

38A. HIGH PARK EXTENSION

Size and Location: 8.2 ha at 1873 Bloor Street West. This area represents an additional portion in the centre of High Park that was noted as part of the ESA in the MTRCA (1982) report and in MNR files (MNR 2008). This area is mapped as part of the High Park ESA

Valley System: none (Lake Ontario Waterfront)

Previous Designations: Identified as part of MTRCA ESA 114 (MTRCA 1982); MNR Provincial Life Science ANSI (MNR 1989, 2008)

Description

Vegetation Communities and Flora: This extension incorporates two areas in the central part of High Park where the quality of savannah vegetation (a globally rare vegetation community) is among the highest in the park. It is not known why these areas were left out of the original ESA boundary. This area consists of tallgrass savannah: large patches of prairie/savannah indicators such as big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian grass and switch grass interspersed with open-grown black oak trees that provide a partial canopy. Non-native grass species are also present, but there has been active restoration in this area to restore dominance by native tallgrass species.

Fauna: Wildlife surveys in 2006 included this area. This area supported species of open woodlands such as blue-gray gnatcatcher, American goldfinch and American robin. However, it is likely that most species that depend on open habitat within the park are likely to use the extension areas periodically.

Site Statistics

- 1 vegetation community, predominantly tallgrass savannah mixed with cultural woodland
- 10 L1 to L4 flora species
- 1 L1 to L4 fauna species
- 31 species of flora
- breeding bird surveys included this area but did not record species separately

Official Plan ESA Criteria Fulfilled

Criterion A. *Habitats for vulnerable, rare or threatened plant and/or animal species and communities that are vulnerable, rare, threatened or endangered within the Province, the City or the Greater Toronto Area: **fulfilled.***

- 7 significant flora species
- 1 significant vegetation community

Criterion B. *Rare, high quality or unusual landforms created by geomorphological processes within the City or the Greater Toronto Area: **not fulfilled.***

- largely intact remnants of the interim period between the recession of Lake Iroquois and the modern lake processes that formed the Toronto Islands (see description under High Park ESA)

Criterion C. *Habitats or communities of flora and fauna that are of a large size or have an unusually high diversity of otherwise commonly encountered biological communities and associated plants and animals: **not fulfilled.***

Criterion D. *Areas where an ecological function contributes appreciably to the healthy maintenance of a natural ecosystem beyond its boundaries, such as serving as a wildlife migratory stopover or concentration point, or serving as a water storage or recharge area: **fulfilled***

- notable area for migrant songbirds: 20% of migrant songbird records are from High Park

Surveys Conducted by the Study Team

- Flora: 16 September 2008, October 20, 2009; December 8, 2010 (reconnaissance surveys)
- Fauna surveys 9, 16, 25 June 2006; 1, 9 July 2006
- Amphibian surveys: April 29, 2006, 1, 24 May 2006, 21 June 2006

Other Surveys

- January 1996(TRCA)
- August 1997(TRCA)
- January/July/September 1998(TRCA)
- June, July 2000; June/July 2001(TRCA)
- June, July 2005(TRCA)
- July 2007 (TRCA)

Condition

This area supports a high proportion of savannah species, though with many non-native species. Several *ad hoc* trails are found in the extension. An open air stage is present in the western portion of the extension.

Conclusion

These areas support features and functions that qualify them for addition to the currently designated High Park ESA.

Management Needs

Vegetation and landform should continue to be managed within the extension as part of the High Park Management Plan.

Significant Species and Communities

Flora								
Scientific Name	Common Name	COSEWIC	MNR	S Rank	L Rank	GTA	Toronto	7E4
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem			S4	L3	R	R7	R15
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada Wild-rye			S4S5	L4	R	R6	R7
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Old Switch Panic Grass			S4	L3	R	R2	R2
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i> * ^P	Sycamore			S4	L1	R	R2	R6
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black Oak			S4	L2	R	R5	R9
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little Bluestem			S4	L2	R	R2	R5
<i>Silphium terebinthinaceum</i> * ^P	Prairie Dock			S1				
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Yellow Indian-grass			S4	L2	R	R2	R3

* not considered a qualifying species

^P planted

High Park Extension

Fact Sheet

Vegetation Communities	Provincial Rank	TRCA Rank
Dry Black Oak Tallgrass Savannah	S1	L1

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