



## *E-News – October, 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*

### **TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING, SAT. OCT. 15, 10 AM – 12 NOON, RUSSELL TILT PARK**

Evergreen and the Town of Richmond Hill invite you to join in to plant native shrubs and trees along the bank of the creek in Russell Tilt Park. Help make your neighbourhood a healthier place. Gloves, tools, drinking water and light snacks will be provided. Please wear weather appropriate clothing and sturdy closed toe footwear, and bring a reusable water bottle. Meet at the parking lot on the north side of Regatta Ave., just west of Yonge St. For more information or to sign up, please contact Mildred Ho, [mho@evergreen.ca](mailto:mho@evergreen.ca) or 416-596-1495 ext. 303.

### **JEFFERSON FOREST HIKE, SAT. OCT. 15, 1:30 PM**

Join members of the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) for a 3 hour ramble at a moderate pace along the new ORTA trail route through the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) Jefferson Forest Tract. Secondary trail routes will be shown and explained. Meet at the Trailhead parking lot on Old Colony Rd. just west of

Bayview Ave. For more information, contact hike leader Rhys Beak at 905-237-1826 or cell phone on day of hike only 289-221-7154.

**FALL TREE PLANTING, SAT. OCT. 22, 10 AM – 12 NOON, GEORGE FORSTER HOUSE, PHYLLIS RAWLINSON PARK.**

The Town of Richmond Hill invites you to help plant trees and shrubs at the historic George Forster House in Phyllis Rawlinson Park. This is a great way to get involved with the community and the environment. Equipment will be provided. Please dress according to the weather and wear sturdy footwear. Bring a hat, sunscreen, drinking water and a snack or lunch. Meet at the House at the east end of the park. See map of the location at:

[http://www.richmondhill.ca/documents/fall\\_tree\\_planting\\_george\\_forster\\_house.pdf](http://www.richmondhill.ca/documents/fall_tree_planting_george_forster_house.pdf)

For more information, contact the Town's Natural Heritage Section at [naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca](mailto:naturalheritage@richmondhill.ca) or 905-747-6465

**HALLOWE'EN HIKE AT LAKE ST. GEORGE – SUN. OCT. 30, 3:00 – 4:30 PM**



This is our annual visit to this historic site, now a TRCA Field Centre not normally open to the public. In the spirit of the season, costumes appropriate to hiking in the outdoors are encouraged and treats will be on hand. The hike will go for an hour and a half or so and the terrain is not too challenging, and there will be a scavenger hunt for the youngsters to keep them entertained. The Field Centre is located on the north side of Bethesda just east of Bayview. For more information, contact Jim &/or Sharon Bradley 905-773-7415,

[jsbradley@rogers.com](mailto:jsbradley@rogers.com). The hike is supported by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the Oak Ridges Trail Association.

## *Local News*

### **MORaine CAN'T WAIT CAMPAIGN**

Over the past month, several organizations have banded together to bring the need for greater protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) to the attention of the candidates for the provincial election. Unfortunately, the editors of the ORFE E-news were out of the province for most of that time or we would have brought this issue forward much sooner. We have noted that some people in the area are displaying lawn signs and we hope that many others have received the information from another source.

The need to continue to be vigilant about protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine will not end with the election. Indeed the ORM Act and Plan along with the Greenbelt and Niagara Escarpment legislation all come up for review in 2015. It will be important to work with the elected representatives to make sure that the protections remain and are strengthened. To learn more about the issues visit

<http://www.morainecantwait.ca/home/>. To sign up for regular Moraine for 2015 updates go to: <http://ecospark.ca/morainefor2015/>

## PROJECT FEEDERWATCH - EVERYDAY CANADIANS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF BIRDS



Backyard birdwatchers across Canada are invited to take part in the 25<sup>th</sup> season of Project FeederWatch, from Saturday, November 12 through Friday, April 6. With each season, FeederWatch increases in importance as a unique and indispensable monitoring tool for more than 100 bird species that winter in North America. Last year, over 2,500 Canadians and 11,000 Americans counted backyard birds; their observations help scientists better understand the health and behaviour of birds. This is important as birds are like

the canary in the coal mine as indicators for the well being of our planet.

Each checklist submitted by 'FeederWatchers' helps scientists at Bird Studies Canada ([www.birdscanada.org](http://www.birdscanada.org)) and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology ([www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)) learn more about where birds are, how they are doing, and how to protect them. Participating in Project FeederWatch is a great way for families and friends to connect with nature, have fun, and help birds. You do not have to be an expert to participate - they will send you a poster of common birds and help is just a phone call or email away.

Participating is fun and easy. You get to choose how much time you wish to dedicate to the project, and submit your data on the web or through paper forms.

The program is largely paid for by a participant fee of \$35.00 that covers the cost of the participant kits and analyzing the data. Participants also get *Bird Watch* magazine as well as a charitable tax receipt. It is worth every penny for a wonderful way to spend the cold winter months while enjoying the birds and helping science. For more information and to enroll, visit:

<http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/pfw/index.jsp?targetpg=index&lang=EN>

### DOLPHIN TALE – THE MOVIE

ORFE does not generally comment on movies but this one is different. It is inspired by the amazing true story of a brave Dolphin and the people who worked together to save her life. We learned about it through a mailing from the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) and watched the trailer. Those who have seen this film seem to like it. The Sunday Sun gave it 3 ½ stars out of 4 and it jumped from #3 to #1 in box office sales. It is playing locally. We suggest that you watch the trailer at:

<http://www.warnerbroscanada.com/index.php/now-playing/dolphin-tale/> to see if this is something that might interest your family. If you do get inspired to learn more about marine life and how you can help protect it, the CWF has lots of information at:

<http://www.cwf-fcf.org/en/conservation/freshwater/rivers-to-oceans/>

## *Nature News – Fall Ramblings*

With the arrival of Thanksgiving - even with good weather - we can't avoid acknowledging that fall is really here. It can be a great season watching the beautiful show of the trees turning colour. If you don't have a tree or two in your yard to watch, fall is a great time to plant them and what a way to celebrate the International Year of

Forests. Trees have a long list of benefits some of which can be found here: [http://www.yourleaf.org/benefits\\_of\\_the\\_urban\\_forest](http://www.yourleaf.org/benefits_of_the_urban_forest). If you are not sure where to start, help is close at hand through the LEAF Back Yard Tree Planting Program. They will provide an onsite consultation and plant a good sized tree for a really reasonable cost. For more information including photos of trees available and more resources, visit: <http://www.yourleaf.org/southern-and-central-york-region>

Fall is also a great time to assess your yard and garden. What did work this year? What would you like to do differently in the future? It is easier to do this now than when the garden shows begin in March and the ground is covered in snow! Of course in March you can readily see if your yard has any winter interest like a coniferous shrub or tree peeking its green head out of the white blanket! Another interesting winter feature is the stalks and seed heads of your garden plants in the snow. Don't be in a hurry to clean these up in the fall as the seeds provide food for wildlife, and the stalks hold the snow in the garden to provide a good base of moisture in the spring.

Of course there are the fall projects. It is a great time to add compost to your lawn and garden. This not only provides fertilizer but also builds the quality of the soil especially in this area where there is so much clay. Chemical fertilizers on the other hand tend to wash away and run into our lakes and rivers - in Oak Ridges that means Lake Wilcox and the Humber where they add to the phosphorus load. This feeds the algae and weeds that diminish the oxygen as they decompose, harming fish and amphibian habitat. A ¼ to ½ inch layer of compost will do wonders and good compost is readily available in bags at the Miller facility on Bloomington Road between Bayview Ave. and Leslie St. For other lawn tips in a handy annual calendar format, visit <http://yrea.org/wp-content/uploads/YREA-Organic-LawnCare.pdf>. If you do have trees, you have to rake the leaves but don't put them all out for yard waste. A 4 inch layer of leaves on your garden bed provides great winter mulch. Don't be in a hurry to remove them in the spring either as the worms will aerate your garden for you, as they come to the surface to eat the leaves and take that goodness down into your soil. By June all of the leaves will be gone!



Fall is also an interesting time for wildlife. Many of the birds are heading south so it pays to keep an eye out for different species that we don't regularly see. They are quieter and less coloured in the fall so it is not as easy to view the migrants on this trip. If you are around Lake Wilcox, you may see some interesting water fowl as this is a good stopover location for them in their travels. Many of the creatures that stay for the winter are looking for a warm place to hang out. It is best to check your buildings for cracks and holes that will allow entry for mice, squirrels and even raccoons. It is mating or rutting season for the deer and, like other species in love, they can do some crazy things. Please keep your eye out and slow down in natural areas as they could bolt across the road at any time.

Finally it can be a season of lots of fun. It is a great time to get out in the country and see the changing colours. While you are there, you can stop at a farmer's market or two to pick up your pumpkin along with all kinds of other goodies. Another option is an orchard to get fresh apples and usually great baked goods and preserves too. Check the York Region Farm Fresh web site for locations. [http://69.73.181.177/~yorktour/resources/FarmFresh\\_Map\\_Guide.pdf](http://69.73.181.177/~yorktour/resources/FarmFresh_Map_Guide.pdf). Fall is also a wonderful time for a hike as the bugs have left the forest and the trails are generally dry.

York Region Forests have lots of good trails, visit:

<http://www.york.ca/Departments/Transportation+Services/Forestry/Forest+Events.htm>

The Oak Ridges Trail Association offers many hikes of varying length and pace. You do not have to be a member to join them. See their hike list at:

<http://www.oakridgestrail.org/hikes.htm>

Enjoy the season!

## *Green Tip of the Month*



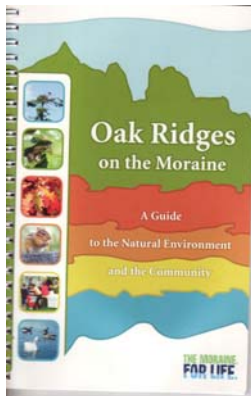
With the arrival of fall, Hallowe'en is just around the corner. Again this year ORFE suggests that you consider celebrating the goblin season with some green ideas not just for the sake of the environment but also for the health and safety of the young ones. There are lots of web sites with interesting ideas. Here are a couple of suggestions:

<http://www.got2begreen.com/green-lifestyles/get-ready-for-an-eeek-o-friendly-halloween-part-1/> .

<http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=parents>

Discuss the ideas with your children and friends. We are sure that the creative juices will flow for a wonderful celebration.

If you like this pumpkin pattern, you can get this and more at: <http://www.cwf-fcf.org/en/action/how-to/at-home/halloween-pumpkin-templates.html>



**OAK RIDGES NEIGHBOURHOOD GUIDE NOW ON OUR WEB SITE! [WWW.OAKRIDGESFRIENDSOFTHEENVIRONMENT.CA](http://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](mailto: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.*

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