

## UPDATE

December 2020

*This newsletter is based on notes provided by Forestry and notes from the HP Resource Group update in fall 2020. The Natural Environment Committee did not meet in 2020.*

### Forestry Report

Forestry Natural Resource Crews started back working in the park in May after work was paused due to COVID-19, and they were able to successfully complete spring plantings. Crews continued to work on invasive species management throughout the summer season, controlling various herbaceous species such as Burdock, Garlic Mustard, Tall Sweet White Clover, Japanese Hedge Parsley and Dog Strangling Vine. Fall plantings were carried out in various sections of the park.

Woody invasive species management is planned at several sites in the park starting November 2020 – March 2021 to support a variety of projects, including preparation for prescribed burn, and natural area planting efforts.

Alternate Invasive Control Measures: City staff carried out a bioherbicide demonstration in July to control buckthorn shrubs using a product made with a naturally occurring fungus. Preliminary results are promising. A follow-up site visit in early summer 2021 will evaluate the full efficacy of this product.

### Acorns

Park visitors would have noticed an abundance of acorns this year. Forestry reported that they would not be collecting any this year; they actually have a surplus of black oaks being grown for High Park from previously collected acorns, and are making planting plans for the next few years.

### Prescribed Burn

The spring 2020 prescribed burn in High Park was postponed until spring 2021. 3 sites are proposed: 1E East, 9B and 9A.

### Phragmites Treatment Suspended

The phragmites treatment by TRCA has been suspended. The treatment involved herbicide use on dry-land sites in 2018 and spading/removal of dead plant material in 2019. No further information is available at this time from either TRCA or Urban Forestry.

### High Park Terrestrial Biological Inventory

In 2018 the TRCA conducted a terrestrial inventory of High Park's flora and fauna. The [full report](#) was released in early 2020 and contained a number of recommendations which are still to be implemented. TRCA is now working on a wetland evaluation for Grenadier Pond and the associated wetlands in High Park and Rennie Park.

### Moths and Purple Martins

The High Park Moth Study group has now recorded well over 1000 species! The purple martin house at Grenadier Pond had a very successful breeding season this year. Thanks to Tim McCarthy for caring for the house; new volunteers are lined up to take over next year.

### High Park Nature Website Relunched

In late September, High Park Nature launched our updated [website](#). This WordPress-based website is the culmination of many hours of volunteer work. Thanks especially to Yuliya Hluzd and Jason Ramsay-Brown for making this possible.

### Local Area Planning Study

The NEC, represented by Leslie Gooding, provided input to the Bloor West Village Avenue Study. Most of High Park is a provincially significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). The NEC reviewed the pertinent policies and recommended they be applied in High Park.

### High Park Stewards

During March and April online meetings/presentations were held. Members learned about the WWF sponsored [Project Swallowtail](#). This initiative provides native plants and expertise to Toronto's west-end residents with the goal of increasing pollinator plants in neighbourhoods close to High Park. Seed collecting and plant sharing are part of this project, as well as some shrubs and plants from LEAF.

Instead of in-person events at the start of the field season, Stewards were able to be engaged with activities they could do at home, based on material prepared by Park Program Officer Jaclyn Scobie. There was no plant sale in 2020.

Twice monthly stewardship sessions began on Sunday, August 23 with modifications approved by Toronto Public Health. Sessions were led by two city staff and a maximum of 8 volunteers (a big change from past sessions!)

Boulevard Beds Update (provided by Mary Cole): A small group of Stewards continued to tidy and weed the Boulevard Beds from June 2020 onward, usually working for an hour each week. The native plants did well this year and we have seen many pollinators visiting them. In early October we were able to plant 200 native perennials, grown in the High Park greenhouse from seed harvested in High Park. Grasses, flowering shrubs and perennials were placed in newly weeded and empty areas of the beds. Many thanks to city staff Donna Costanzo and Patricia Landry for making the planting possible.