

UPDATE

December 2021

Forestry Report

Forestry Natural Resource 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.

The bioherbicide demonstration plot for buckthorn will require additional follow-up over the next couple of years to determine its efficacy and suitability for High Park.

A prescribed burn postponed in 2020 and 2021 is tentatively planned for spring 2022 (sites to be determined).

No update is available on the phragmites management program. No information is available on any plans to address concerns raised by the TRCA 2019 report outside of the actively managed oak savannah areas. No information is available about the capital improvements mentioned in the Ravine Strategy Implementation Plan.

NEC Survey

In August/September the Natural Environment Committee conducted a survey of members and supporters. The [results](#) showed strong support for better protection of High Park's natural environment, particularly the black oak savannah, and serious concerns about negative impacts of heavy usage and improper behaviours.

Meeting with Councillor Perks

Several NEC members met with Councillor Perks on November 16. The main focus was the municipal and provincial legal protections and responsibilities that apply to High Park, given the designation of a major portion of the park as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) and an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA). This was discussed in the context of the proposal for reconfiguration of Parkside Drive recently approved by City Council. Councillor Perks clarified that the terms of the Official Plan that refer to "development and site alteration" do not apply to modifications of infrastructure. He also indicated that the proposed sidewalk on the eastern edge of High Park would not be a standard sidewalk, but rather what is classified as a "temporary" sidewalk, which would have less impact on the adjacent ravine.

We plan to continue to discuss protection issues with Councillor Perks in the new year. His main focus in January will be City budgets and public input is welcome.

LDD Moth Control

At the invitation of Forest Health, Clement Kent wrote a [note on behalf of the NEC](#) in support of an alternative product that would be less harmful to other Lepidoptera. He also encouraged other organizations to do the same.

Dog/Nature Brochure

Two NEC members distributed several hundred copies of the ProtectNatureTO [Love Nature brochure](#), along with a High Park Nature business card, in their respective hi-rise apartment buildings just north of High Park. Additional copies are available on request.

New Financial Arrangements

The NEC has set up an account with Pollinator Partnership Canada (P2C) so we can both receive donations and make expenditures independently, without involving the City. Previously we operated using High Park Stewards' funds that were managed by the City, a cumbersome process that was not working well for all parties. The City is planning to transfer the remaining stewards' funds to P2C as well.

Our thanks to High Park Community Alliance for their vote of support by making a donation to the work of the NEC.

Fishing at Grenadier Pond

Both the NEC co-chairs and Lenka Holubec have [written](#) the City about the unsuitability of fishing at Grenadier Pond (the only activity permitted at High Park that deliberately harms and removes wildlife). So far the only response we received used set wording taken from a City response several years ago. We will continue to press to give this matter the attention it deserves.

High Park Stewards

In-field stewardship events led by Urban Forestry Program Officer Jaclyn Scobie resumed in July 2021 and ended on November 28. COVID-19 health and safety measures limited participation to 12 Stewards per session. There were 8 events: 3 plantings, 1 invasive species management (Hedge Parsley), 2 seed collections and 2 Buckthorn removals. 1730 native plants were planted (21 different species). See our [Blog](#) post for more details.

Stewards are encouraged to use the resources provided on the [Other Groups](#) section of our website to participate in activities, webinars and on-line meetings from a wide variety of other groups and to join [Project Swallowtail](#) and [NANPS](#) to obtain native plants in lieu of our own native plant sale. PDF versions of [Stewards Newsletters](#) are also available.

High Park Nature promotes awareness and respectful enjoyment of the park's natural heritage. It is a joint initiative of the High Park Natural Environment Committee (NEC) and the High Park Stewards. The NEC advises the City of Toronto on the protection and restoration of the natural features of High Park. The High Park Stewards plant, collect seeds and remove invasive species from restoration sites, and promote the use of native plants. This newsletter reports highlights from our activities and other park news.