



The SPOTTED TURTLE

Volume 19 Issue 1 February 2013

February Storm 2013

Photo: Marg Richards

Jack Donaldson

PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE

It has been an interesting winter season with some terrific snow storms and some equally terrific sunny and crisp days. The ski trails looked good the last time I was at the park and the skating oval was getting good use. One family with young

children were having a lot of fun hand feeding the chickadees, who are often found in the woods around the Visitor Centre. Winter programming has been active and there have been lots of winter campers. It's outstanding to have such a great place to enjoy the best of the winter season.

The coming season promises to be excellent.

As noted in the following pages the Huron Fringe Birding Festival is once again looking great with registrations running ahead of previous years.

This is an absolutely outstanding event with something for everyone who enjoys the out of doors. We are particularly pleased to welcome Bradley Fauteux, Managing Director of

Ontario Parks, and his family who will be visiting during the event this year.

In the meantime don't wait for the spring season to come back and visit the park. Walking the plowed roads is a great way to clear your mind and get the blood flowing.

Peter Harrison

COMING EVENTS

February— Registration open for Huron Fringe Birding Festival

May 8—deadline for Spotted Turtle

May 24-27 & May 30—June 2—
Huron Fringe Birding Festival

Saturday, June 22—

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

July 25—Deadline for Spotted Turtle

September 20—22—Youth Summit for Biodiversity

September 21 & 22—WILD FOR THE ARTS



MacGregor Point Park float for the Port Elgin Santa Claus Parade

Climate Change Complexities in the Northern Hardwood Forests

David A Gabel, ENN

Published November 21, 2012 09:43 AM

For residents of the northeastern United States, the abundant woodlands of the northern Appalachians provide an excellent getaway from the congested coasts. These woods are composed typically of hardwood trees like Oak, Ash, Maple, and Birch, changing to evergreen varieties at the higher elevations. Climatologists predict that the northeast will experience warmer and wetter conditions as the climate continues to alter. However, until now, there has been no exhaustive study conducted to see how the climate change will affect the biosphere of the northern hardwoods. A recent study found that this region will be susceptible to major disruptions to forest health, its maple syrup industry, the spread of wildlife diseases and tree pests, as well as changing timber resources.

The study was conducted at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, located in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. It was led by Dr. Peter Groffman, microbial ecologist at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies. His team looked at more than 50 years of long term data on environmental conditions, concluding that current climate change models do not take account for the surprises that take place in forests.

"Climate change plays out on a stage that is influenced by land-use patterns and ecosystem dynamics," said Groffman. "We found that global climate models omit factors critical to understanding forest response, such as hydrology, soil conditions, and plant-animal interactions."

The most noticeable change is the arrival of spring earlier in the year, and fall later in the year. There has been more rainfall and less snowfall, and the remaining snowpack is melting two weeks earlier than usual. This means that the snowpack melting is no longer in sync with the spring plant growth. This transitional period is critical, because the melting snow also takes away important soil nutrients for plants awakening from their slumber.

Also, the lack of snowpack exposes the soils to more freezing, potentially damaging tree roots. This hits the sugar maples very hard. Not only is the soil frost linked to tree mortality, but warmer winters also reduce the sap yield. On top of that, mild winters also encourage the spread of pests and diseases, which were once held in check by more frigid winter temperatures.

The lack of snow depth allows deer to forage more throughout the forest, damaging young trees and the forest understory. The deer also carry a certain parasite that is lethal to moose, threatening the northern moose populations.

For human activities, climate change in the northern hardwoods will also have a great impact. Ski resorts, which already rely heavily on manmade snow, will be challenged even more with the lack of snowpack. Logging operations will also become more difficult with the loss of snow-packed roads.

"Managing the forests of the future will require moving beyond climate models based on temperature and precipitation, and embracing coordinated long-term studies that account for real-world complexities," concludes Groffman. "These studies can be scaled up, to give a more accurate big picture of climate change challenges—while also providing more realistic approaches for tackling problems at the regional scale." The study has been published in the journal [BioScience](#)



MacGregor Park Float wins at Port Elgin Santa Claus Parade

Ontario Nature's Blog: We Want to Hear From You

Submitted by Victoria Foote, Ontario Nature

Join Ontario Nature's blogging community, and share your outdoor experiences and knowledge with nature-lovers from across the province. Recent contributions from veteran writer and novice birder, Julia Zarankin, chronicled her adventures with all-season birding, from the relative calm of the spring migration to the controlled chaos of Hurricane Sandy. To read more about Julia's nature pursuits, visit Ontario Nature's blog at www.ontarionature.org/

HURON FRINGE SHOP

The store managers of the Huron Fringe Shop, Michael and Andrea La Blance, have just returned from attending the Toronto Gift Show. Several new items have been ordered for the coming 2013 season. They include wooden cutting boards in the shape of a Maple Leaf and a Bear; small wooden hanging ornaments; 3 D glass sun catchers; brain teasing puzzles; crew neck sweat shirts with embroidered scene and 'Mac Gregor Point Dark'; printed DJ pants or shorts with matching top; sun visor with attached sunglasses; ceramic trivets decorated by a Canadian artist; note cards with envelopes drawn by a Canadian artist and 3 foot long brightly colored stuffed caterpillars, to name a few. We look forward to seeing you in the Visitor Center this season. When you purchase items from the Friends of Mac Gregor at the Huron Fringe Shop, all the revenue returns to Mac Gregor Point Park to help enhance it.

Attention Friends, We are now looking for individuals who would be interested in managing our Huron Fringe Gift Shop. The Huron Fringe Gift Shop is one of the major fundraisers that The Friends maintain year after year which in turn contributes to the enhancement of park features as well as providing funding for interpretive staff to be hired during the summer. This is a rewarding experience that will help hone and challenge your organizational skills. If you are interested please contact the Park Liaison Matthew Cunliffe at 519-389-6231 or email us at fompp@bmts.com]

Spotted Turtle

Karen King

The Spotted Turtle, for which this newsletter is named, is a small attractive turtle. As its name implies, this little turtle has a pattern of small, round yellow spots on its broad smooth shell. Spotted Turtles occupy a wide variety of shallow wetland habitats including swamps, bogs, fens and small woodland streams. Their other habitat requirements include soft substrate and some aquatic vegetation. Spotted Turtles are mostly active during the day, except for nesting females, who are active after dark. This turtle loves to burrow into the mud at the bottom of a wetland or crawl into mammal burrows under vegetation. Spotted Turtles are omnivorous scavengers and feed in the water. Usual plant foods include aquatic grasses and filamentous green algae. Animal foods, eaten live or as carrion, include insect larvae snails, tadpoles and salamanders. Spotted turtles and their eggs are preyed upon by coons. The decline in the Great Lakes region is due to habitat destruction and captures for the illegal pet trade. For these reasons this turtle is listed as endangered both federally and provincially.



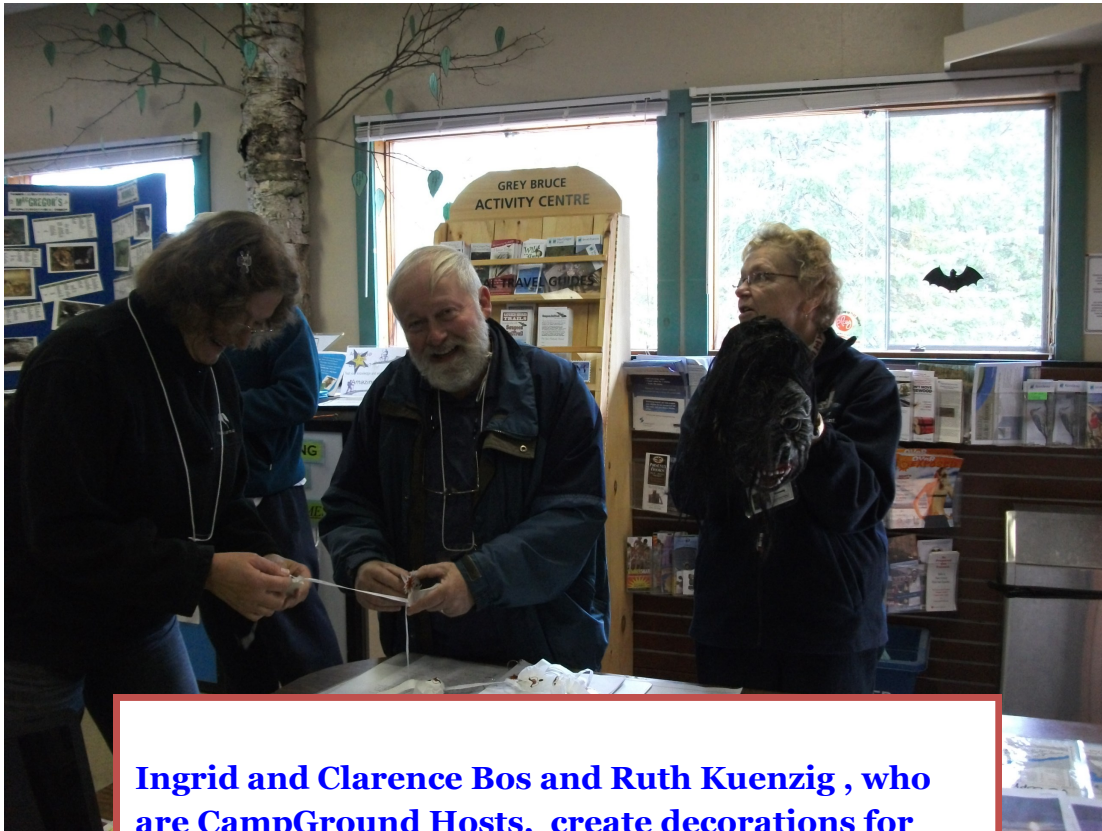
Back to Nature Network Teachers' Guide Now Available

Submitted by Bill Kilburn, Back to Nature Network

The Back to Nature Network teachers' guide, *Into Nature*, is a unique teachers' guide that enables the teaching of all Ontario school curriculum subjects outdoors in nature on a regular basis. Content of the guide includes logistics, resources and learning experiences for teaching in nature. To download the English language version of *Into Nature*, visit www.back2nature.ca/resources-research/education. A French language translation of the guide will be available in January, 2013.

**BE SURE TO VISIT FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR
WEBSITE TO GET INFORMATION ON THE PARK
AND UPCOMING EVENTS.**

<http://friendsofmacgregor.org>



Ingrid and Clarence Bos and Ruth Kuenzig , who are CampGround Hosts, create decorations for Witches in the Woods, October 2012

TREE AND HUMAN HEALTH MAY BE LINKED

Analysis by the U.S. Forest Service of 18 years of data from 1300 counties in 15 states found that Americans living in areas infested by the emerald ash borer suffered from an additional 15,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease and 6000 more deaths from lower respiratory disease when compared to uninfested areas. The emerald ash borer kills all ash species and infested communities with ash lined streets become treeless.

The researchers analyzed demographic, human health and forest health data at the county level between 1990 and 2011. The findings which hold true after accounting for the influence of differences like income, race and education, are published in the current edition of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

Although the study shows the association between loss of trees and human mortality from cardiovascular and lower respiratory disease, it did not prove a causal link. However, the researchers did see the same pattern repeated over and over again in counties with very different demographic makeups.

The emerald ash borer was found in southern Bruce County last summer in the Lucknow area adjoining Huron County. Many of our towns and villages have a component of white ash on the streets although sugar and red maple are often the dominant species. It has not yet been found in Grey County. To date, there are no restrictions on the movement of ash wood in Bruce County although restrictions will likely be in place by the spring.

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We will have one board member retiring this June. Consider donating some of your time to help MacGregor Point Park. Contact any of the above Board Members if you are interested or have questions.

The Friends of MacGregor Point Provincial Park present the Huron Fringe Birding Festival 2013 at MacGregor Point Provincial Park

Registration is now underway for the 2013 Huron Fringe Birding Festival, our 16th consecutive event, which takes place over two four day weekends (Friday May 24 to Monday May 27 and Thursday May 30 to Sunday June 2, 2013) at MacGregor Point Provincial Park.

After just a few days of on-line registration, several events are full or almost full, and the banquet is over a half sold.

Again this year the Friends of MacGregor Point Park have invested in our on-line registration program allowing participants to register at their computers. Paypal is also available and participants are able to register and make their payments all on-line, along with memberships and donations to the Friends.

We no longer have a paper form to register. Anyone needing assistance to register can contact the Park (see below).

Our registrar, BJ Martin, has worked tirelessly with OSIM to perfect the on-line pre-registration and brought the process to a very high level. It will serve us well for many years into the future. This program would be the envy of any festival or event like ours.

Another big effort this season was placed with publicity. A sub-committee chaired by Fred Jazvac was formed to determine how best to publicize the Festival, in addition to our standard advertising such as rack cards.

Bookmarks have been purchased and displayed throughout Grey and Bruce, as well as rack cards and brochures.

Another key part of publicity is the establishment of Facebook and Twitter accounts, and a fantastic blog written by Ed Nanni and contributed to by members of the committee and others.

Our Programming Sub-committee chaired by Norah Toth had a very busy Fall arranging about 80 events including bus tours, geology, wildflower, photography and of course birding events led by experts from near and far.

Returning this year will be bird banding at the Visitor Centre with Brendan Toews on the Saturday and Sunday mornings of the Festival.

Our off-site banquet on Saturday evening will take place again this year on Saturday May 25, 2013, at the St. Joseph's Parish Hall in Port Elgin. We hope this new site will be a great success. There will be a chicken buffet dinner supplied by Harrigan's Catering of Southampton, followed by a presentation by Peter Middleton 'Why do Gulls Perch on White Rocks? and Other Insights from a Career in Ecotourism'. The cost is \$35.00, which includes the banquet and presentation (\$45.00 after April 15). A silent auction and vendor displays will be part of our banquet evening.

Festival passes, weekend passes and single event tickets are available. Pre-registration is now available at the Friends of MacGregor Point Provincial Park website www.friendsofmacgregor.org .

For more information send e-mail to birdfest@rogers.com or fompp@bmts.com . Or call the park at 519-389-6231 or 519-389-6232.

The Festival is supported by three levels of sponsorship:

Partners: Ontario Parks, The Friends of MacGregor Point Park, Grey Sauble Conservation

Corporate: Bruce Power, Ontario Power Generation, Eagle Optics

Event: Colonial Motel, Handy Andy Services, Harrigan's Catering, Hills Insurance, John King Law Office, Maplewood Motel, Mildmay Tent Rentals, Nature's Millworks, Rotary Club Southampton, Synergistic Solutions

The Huron Fringe Birding Festival is organized by a committee of the Friends of MacGregor Point Park, co-chaired by Norah Toth and Jim Duncan and committee members as follows:

Bette Jean Martin, Fred Jazvac, Anne Cathrae, Doug Pedwell, Judy Duncan, Carole Lupton, Arlene Richards, Norma Nanni, Margaret Anderton, Mike Pickup, Liz Addison and Stewart Nutt.

As a co-chair of the Festival I would like to thank everyone on the committee (and some not officially on the committee but contributing anyway), the Park and the Friends for supporting the Festival. You should all be proud of the great success of our event.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2013 Festival.

Jim Duncan, co-chair, HFBF 02/03/13

FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR PROJECTS FOR 2013

Several of our approved projects will be seen about the park this spring. Thanks to the maintenance department and the huge efforts of Dave Cheer, new coloured coded Way Point Signs and Intersection markers will be appearing. The intersections are to be numbered and these numbers will also appear on the new 'Bicycle Trail Map', which should soon be on its way to the printers. Hopefully, both these projects will help hikers and cyclists enjoy the many trails of the park and enable them to safely find their way back to their campsites or home.

A new bulletin board will be installed outside the Visitor Centre to spruce up the area to promote programs.

A new viewing platform at the Water Snake Pond has been proposed. Currently, this project has been presented for an Environmental Assessment. More details will follow in the next Spotted Turtle.

Drew, Betty-Anne and Kinsley
Cobean enjoy the skating oval

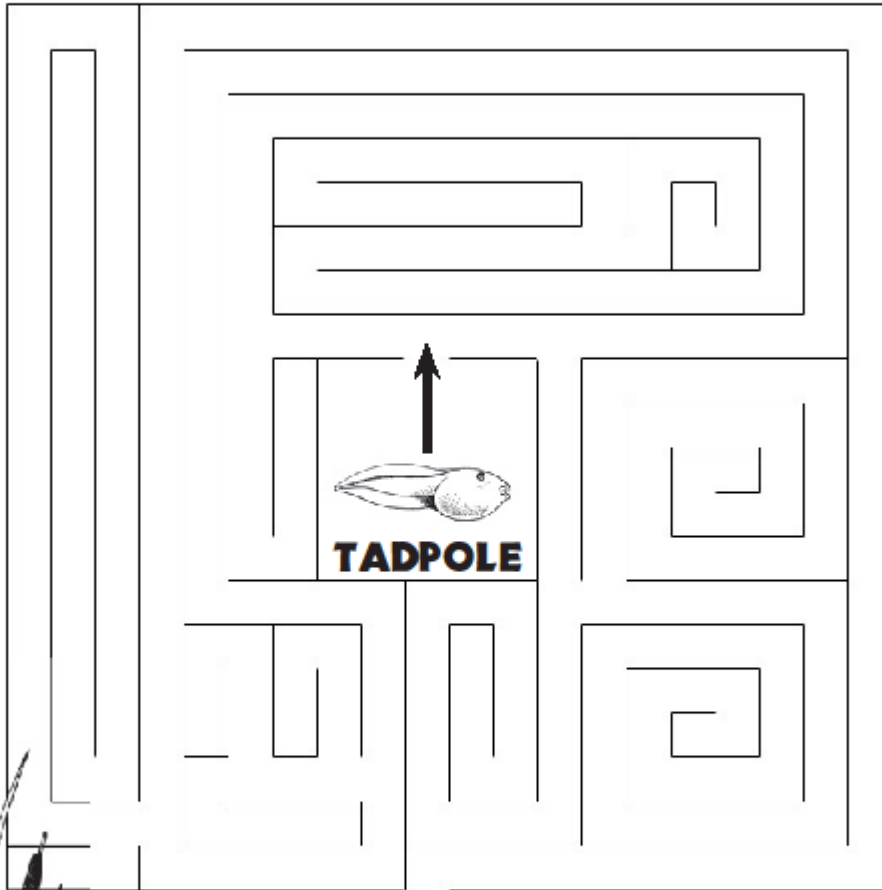


Maze

Want to learn more about . . . ?

AMPHIBIANS

visit our Resource Library in the Campsite24 Visitor Centre



**HELP THE
TADPOLE GET
OUT OF THE
POND**



Northern Leopard Frog tadpoles live in ponds. By late summer, they lose their tails and grow arms and legs. Look for the adult frogs in long grass near water.

ONTARIO
PARKS

www.campsite24.ca

Campsite24



Shadow, friend of Marg Richards and Jack Donaldson, enjoys the snow near their home in the Park.

Photo supplied by Marg and Jack

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 as follows:

<u>Purchased</u>	<u>Expires</u>
Jan.—March	April 1
April– June	July 1
July—August	September 1
September—December	January 1

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

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

DECREASE COST OF MAILINGS E-mail: _____

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

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.