmith.

The trail improvements completed over the last three years are shown on the map below.

In 2013 the CRCA is proposing to improve the trail crossing the wetland in the Conservation Area's northeast corner. An initial site inspection of the area by CRCA staff has been completed and will be followed up with discussions with Ministry of Natural Resources staff about the best way to design and build a low impact crossing through the wetland area.

This map shows the trail improvements that have been made at Parrott's Bay Conservation Area from 2010 to 2012.



New boom installed in Brockville Detention Basin

In a joint effort between the City of Brockville and the CRCA, a new flotation boom was installed at the Detention Basin in Brockville. The new boom, which consists of a sequence of floating cedar logs attached to a stainless steel cable, was installed to better prevent debris from floating into the

protective grating systems that cover two large culverts.

The flow rate of the largest of the two culverts is adjusted seasonally to prevent flooding within Brockville. It works in tandem with another flood control structure the Broome-Runciman Dam located in the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.



CRCA Watershed Engineering Technologist Shawn Fairbank installs a flotation boom in the Brockville Detention Basin.

Winter and spring events planned at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

There are great winter and spring events planned this year at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville.

Returning once again this year is the annual Winter Fun Day on Saturday, January 26 complete with dog sled races. "Last winter we had to cancel this event because there wasn't enough snow," said Karla Maki-Esdon, CRCA Communications Coordinator. "However, we did have the dog sleds come out with their dog carts and scooters during the Fall Festival. It's something we hope to try

again."

Saturday Skates and a Family Day Skate are also on the winter events list. Volunteers are still needed for some of the Saturdays. Please contact Stefan Foerster, CRCA Conservation Areas Supervisor at (613) 345-1990 if you are interested in helping.

A Community Clean-up in April, Spring Tree Sale and Tree Identification Hike in May, and Stargazing in June round out the programs being offered at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. See our What's Happening pages for details.



Dog carts proved to be a popular attraction at the Fall Festival held at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in October. The dog sleds return to the Wildlife Area on January 26.

Union Gas provides another grant to CRCA

Union Gas has been a very generous donor to the CRCA recently providing both technical expertise and financial help. Last fall Union Gas provided \$1,500 to the CRCA to assist with funding some special programming for the public at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

"We wanted to provide some special programs during the winter and spring that don't depend on the weather," said Karla Maki-Esdon, CRCA Communications Coordinator. "Last winter our attendance and revenues were down significantly because of poor winter weather. The Union

Gas grant will allow us to bring in some special guests that we can't normally cover in our regular operating budget."

The series kicks off with

Little Ray's Reptile Zoo on Sunday, January 20. It's followed up with a Bird Presentation by Wild Ontario on Sunday, February 24. The final presentation

on Flying Squirrels will be on Sunday, April 7 (see our What's Happening calendar for details).

All three presentations feature live animals.



Peter Siemonsen Utility Services and Construction Manager of Union Gas in Kingston presents a \$1,500 cheque to CRCA Chair Allan McPhail. The money is being used for special public presentations at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area Master Plan approved

The Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area Master Plan was approved by the CRCA board in November 2012. The Master Plan provides guidance for the development and use of Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area over a 20-year period. Jason Hynes, CRCA Lands Planner, spent over a year creating the document and gathering public feedback on its concepts.

He held two open houses, the first in which the public could comment on the initial concepts of the Master Plan. The second open house was held in September 2012 to provide an opportunity to comment on the draft plan. The CRCA also posted the draft Master Plan on its website for several months to allow for public input. Now that the Master Plan has been approved, the CRCA will be able to begin



Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston is the CRCA administration headquarters (shown below) as well as being a popular local Conservation Area. A new Master Plan for this Conservation Area was approved by the CRCA board in fall 2012.

implementation of some of the minor recommendations in 2013 and the more significant ones in 2014. Conserving the property's ecological features while providing recreational and education opportunities will be the focus of the plan. Facilities will be enhanced and programming will be directed to the already

developed parts of the Conservation Area. The CRCA is grateful to all those who contributed to the Master Plan and thanks the public for their participation during this process. You can view the approved Master Plan on the CRCA website at www.cataraquiregion.on.ca.

Upgrades in store at the sugar shack

Over the next two months, some much needed upgrades will be happening at the sugar shack at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area just in time for Maple Madness 2013. The CRCA will be re-

placing the long-standing pancake grill and burners with new ones and installing a large exhaust hood in the cooking area. The upgrades are needed to meet current standards for the cooking area.

"One of the challenges we faced in completing these upgrades was the fact that there is no electricity available at the sugar bush," said Steve Knechtel, CRCA General Manager. "Staff examined a number of options including bringing electricity to the site. This proved to be too expensive." In addition to the new propane grills and burners, we will also be installing a generator in order to provide power to the range hood. "As part of their community outreach program, Union Gas employees have generously donated their time and efforts to help install the piping needed for the new equipment," added Mr. Knechtel. In 2011, Union Gas also contributed money to upgrade interpretive signage in the sugar bush.



Cooking equipment in the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area sugar shack will be replaced in time for Maple Madness 2013 in March. CRCA Forestry Technician Rick Knapp demonstrates his pancake-making technique.

Treetop Trekking coming to Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area

Plans are underway for Treetop Trekking to come to Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in 2013! Get ready for some exhilarating aerial courses where you can stride along the tree tops with zip lines, rope bridges, climbing nets, swings and more. It will be a fun new way to enjoy nature while you get an adrenaline rush! Construction of the courses is expected to be completed by spring. The

courses will be located in the sugar bush area. "This will not affect our Maple Madness or winter recreation programs as the aerial courses will be open in the spring, summer and fall," said Steve Knechtel, CRCA General Manager. "We're hoping that this will generate more revenue at the Conservation Area during what is normally our off season." Treetop Trekking's

office will be at the Little Cataraqui Creek Outdoor Centre where people will be able to register and receive information about the program. Stay tuned for additional details! Treetop Trekking specifically designs their aerial courses to have a low impact on the natural heritage of the area. They currently run aerial courses at several locations in Ontario and Quebec.

Fines increasing for Conservation Lands offences

The activities that are allowed on conservation lands are regulated under Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. This can include everything from the uses that are permitted to where and when you can enter a Conservation Area or other property owned by

a Conservation Authority. Fines have been increased for offences on Conservation Lands. They have not been increased for more than 20 years. They were increased to more closely match the fines of comparable offences under the Ontario Regulation

347/07 of the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*. The increases are a maximum 15 per cent of the set fine allowable under the *Provincial Offences Act*. Provided below is a listing of some common offences and the old and new fines.

Offence	SECTION	OLD FINE	NEW FINE
Remove property	4(1)(b)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Damage property	4(1)(b)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Cut growth	4(1)(c)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Remove soil or rock	4(1)(d)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Disturb other persons	4(1)(e)	\$75.00	\$150.00
Unlawfully disturb wildlife	4(2)(a)	\$75.00	\$150.00
Enter at other than designated entry point	4(3)	\$50.00	\$100.00
Leave at other than designated point	4(3)	\$50.00	\$100.00
Enter after closing hours	4(4)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Remain after closing hours	4(4)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Litter	5(1)	\$75.00	\$125.00
Unlawfully start fire	7(1)	\$50.00	\$150.00
Unlawfully bring animal into conservation area	10(1)	\$25.00	\$75.00
Permit animal to be at large (note-this applies mainly to dogs)	10(2)(c)	\$25.00	\$75.00
Operate motor vehicle off roadway	11(2)(a)	\$50.00	\$125.00
Ride bicycle off roadway	11(2)(a)	\$25.00	\$75.00
Fail to obey officer	13	\$75.00	\$125.00

Conservation lands regulations will continue to be enforced by CRCA staff and Frontenac Municipal Law

Enforcement. They are contracted by the CRCA to assist with enforcing the Conservation Lands regulations



Secretive Salamanders

By Matt Ellerbeck - Salamander Advocate & Conservationist
(Editor's note - Matt Ellerbeck is a local expert on salamanders, snakes and turtles. He will be doing a salamander presentation at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area Outdoor Centre on Sunday, April 14. See our What's Happening pages for details.)

Ontario is fortunate to have an abundance of biodiversity. This includes one group of secretive animals, the salamanders.

Twelve different salamander species can be found across the province. Several of these occur at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. These include the diminutive Red-backed Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*). As their name suggests these salamanders contain an orange to red stripe down the back. However, these salamanders also occur in almost uniformly dark blue or purplish coloration. Such individuals are known as the "Lead-backed" Salamanders. These are the

most common species in the area. Some estimates state that in pristine habitat as many as 1,000 Red-backs can be found per acre!

Other salamanders found in the area include the beautiful Yellow-spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*) and Blue-spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*). Both species contain dark background colors (black to dark blue) with flecks or spots of bright yellow and blue over the body. These markings are highly variable and unique among individual salamanders.

These species are both part of the same family, the *Ambystomatidae*, commonly known as the mole salamanders. These are much larger than the streamlined Red-backs. The mole salamanders are thick and stoutly built. They are also not as commonly seen, though still quite abundant. Mole Salamanders, especially the Yellow-spotted Salamander, may spend much of their time

deep in subterranean habitats. These may only emerge after heavy rains.

The last species of salamander to be found in the area is the Eastern Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*). Newt is a name that is given to salamanders belonging to the family Salamandridae. Many of these species live mainly in the water. After their larval stage, the Eastern Newts enter the "Red Eft" stage during which time they live mainly on land. During this stage the newts are a solid bright orange color with brilliant red spots.

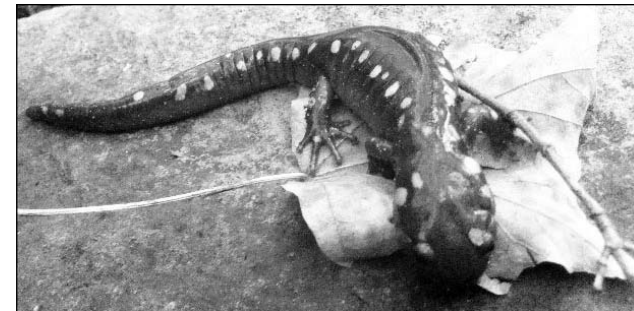
After around three years the newts darken in coloration becoming greenish-gray with a vibrant yellow underside. They still retain the red spots, though less of them. The tail also becomes flattened during this stage and they return to the water.

Given that five forms of salamander can be found at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, you might question why they are rarely seen, especially

given the abundance of some forms. This is due again to the salamanders' cryptic life-style. They prefer to remain hidden under debris or rocks, only coming out seasonally, to mate or breed, or at night after heavy rains (not usually times that people are hiking).

However, whether we see them or not, the salamanders are there and we can do several things to help them. This includes not wearing insect repellents or sunscreens when visiting woodlands, forests and wetlands. An alternative is to wear light (and lightly coloured) long-sleeve shirts, a hat (to protect from the sun), and natural oils as insect repellents. Natural and environmentally friendly insect repellents can be purchased at natural food stores. Salamanders are very sensitive to chemicals and the introduction of these into their environment can have devastating effects.

If you encounter a



Blue-spotted, Lead-backed and Yellow-spotted salamanders can all be found at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Salamanders should not be handled as their skin is very sensitive to chemicals and lotions.

salamander, on land or in the water, don't pick it up. Salamanders have very absorbent skin and the oils and salts from human hands can seriously harm them. Chemicals on the hands such as insect repellents, sunblock, and lotions can further cause damage. The risk of skin damage that could result in secondary skin infections, and

bone and muscle injuries from struggling are also a threat. For these reasons salamanders should never be handled.

Many salamander species are now facing the threat of extinction, and several in Ontario are listed as Species at Risk. This is why we should strive to protect our local salamanders.

Friends of Lemoine Point actively helping the CRCA

The Friends of Lemoine Point are a small, but active group of volunteers who assist the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority with a variety of projects and initiatives at Lemoine Point Conservation Area in Kingston.

Major projects include tree planting and maintenance of planted areas, invasive species removal, trail maintenance, the native plant nursery, and

other special projects.

New members and volunteers are always welcome. If you are interested in volunteering, please call (613) 546-4228 ext. 306 and leave a message. One of the Friends will return your call. Or you

can e-mail lemoine@cataraquiregion.on.ca.

Additional information about the Friends and their activities is available on the CRCA website www.cataraquiregion.on.ca/lands/friendsoflemoine.html.



Each year the Friends of Lemoine Point hold a volunteer appreciation barbecue at the Native Plant Nursery at Lemoine Point Conservation Area.

Improvements continue along the Cataraqui Trail

Cataraqui Trail volunteers were busy this past fall making numerous improvements along the Trail.

Funding was received in 2012 from the Valley Heartlands Community Futures Development Corporation and the Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation for surface improvements, culvert replacements, ditching, distance markers, kiosks and other signs.

Most of the work was completed in the fall of 2012. Sections of the trail were closed while surface

improvements were made and new culverts were installed. Trail volunteers worked hard to installed

kilometre markers along the trail as well as installing posts for directional signs and kiosks.



Top Left: Cataraqui Trail volunteer Dieter Eberhardt paints kilometre markers in the CRCA Workshop at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Bottom Left: Cataraqui Trail volunteers installing the kilometre markers along the trail. Right: A new culvert installed on the Cataraqui Trail.

FOUNDATION NEWS

The Cataraqi Conservation Foundation partnered in 2011 with **Leave a Legacy™** - South Eastern Ontario with the intention of encouraging supporters of conservation in the area to think about making a living reminder of a cause that is important to them, now and in the future. Our partnership with **Leave a Legacy™** ensures that potential donors have access to the best advice for estate planning. There are some steps that you can take NOW to ensure significant tax benefits for your estate:

1. Consult your lawyer and prepare a will.
2. Leave a gift in your will to the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation.
3. Be specific: determine a dollar amount or percentage of your assets to

4. Consider using assets for your legacy.
5. Name the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation as a beneficiary of your RRSP, RRIF, or your pension plan.
6. If you have an existing life insurance policy, name the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation as a beneficiary. Your estate will receive a significant tax benefit.
7. Take out a new life insurance policy and designate the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation as the beneficiary: you will be able to receive a tax receipt for the premiums paid.
8. Remember your loved ones with memorial gifts to the Foundation.

9. Encourage family and friends to include the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation as beneficiaries in life insurance policies and wills.
10. Obtain professional advice: ask your financial or estate planning adviser to include giving to the Foundation as part of your financial plan.

If you do not have a financial or estate planning adviser the website of **Leave a Legacy™** - South Eastern Ontario lists several who will be pleased to provide you with advice. Visit www.leavealegacyseo.com. Additional information is available on the Foundation's website www.cataraqi-conservationfoundation.org and you may also contact the Foundation Secretary.

Imagine Canada and the Foundation's transition

You may have noticed that on the printed materials the Foundation uses there is a "trust mark" indicating that the Foundation subscribes to the fund raising ethical code advocated by **Imagine Canada**. This program is now being enhanced to peer-reviewed standards model, and the Foundation has un-

dertaken to obtain the accreditation under the new program. Among other things, it requires a mission statement, a strategic plan, a risk identification and assessment plan, strategies for consultation with stakeholders, a conflict of interest policy, a privacy policy and a complaints policy.

The Foundation also

has to ensure that the organization operates with full transparency and accountability. Much of this will be achieved by making the policies and information public on the Foundation's website.



New Board Members

We are looking for volunteers to join the Board. Please let us know if you are interested in serving, or

know of someone who would be interested in joining the Board of the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation. Please con-

tact Michael Bell, Past President at (613)352-5741 or e-mail at forevergreen.secretary@gmail.com

2012 Conservation Awards

The Foundation presented three awards at the Forever Green Gala on November 3.

The 2012 Education Award was presented to Walter (Walt) Sepic for his commitment to environmental education and capacity to inspire and influence students and teachers alike. For some 22 years Walt provided leadership in the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board by designing and developing the environmental and outdoor education programs for his board. Walter was also instrumental in involving the board in the **ecoschools** program which has had far-reaching effects in developing "capacity within

schools and boards to sustain and deepen environmental education and practices" (Ontario **ecoschools**).

Mary and Edward Farrar were the recipients of the 2012 Individual Award. They brought fresh eyes to underappreciated potential in our community. They focused their energies on developing a vision of a waterfront trail from the LaSalle Causeway to Kingston Mills, which with support of the City of Kingston, became a trail to be developed over ten years on the east side of the Cataraqi River from the Lasalle Causeway to John Counter Boulevard. The Farrars, through leadership

of the Friends of the Kingston Inner Harbour, continue to advocate for the development of Douglas Fluhrer Park as a cultural hub.

Scott Environmental Group Limited was the recipient of the 2012 Corporate Award. They are a leader in providing environmentally sensitive industrial and commercial cleaning services, environmental cleanup, and organic recycling for our community. If the key action words of our conservation-challenged times are reduce, reuse and recycle, then this local corporation makes Kingston and area a leader in protecting the environment.

Forever Green 2012 Gala

This year's gala raised just over \$17,000 for the CRCA's conservation education programs. The Foundation would like to thank all of the people who attended the gala, the volunteers and the many donors who contributed items for our live and silent auction and raffle prizes. Please consider supporting our donors when it is time to make a purchase.

1000 Island Kayaking • 33 Vines Winery • AECOM • Ambassador Conference Resort • Arbre Care Tree Services • Barbara Bradfield • Bearance's Grocery • Betty Boone • Black Dog Pottery • Bread & Butter Bakery • Breaking Bread Fresh Food Bistro • Brian Mantrop • Brunet Plumbing Supply • Burt's Greenhouse • Camera Kingston • Canadian Tire Cataraqi • Canadian Tire Kingston Centre • Capital Movers & Storage • Carolyn Hetherington • Cataraqi Conservation Foundation Board • Cataraqi Golf and Country

Club • Charleston Lake Provincial Park • City Spa 560 • Clearwater Designs • Cliff Edwards • Colonnade Golf & Country Club • Cooke's Fine Foods and Coffee • Countrytime Furniture • CRCA • Diamond Hotels • Diane Fielding • Diane Fittell • Domino Theatre • Doug & Christine Radford • Doug Snyder • Earthworx • Fielding Tire & Automotive Services • For Every Season • Frontenac Provincial Park • Gallery Raymond • GE Cleaning Services • The Glass House • GoodLife Fitness • Hotel Belvedere • Jeff Scott • Jo Fittell • Joanna Mazzeo • Karen Bach • Kingston Frameworks • Lemoine Point Nursery • Leon Doucet • Linda Coulter • Living Rooms • Loyalist Township • Luv-a-K9 • Margo Warner • Mill Street Café and Gallery • Neil's Flowers • Olivea Restaurant • Pam's Flower Garden • Pat Frontini • Pat Hudson Mills • P'lovers • Princess Animal Hospital • Pyke

Farms Landscaping Products • Queen's Performing Arts Centre • Ramekins • Random House Canada • Rideau Lakes Golf and Country Club • Riley's Garden Centre • River Mill Restaurant • Robert Bateman • Rose and Crown Restaurant • Ryder-Burbidge Hurley Fasano • Scott Wentworth Landscape Group Ltd • Shirley Hulley • Sonset Farm • St. Lawrence Parks Commission • Stewart Fyfe • SunHarvest Greenhouses • Ted Hsu • The Straw House/Evergreen Farm • Thousand Island Playhouse • Tom McAneney • Trailhead • Trousdale's Home Hardware • Urban Paws • Via Rail • Weese Tree Preservation • Wellington Foreign Exchange • Wendy Cain • Wilton Pottery • YMCA of Kingston



The 2012 Conservation Awards were presented at the Forever Green Gala in November. Walt Sepic (left) was the recipient of the Education Award. Mary and Edward Farrar (right) won the Individual Award. Scott Environmental Group Limited was presented with the Corporate Award.

CRCA hosted education session for teachers

The CRCA is hosted a free education session for area teachers and teacher candidates from Queen's this past September about our conservation education programs offered at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Teachers found out ways to enrich their classroom curriculum through experiencing a sample of our marsh dipping and map reading programs offered as field trips. All had an opportunity to network and enjoy being outdoors. Special thanks goes out to local businesses Trailhead, the Rocking Horse, Smith Army Surplus, Play and Learn, Fig Design, Living Rooms and Classroom Complete Press for contributing displays and door prizes to all participants.

As *Cat Tales* goes to press we are getting ready to host a winter information session on January 10 so that teachers and teacher candidates can learn more about our winter programs.



Top: Teachers and teacher candidates got a chance to experience a hands-on CRCA conservation education program in September at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. **Bottom:** Brenda Graham from the CRCA's Mac Johnson Wildlife Area presents a food web program at our first hands-on teacher workshop.

What's that rock?

The large rock sculpture outside the CRCA Administration Office at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston finally has an identification sign. The sculpture by Toronto artist Bill Vazan is called *Two Tattoos*. It was installed in 2000 as part of the Art for Earth's Sake Millennium Project, which was a project of the Kingston Artists' Association Incorporated (KAA).

In October 2012 a

sign explaining the sculpture and the project was installed and unveiled by

the Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre (formerly the KAA). CRCA staff will no

longer have to answer the question, "what's that rock?"



The Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre unveiled a sign explaining the sculpture at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in October 2012.

Preschool, Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Conservation Education Programs

Be sure to sign up for one of our outdoor, hands-on, curriculum linked conservation education programs. We still have spaces for our winter, maple and spring 2013 programs at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston.

To help save on bus costs and the environment, we welcome and encourage two classes to participate at the same time. Connect students with nature for either a half day or consider a full day and either take part in two programs or in the winter enjoy

Kingston's largest natural rink. During the spring enjoy a class picnic and extra time on our beautiful, accessible trails. To book your class e-mail educate@cataraquire-gion.on.ca or call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

Winter and spring conservation education programs for elementary and secondary school students are also available at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville. Please call Brenda Graham at (613) 923-1526 or e-mail edmjwa@cataraquire-gion.on.ca.

Nature Explorers Day Camp 2013

Based at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, six to 11-year olds experience the great outdoors through our hands-on exploration, outdoor activities and a weekly guest speaker. For two days a week, campers get loads of time to swim, play on the beach and explore Gould Lake Conservation Area!

Qualified, experienced and returning instructors will teach campers in groups with

a ratio of one instructor for every eight campers. Each day will be filled with adventures, games and fun. Your child will come away with a greater awareness and connection to the natural world.

The camp runs from July 2 to August 23 and there is a different theme every week. Information and registration forms will be available on the CRCA website by the end of January.

Nature Program for Early Learners, Home Learners and Retirees

The CRCA offers Nature Programs for early learners (ages 2.5 to 5), home learners (ages 6 to 11, 12 to 14) and Retirees (adults) at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

In September, we learned all about Incredible Insects. In November, nature program participants learned all about the importance

of Wonderful Weeds and Sneaky Seeds.

The nature programs continue in January 2013 with Marvelous Mammals and in April 2013 with Amazing Amphibians. Spaces are still available please contact Dianne Doyle to register at 613 546-4228 ext. 221. See website for specific dates.