

February 2011

High Park Nature Centre

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JOIN THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT!

Join us in celebrating the Great Backyard Bird Count, taking place from Friday, February 18 until Monday, February 21!

It couldn't be easier to participate! Just visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc> to print out the regional bird checklist. Then pick a day, time and location. Even better—participate on more than one day and/or more than one location. You need just 15 minutes to count the birds you see. You have until March 1st to complete your online submission.



This would make a great Family Day activity! If you do participate, please be sure to let us know about your count and any special birds you spotted.

If you haven't seen too many birds in your backyard this winter, check out The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Celebrate Urban Birds website: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/celebration/birds/tips/attracting> to find out how to make your yard bird-friendly. As always, we recommend a visit to Wild Birds Unlimited, who regularly support us with donations of seeds and other items: <http://toronto.wbu.com>.

PRESCRIBED BURNS IN HIGH PARK

City of Toronto Urban Forestry is planning to undertake a prescribed (or "controlled") burn in High Park in early spring 2011.

Prescribed burns are part of Urban Forestry's long-term management plan to restore and protect Toronto's rare Black Oak woodlands and savannahs. A prescribed burn is a deliberately set and carefully controlled fire that burns low and consumes dried leaves, small twigs and grass stems, but does not harm larger trees. Fire-dependant ecosystems, such as High Park's Black Oak savannah, contain prairie plants that respond positively to prescribed burning, and grow more vigorously than they would in the absence of the fire.

For more information about the prescribed burn program and ongoing forest restoration, please call Urban Forestry at 416-392-0380 or visit www.toronto.ca/trees under 'Ravines'.

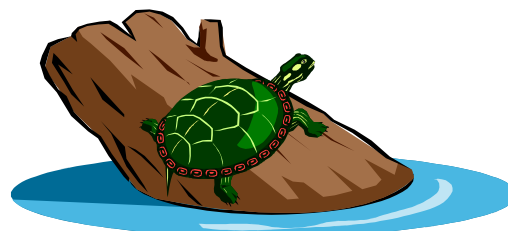
ATTENTION ARTISTS!

The Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre (KTTC) is looking for turtle-themed artwork from kids in grades 4 - 8 to use to create a set of greeting cards.

What do turtles mean to you? What can people do to protect and respect the native turtle species of Toronto?

Submitted artwork will be displayed on the KTTC website and the person with the winning design will receive a prize and be featured in the KTTC newsletter.

Visit www.kawarthaturtle.org for more information.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

High Park Initiatives (HPI) is a registered charity dedicated to supporting the High Park Nature Centre's environmental education and stewardship programs. It is made up of a volunteer Board of Directors, Committees and Members. Board meetings are scheduled on the second Wednesday of every month. Committees meet once per month.

Are you interested in contributing to the work of High Park Initiatives and the Nature Centre? We are looking for dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to assist with various programs and initiatives. There are several ways you can lend a hand!

The Board of Directors: Individuals interested in positions on the HPI board are asked to provide CV and details of relevant career experience to:

HPI.secretary@highpark.org

HPI Committees: The HPI committees assist and advise the HPI Board of Directors by providing input, advice and assistance to the committee chair in carrying out the work of the HPI and Nature Centre. Current HPI committees include: Fundraising, Exploratory Committee for the expansion of the Nature Centre, Program Committee and Practices and Policy. If you are interested in joining any of these committees or finding out more information please contact:

HPI.secretary@highpark.org

There is also a need for someone to attend meetings for the sole purpose of taking minutes. Contact chair@highpark.org to inquire.

The High Park Nature Centre needs volunteers for the following roles:

IT Volunteer: We are in need of someone who can provide a consultation on the hardware and software needed to help us run as efficiently as possible. This person would also be needed to set up any new systems, including a network, printers and cable modem. Please contact diana@highpark.org if you have the skills and time to contribute.

Handyperson: We need new wooden frames built for our instructors' chairs. The current frames, constructed from wood, dowels and strapping, have broken and the wood frames need replacing. If you have the skills and tools to rebuild the wooden frames and reuse the strapping, we need you! Contact naturecentre@highpark.org for more info!

THE YEAR OF THE FOREST

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the **International Year of Forests** to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

Did you know that...

- Forests cover 31% of total land area.
- 30% of forests are used for production of wood and non-wood products.
- The livelihoods of over 1.6 billion people depend on forests.
- Forests are home to 80% of our terrestrial biodiversity.
- Forests are home to 300 million people around the world.

In Toronto, 10.2 MILLION trees make up our urban forest. With a population of 2.48 million, we are outnumbered by trees 4 to 1!

Want to get to know the trees of Toronto? Check out <http://bit.ly/gL26KN> for a great infographic. We also love the Tree Tours offered by LEAF Toronto; visit <http://www.treetours.to/self-guided-tree-tours> to download a self-guided tree tour.



Katie and friends check out a High Park tree

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Camp registration day is Tuesday, February 22nd, starting at 8 am.

Please visit www.highparknaturecentre.com/programs/summer-camp for more information about camp programs, registration and policies.

COYOTES IN HIGH PARK

Reports of coyotes in High Park have increased in the last week. As coyotes breed in late January to March, the recent sightings are likely related to their mating season. At this time, we remember Taylor Mitchell, a Toronto singer and songwriter who died as a result of a coyote attack in Nova Scotia in October of 2009. Emily Mitchell, Taylor's mother, has been quoted as saying "We take a calculated risk when spending time in nature's fold — it's the wild-life's terrain."

To learn more about coyotes, we suggest visiting the City

of Toronto's Wildlife in the City webpage on coyotes: http://www.toronto.ca/animal_services/coyote.htm

The Stanley Park Ecology Society in Vancouver has developed a program aimed to educate residents about co-existing with these beautiful creatures. Visit <http://bit.ly/2eJwFn> to learn more.

To learn more about the Taylor Mitchell Legacy Trust and to make a donation, visit <http://www.taylormitchell.ca/>

In a way Winter is the real Spring -
the time when the inner things happen,
the resurgence of nature.

- Edna O'Brien

EVENTS IN THE PARK

High Park Walking Tours

Sunday, February 6th:
[Winter Tree Identification](#)

Sunday, February 20th:
[High Park Through the Ages](#)

10:30 am to 12 noon

Walks may go on wooded trails, so please wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

Meet at the benches across from the Grenadier Restaurant

For more information, please visit:
www.highpark.org/walking.htm



High Park Nature Centre Winter Nature Walk

Saturday, February 12th:
[Art Hike](#)

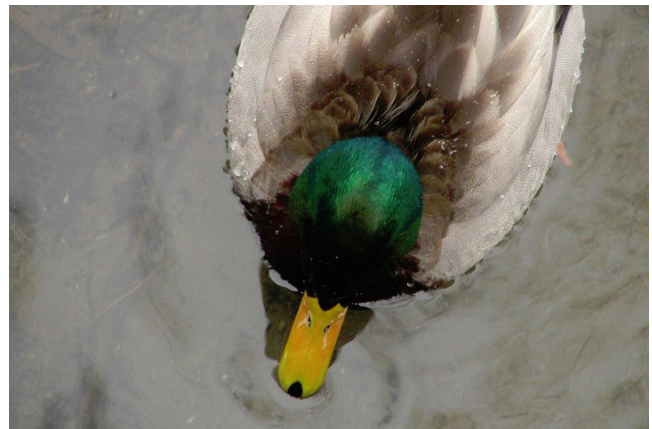
1 to 3 pm

Come enjoy the winter beauty of High Park...and then create! We will visit the savannah, woodlands and wetlands for inspiration before returning to the Nature Centre to make some art.

All Ages: Bring the Whole Family!

Fee: \$2 Recommended Donation

Meet at the High Park Nature Centre



This mallard duck was happily paddling in Wendigo Creek in the midst of the snowstorm on February 2nd.

Photo by Jonathan Hayes

The Nature Centre is overseen by High Park Initiatives, a registered charity dedicated to the protection, preservation, restoration and respect of High Park's natural environment.