



THE SPOTTED TURTLE

The Newsletter of the Friends of MacGregor Point Park

COMING EVENTS

July 29 to Closing- 15%
discount at Huron Fringe Gift
Shop

August 7 & 25- MacGregor's
Mystery Evenings at the Campfire
Circle, 7:00PM

August 17 - MacGregor's Got
Talent-

7:00 PM at the Campfire Circle

September 15 & 16 - Wild for
the Arts— Rotary BBQ daily

September 28 - 30 - Youth
Summit for Biodiversity

September 30 - deadline for
Spotted Turtle

October 20 - Witches in the
Woods

February 7- Deadline for Spotted
Turtle

February 16-18 - Family Day

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This has certainly been a special year weather wise with the mild winter, early and very warm spring and now hot and dry summer. While our farming friends are very concerned the weather has not hurt park activity. The Huron Fringe Birding Festival was once again a great success both in terms of opportunities for study and in terms of attendance. People really appreciated the opportunity to register on-line, thanks to the up-dated website. The event will begin on May 24th next year.

The good weather has attracted lots of people to the park and camping use is up by 8% so far this year with day use up by significantly more. Staffing continues to be tight with the Assistant Superintendent and Natural Heritage Education officer positions still not filled. This makes the 5 summer student positions sponsored through the Friends of MacGregor even more important to program operation.

The Annual General Meeting in June was well attended and we were pleased to welcome Doug Martin and Bruce McKechnie to the board. Doug was the founding president of the Friends and he and his wife BJ live in Kitchener but have a cottage near the park. Bruce and his wife Pat live in Kincardine where Bruce ran a pharmacy. They spent considerable time enjoying the park from the time when their children were young and now have another generation to show it off to.

We were particularly glad to welcome Mike Pickup to our recent meeting. Mike has been a great supporter and inspiration to the Friends and we are happy to have him back after a lengthy illness.

The "way sign" project is proceeding well and we hope to see these installed before the summer's end. We were also pleased to have the Bruce Resource Stewardship Network
1 "Stewardship Rangers" spend time at the park working on park trail upkeep and remediation. As noted, resources are tight and we do appreciate every help provided.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Other items currently under way are projects to provide better mapping for park users and a guide to MacGregor Point Park for Natural Heritage staff to use in their educational programming. Another initiative recently approved is an upgrade to the Outdoor Auditorium Stage at the campfire circle near the Visitor's Centre. A larger stage is expected to help accommodate even better presentations.

As noted previously we have confirmed our participation in the "Youth Summit for Biodiversity" which will be held this September and will once again be sending 2 students to participate in this fun weekend of environmental education.

The Huron Fringe Shop at the Visitor's Center continues to be

well used and sales are again up this year over the preceding year. Raffle tickets for the kayak, garden fountain and camping gear are available at the shop as well as many other great items.

I would like to add a reminder of the Wild for the Arts Festival in September. Please see the website for details. There is always something new going on so please come and enjoy our beautiful park.

Peter Harrison



Huron Fringe Birding Festival 2012

The Huron Fringe Birding Festival ran from May 25 to June 3, 2012. We had approximately 230 registered participants which is average for the Festival in recent years.

In the fall of 2011 the committee moved forward with the implementation of an on-line registration system for 2012. This system was designed by OSIM, the Friend's website designer, in conjunction with Bette Jean Martin, our Festival registrar. This software reduces both our registrar's time and effort and our environmental impact. Thanks to the Friends for funding this programming effort. It is seen as a long term investment in making our Festival more professional and there will be benefits for the Friends as well. PayPal, for making on-line credit card payments, was added, thanks to Bev Carlisle. There will be some additional enhancements this fall to improve the website registration experience further.

The early spring this year contributed to an earlier migration and to leaves being out more fully, making it a bit more difficult to find birds. However, our leaders were able to find more than 120 bird species. There was also a range of other activities such as photography events, botany and geology, bus tours and even a wine tasting event.

Our first weekend banquet and second weekend catered dinner in the Park were well attended. We are much more than a birding Festival as judged by our recent program brochures.

Our 2012 Festival has also been a financial success. For the past few years it has been completely self supporting and we are happy to say this is the case again for 2012.

Corporate and individual sponsors continue to allow us to keep the cost of the Festival reasonable for all participants. Funds from a raffle on a print donated by Anne Cathrae and a successful silent auction at the banquet organized by Norah Toth combined with registrations and donations will allow the Festival to make a substantial donation to Friends initiatives again this year. We would also like to thank some of our leaders who in effect returned their cheques. This we believe shows that our leaders are fully supportive of the Festival and are willing to donate their time to make sure it will be a continuing event in the Saugeen Shores area.

Each year we ask participants to fill out a simple survey and to make comments on the Festival. We review all these surveys and try to incorporate as many of these comments as possible as we develop our program for 2013. Considering the warm first weekend and the wet second weekend the overall survey results were very positive. We are currently working on a product called Survey Monkey to allow for an on-line survey which we hope to send shortly to 2012 participants, as our survey responses were down a bit from previous years.

Plans for 2013 have begun with a wrap up meeting on June 21 and a program committee meeting will take place in late August; regular committee meetings begin in September.

We would like to thank the Festival Committee for the many hours spent to ensure that the Festival is a success. Also, thank you to our many volunteers - event coordinators, set up and tear down crew, food coordination, registration and sponsor recognition - without each of them the festival would not have been such a success. The support of Park staff headed by Matt Cunliffe is also much appreciated.

Norah Toth and Jim Duncan

Co-chairs, Huron Fringe Birding Festival Committee

HURON FRINGE SHOP-

15% OFF ALL STORE MERCHANISE

**BEGINNING JULY 29TH AND CONTINUING
UNTIL SHOP CLOSING**

**REMEMBER, AS A FRIEND OF MACGREGOR
POINT YOU ALREADY RECEIVE 15%**



"BICYCLE TRAIL MAP

A new park map is under development which will show all of the park trails with distances between trail junctions and landmarks. This will be a great aid for bikers and hikers throughout the park and will hopefully be available in coming weeks. Watch the Friends website, <http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org/>, for information on the map.”

School Programs at MacGregor

It was another successful spring with MacGregor Point’s School Programs. We have a variety of programs for Junior Kindergarteners to Grade eights; they are a tremendous amount of fun for the Students and the Chaperones. We tallied a total of 485 students from a wide range of schools coming from all over Grey and Bruce Counties, and one school from as far away as Toronto!

Kathleen Chayer—one of the Friends' Employees

Hello Friends! My name is Kathleen Chayer, and I'm the new Interpreter at the Visitor Centre. I've lived in Port Elgin my whole life and spent a lot of time at MacGregor Point Park as a child. I started work here on the 6th of July, and have been having a wonderful time ever since. I'm very excited about my work here, and frequently remark on how this seems to be the coolest summer job imaginable. Although at first I was pretty intimidated by how much my colleagues know about the park, I'm finding that I am learning more every day. I'm thrilled that so much of my job directly involves me learning new things about the park. Sometimes this job reminds me more of school than of work, which is really exciting for me as I love school.

I'm really looking forward to the rest of my summer here at the Park, and am excited to get to lead more programs as my confidence levels grow, and my knowledge base becomes more diverse. In particular, I look forward to my role as Steph the Spider in our two upcoming Mystery Evenings, on August 7th and 25th.

All in all, I couldn't ask for a better summer job opportunity, and hope to see you around the Visitor Centre soon!





Some of the Huron Fringe Birding Festival Sponsors

- left to right
Clive Card
(Synergistic Solutions, Tony Sheard,
(Southampton Rotary), Lynda Cain
(OPG) , John King,
(John King Law Firm) Doug Pedwell
(HFBF), Ian Anderton(Handy Andy), Peter Harrison(FOMPP)



Dedication Stone and Plaque commemorating “The Friends of MacGregor Point Bird Blind

Friends' President , Peter Harrison and MacGregor Point Park Superintendent, Keith Early cut the ribbon to officially open The Friends of MacGregor Point Bird Blind.



Retired Park Superintendent , Chris Tomsett attends Bird Blind opening, chatting with one of the sponsors.





Plaque recognizing our many special Sponsors and Donors, that made the completion of this fabulous blind possible.

[The Greenway Initiative](#)—reprinted from Ontario Nature

The first thing that comes to your mind when you think of southern Ontario may not be threatened wildlife, rare plants and gorgeous pockets of unique ecosystems -- but it should be! This area of the world contains some of the rarest and most precious plants and animals in Canada.

Plants and animals need space to live -- places to move around, find food and mate. People need natural space as well to keep air and water clean, and to experience the natural world.

Protecting nature in southern Ontario is a complicated issue in a crowded landscape. To do so, Ontario Nature has created the Greenway Initiative.

A greener way forward The Greenway Initiative is focused on protecting and restoring a connected landscape of key natural areas, or "cores," linked together through natural passageways, or "corridors."

Core natural areas already exist here, from parks and conservation areas, to nature reserve to well managed tracts of privately owned land. Corridors that connect these core areas to each other exist in some cases or must be restored in others.

Successfully connecting these natural cores and corridors will:

- ñ protect and restore large areas of natural heritage;
- ñ ensure water systems remain clean and intact;
- ñ provide and protect habitat for wildlife and species-at-risk;
- ñ connect farmers, conservationists and communities; and,
- ñ keep natural areas healthy for present and future generations.

Many hands make light work Protecting natural areas is a big job in southern Ontario where many people live and work. That's why a central component of the Greenway Initiative is partnership between farmers, conservationists, governments and community members.

While Ontario Nature is taking the lead on the Greenway Initiative, it will not succeed without the help of many people in many different areas.

There are three major approaches to establishing the Greenway:

- r protecting large core areas through land acquisition (land trusts and conservation organizations)
 - r encouraging private land stewardship through corridors that connect cores together
 - r influencing municipal, regional and provincial policy to ensure that important natural areas (woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitat etc.) are identified and protected.
- Land use and the Greenway** Landowners, farmers, naturalists and others all play a role in the protection of lands and waters for in support of ecological integrity, wildlife conservation and human health.

CANADIAN STUDY TO DETERMINE WHAT MAKES A FUNGUS A TREE-KILLER - by Tom Spears (REPRINTED FROM The Ottawa Citizen)

Ottawa- A consortium of government and industry agencies is investing \$4.2 million to decode genomes of pests responsible for destroying large areas of valuable Canadian forests.

The group will work on hundreds of varieties of fungus, looking for ways to distinguish helpful fungi (those that help trees absorb nutrients, for example) from tree-killers.

Killer fungi include the type that causes Dutch Elm Disease.

“If we understand what makes a pathogen a pathogen, then we might be able to inhibit or prevent the pathogens from acting,” said Richard Hamelin, a scientist at the University of British Columbia.

“These pathogens a lot of times will share similar biology. “

The main weapons — both still in the concept stage — would be either to develop disease-resistant trees or to do genetic screening of goods shipped into Canada to search for exotic diseases from other countries.

. Many of today's forest pests arrived accidentally in imports. For instance, the emerald ash borer beetle, currently in Ottawa, arrived in wooden shipping crates from China.

“What we're trying to do is stop them from coming in,” said Hamelin. It would also be useful to certify that wood exports from Canada have been genetically screened and don't carry pathogens that could spread to other countries.

Funding comes from Natural Resources Canada, Genome BC, UBC, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Boreal Genomics and the Forest Products Association of Canada.

The group could in the future analyse larger forests pests such as beetles.

STOP THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to the biodiversity of Ontario's waters, wetlands and woodlands. Invasive species, such as the Zebra Mussel, Garlic Mustard, Rusty Crayfish and Common Reed can out compete native plants and animals and can have a devastating impact on our Provincial Parks.

Invasive species can hitch a ride on your boat or recreational gear. Whether you are enjoying recreational activities on the water or on land, please take the following actions to limit the spread of invasive species.

- **INSPECT, CLEAN AND DRAIN all watercrafts after each use**
- **REMOVE mud and plant material from your hiking shoes, clothing and recreational equipment after each use.**
- **BUY AND BURN local firewood only and don't take it home**
- **DISPOSE of unwanted bait on land**

For more information please visit www.invasivespecies.com

Board of Directors 2012 – 2013

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ex-officio)

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Norah Toth (**Recording Secretary**)

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Please complete your membership renewal and mail to :

The Friends of MacGregor Point Park, R. R. 1, Port Elgin, ON N0H 2C5 . The Friends membership extends one year from the month you join.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ ****PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR E-Mail AS IT HELPS**

DECREASE MAILINGS E-mail: _____

Would you like to be contacted to volunteer at any of the builds or fund-raising functions(i.e. BBQ's) _____ ?

Payment by: Cheque _____ Visa _____ MasterCard _____

Card Number: _____ Expiry: _____

Signature: _____

Membership Category:

Individual - \$20 _____

Family - \$30 _____

Donation in addition to membership _____

Total _____

Official Tax receipts will be issued for all donations.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND IN ANY ARTICLES OR PHOTOS FOR THE NEXT SPOTTED TURTLE BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2012