



E-News – April 2011

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Note: If you are planning to change your e-mail address, please do not forget to let us know so that we can continue to keep you up to date! If you would like to print this newsletter it is available on our web site as a PDF <http://www.oakridgesfriendsoftheenvironment.ca/>

Upcoming Events

GEORGE FORSTER HOUSE GRAND OPENING – SATURDAY APRIL 16, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, PHYLLIS RAWLINSON PARK

Celebrate the official opening of the newly restored heritage house and barn, and plant some trees and shrubs in the natural areas on the property. There will also be a petting zoo, entertainment, nature activities, tours of the house, and barn and hikes. A barbeque lunch will be available at a nominal cost. Phyllis Rawlinson Park is off Leslie St. just north of 19th Ave. For more information and/or to register, visit:

http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?pageid=environmental_initiatives_events



**COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING – SUNDAY
APRIL 17, 10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON,
PHYLLIS RAWLINSON PARK**

Join Evergreen and the Town of Richmond Hill to plant trees and shrubs. Help bring new life to the park and make your neighbourhood a healthier place. Gloves, tools, drinking water and snacks will be provided. Please wear appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear. Phyllis Rawlinson Park is off Leslie St. just north of 19th Ave. For more information, contact Mildred Ho at mho@evergreen.ca or 416-596-1495 ext. 303.

**EARTH WEEK FAIR – TUESDAY APRIL 19, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, YORK REGION
ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE, 17250 YONGE ST., NEWMARKET**

Visit over 20 exhibitors and talk to York Region staff about environmental programs and initiatives. There will be a passport for kids visiting the exhibits, earth friendly giveaways and more. For more information, call 905-830-4444 ext 1226 or visit: www.york.ca

**EARTH DAY TREE PLANTING –THURSDAY APRIL 21, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM,
RICHMOND GREEN PARK**

Join the Town of Richmond Hill's Earth Day celebration at Richmond Green Park. Plant a tree and learn more about water quality and safe cycling. For more information on this and other Earth Week events, visit

http://www.richmondhill.ca/documents/earth_day_poster.pdf or contact the Natural Heritage section at: naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca or 905-747-6465.

OAK RIDGES COMMUNITY CLEAN UP DAY

Saturday April 30, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

Meet at the Parks and Recreation Bldg at 39 King Rd. just west of Yonge St.



Bring the family, and the neighbours. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided. Fill up a couple of bags and come back for the barbeque and cake about 2:00 pm. Nick and Mira's No Frills are providing the food and the Oak Ridges Lion's Club will be the chefs. *Tim Hortons* has supplied t-shirts again this year. We shall have coffee, water & juice but please lug your own mug. Clean up your favourite green space and have fun!!

There are also some local spots where you can start as organized by area volunteers:

- Worthington Park
- Sandbanks Dr. & Park Cres.
- Tadpole Park - meet at 10:30 am
- Groveswood Park
- Ozark Park - Antique Dr. entrance
- Broadhurst Trail entrance at Wood Rim Dr. just north of Kaitlin Dr.

The Lake Wilcox P.S. community and the McLeod's Landing Residents' Association are also participating in the day. If you are affiliated with these groups please join them.

Supplies will be available at these locations but everyone is encouraged to join us for the barbeque.

If you can't join us on this day, please take some time to clean up around your own property and your local super mail box.

If you have questions, would like to pre-register or are interested in assisting with set up and registration, please contact us at 905-773-7415 or orfe@oakridgesfriendsoftheenvironment.ca

COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING – SATURDAY APRIL 30, 10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON, HUMBER FLATS ECO PARK

Tree planting is a great way to get involved in the community and help the environment. Join Richmond Hill to plant trees and shrubs along this headwater stream of the East Humber River. Equipment will be provided but please dress for the weather with sturdy footwear, a hat and sunscreen, and bring water. Also bring a garbage bag or pick one up at the Oak Ridges Clean Up headquarters at 39 King Rd. to clean up some trash in the park too. Meet at the trail head on Red Cardinal Trail just north of Mallard Marsh Cres. For further information and a map, visit:

http://www.richmondhill.ca/documents/tree_planting_humber_flats.pdf or e-mail naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca 905-747-6465

SPRING FOREST FESTIVAL – SATURDAY APRIL 30, 10:00 AM – 2:00PM, YORK REGION FOREST –NORTH TRACT

Get an early start at the Oak Ridges Clean Up Day, and after filling a couple of bags of garbage head up to the York Region Forest to catch the Spring Forest Festival. There will be horse drawn wagon rides, and guided nature hikes at 11am & 1 pm. You can plant a tree (bring your own equipment), and learn how horses help selective forest harvest and about forest management. You can also get a tree seedling from the "Greening Guy". The North Tract is located at 17054 Hwy #48 south of Davis Dr. For more information, contact Pamela Fulford at 905-830-4444 ext 5241.

NORTH AMERICAN NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (NANPS) NATIVE PLANT SALE – SATURDAY MAY 7, 10:00 AM – 3:00PM, MARKHAM CIVIC CENTRE



The North American Native Plant Society annual sale is the best place to get native plants at reasonable prices. Native wildflowers, ferns, grasses and sedges, as well as trees and shrubs, are available for every garden, from the sunniest to the shadiest! Experts will be on hand to help you find the plants for light and soil conditions in your garden, and the habitat you want to recreate. There will also be free presentations and a great selection of nature books. For more details including the plant list, visit the website www.nanps.org

RICHMOND HILL HEALTHY YARDS EVENT – FRIDAY MAY 13, 2:00 – 7:00 PM, RICHMOND GREEN, 1300 ELGIN MILLS RD E. AT LESLIE,

Plan to attend the Healthy Yards Event to get expert advice on backyard naturalization and organic lawn care. You can also get free mulch and purchase a yard composter. Try your hand at the gardening contests to win green prizes. If you have pre-ordered your native plant kit and/or rain barrel, this is the time to pick up those items. If not hustle on to the website to see if any are still available at www.richmondhill.ca/healthyyards . For more information, contact naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca or 905-747-6465.

Local News

ROBERT BATEMAN GET TO KNOW CONTEST FOR YOUTH

The Robert Bateman Get to Know Contest encourages Canadian youth 19 years of age and under to enjoy nature by getting outside and creating art, writing, digital photography, and videos. The goal is to be as creative as possible - so let the natural world inspire you! Go wild with your creation. Submit your art for the chance to win cash prizes, an invitation to the week-long Get to Know Art & Nature Camp in Victoria and much more. The contest launches during National Wildlife Week, April 10 - 16, at participating parks, zoos, and museums all across Canada. The contest is free and the entry deadline is May 23, 2011. For more information including rules and entry form, visit: <http://www.gettoknow.ca/ca/> There are also great program ideas on the site.

FEDERAL ELECTION MAY 2, 2011

It is hard to ignore the fact that a federal election campaign is underway, culminating with the vote on May 2nd. The Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment does not endorse any party or candidate but encourages residents to pay attention to the issues and get out and vote. There are many things that we would like our government to do or not do for the country. One of them is to protect the environment. Nature Canada has a very good website with issues and a few questions for candidates on protecting nature at: <http://www.naturecanada.ca/election2011.asp>. Four other environmental groups, The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Environmental Defense, Equiterre and the Pembina Institute, are surveying the parties on their environmental policies. Their results are being released on April 18th and will probably be reported in the media. Please become informed on the issues of importance to you, hopefully including the environment, and get out and vote.

Nature News – International Year of Forests – Taking Action

One of the main reasons for declaring an “International Year” is to focus on action to improve the current state of the issue - in this case forests. So what is being done to preserve and enhance the earth’s forest cover? There are numerous projects underway and here are a few.



One of the main threats to forests is logging and mining that remove mature trees not just for wood but also to build roads and other infrastructure. In Canada one very positive recent step was an agreement between 21 forestry companies and nine national environmental organizations that was signed in May 2010. This agreement covers more than 72 million hectares of Crown-owned forest licensed to the companies from British Columbia to Newfoundland. The aim is to develop and implement forest-harvesting practices that are the best in the world. The Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the Forest Products Association of Canada have jointly produced an interactive map and provided more information on this historic agreement and how it will protect the Boreal Forest. Find it at: <http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/boreal/map/>

Due to the importance of tropical forests to birds, both those who live there year around and those who breed here in the summer but winter in the tropics, it is not surprising the Bird Life International is working to save the forests in warmer climates. They have

created a *Forests of Hope Programme* which aims to prevent deforestation or promote reforestation of natural forests in 20 sites that cover over 5 million hectares of tropical forest by 2015. To learn more, visit: <http://www.birdlife.org/forests/index.html>

Closer to home, both the Federal and Provincial governments have increased protection of sensitive areas by creating new national parks and establishing the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Greenbelt legislation. Can they do more? Of course, as both levels of government are tardy in establishing technical requirements for the implementation of “species at risk” programs.

Locally both the Region of York and the Town of Richmond Hill have Tree Preservation By-Laws that restrict landowners from cutting down mature trees. Both also support a number of tree planting initiatives to hopefully increase the urban canopy. Even with these measures, however, with the ongoing growth and therefore development in our communities it certainly seems that we are not keeping up in even maintaining our local tree cover.

Next issue - what you can do for the forests.

Ground Nesters Alert!

At this time of year, many critters build their nests on the ground. If you have bunnies in your neighbourhood, please be careful when gardening particularly around shrubs as she might have made a nest there. Mom does not visit the nest often as the babies do not have any scent as a protection against predators. Mom only comes a couple of times a day to feed them so as not to attract attention to the nest. Many birds such as the Killdeer build their nest on the ground in fields. ***Especially at this time of year please keep your dog on a leash and your cat indoors or on a lead!*** If you find a sick, injured or orphaned wild creature, please call the Toronto Wildlife Centre at 416-631-0662. Also check their website to see how you can help at: <http://www.torontowildlifecentre.com/index.html>

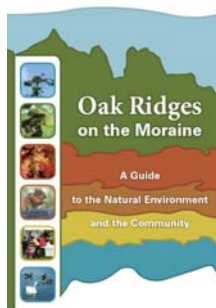
Green Tip of the Month

As we approach the annual Clean Up Day, perhaps this is a good time to think of the 1st R in Reduce, Reuse, Recycle - how you can cut down on the amount of garbage and even recycling that you produce. This website has some good tips:

http://www.ehow.com/how_2058781_reduce-household-waste.html

It refers to programs in the City of Toronto but Richmond Hill has similar ways to deal with your unwanted materials at:

http://www.richmondhill.ca/subpage.asp?pageid=townhall_waste_management



OAK RIDGES NEIGHBOURHOOD GUIDE NOW ON OUR WEB SITE! WWW.OAKRIDGESFRIENDSOFTHEENVIRONMENT.CA

Oak Ridges on the Moraine: a guide to the natural environment and the community is your source for environmental and community information in Oak Ridges. The supply of hard copies is pretty well exhausted. The whole guide is available on the ORFE web site.

The Guide has been produced by the Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment with the support of the Oak Ridges Lions Club and the financial assistance of the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation.



The Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment also appreciates the ongoing support of the Town of Richmond Hill.

The Oak Ridges Friends of the Environment E-News welcomes comments and suggestions. Please send to orfe@oakridgesfriendsoftheenvironment.ca. To unsubscribe to this newsletter please send a message to the same address with "Unsubscribe E-News" in the subject line. We shall be sure to respect your wishes. If you are receiving this "second hand" and would like to subscribe please contact us and we would be happy to add you to the list.

Visit our web site at: <http://www.oakridgesfriendsoftheenvironment.ca/>