



THE SPOTTED TURTLE



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR POINT PARK "Naturally Connected"

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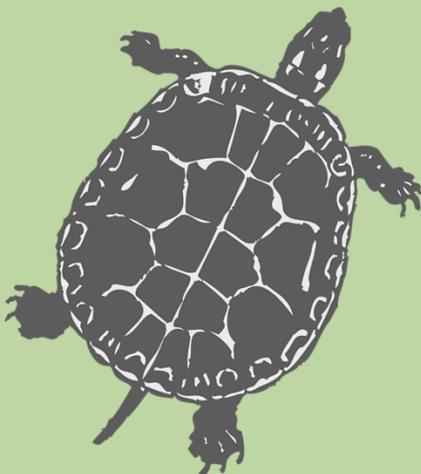


Photo: The Granger Collection, New York / The Granger Collection

MARTHA, the last Passenger Pigeon . . .

Today [September 1, 2014] marks the 100th anniversary of the death of a 29 year-old female Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*), the last one of its kind, in captivity in the Cincinnati Zoo on September 1, 1914. This was once the most plentiful bird species in the world and both John James Audubon and Alexander Wilson, the great ornithologists of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, described astounding migratory passages of these birds that numbered in the billions, taking several days to pass, and were so dense with birds so as to darken the surrounding landscape like an eclipse during their passage. Their sheer numbers and preference for tree mast as a food source

meant that they exerted much control on the composition and distribution of many tree species throughout the forests of eastern North America. In migration they were capable of sustained flight approaching 100 km/hr, earning them the nickname "the blue meteor". A single nesting colony in western New York in 1823 was known to cover 180 square miles, with birds nesting so densely in the trees that their weight would cause branches to break off. In 1850, Mr. N. Pearson of Aurora found a colony of "millions of nests" in a pine forest between the 5th and 6th Concessions of Pine Orchard in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

[continued on page 2]

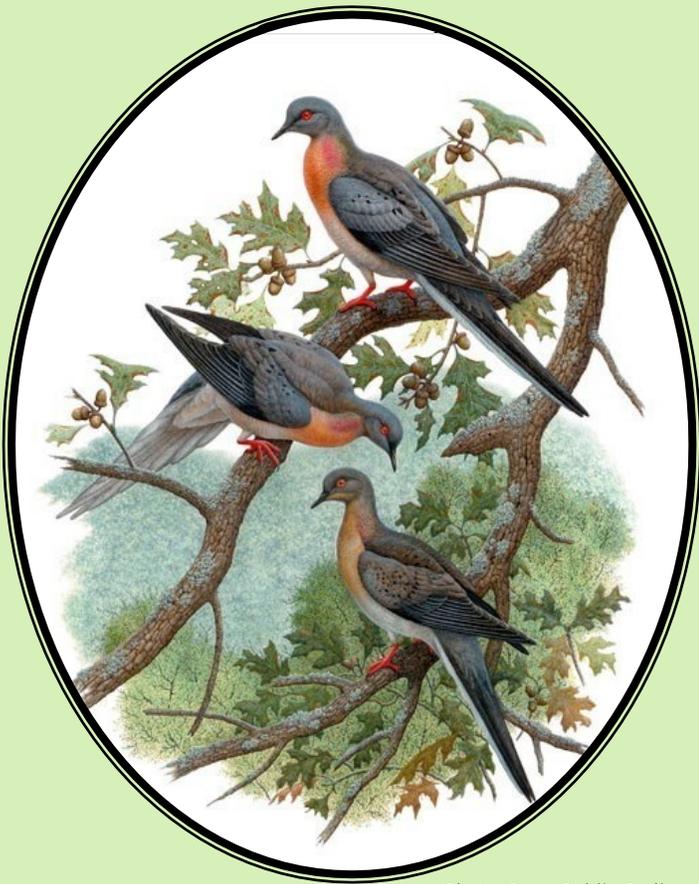


Photo: Iowa Public Radio

[continued from page 1]

In May of 1860, Major W. Ross King observed a single flock passing over at Fort Mississauga, near the mouth of the Niagara River in present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake, within sight of Toronto, that has been estimated to have exceeded 3 billion individuals! They bred in many places throughout the Greater Toronto Area in the City of Toronto, Peel, Halton, York and Durham regions. The name Mimico is derived from a Mississauga Indian word meaning "place of the wild pigeon".

Despite their staggering numbers, people wantonly and relentlessly shot and captured these birds and disrupted their great nestings and cleared their required forests with a ruthless industrial efficiency made possible by the advent of the telegraph and the railroad, exhausting their incredible numbers in a brief 30 years. The last great flock seen over Toronto occurred a mere 14 years later when John Townson saw a flock estimated to be a million birds over Toronto Islands on April 3, 1874. By the early 1890s sightings in the Toronto area were becoming quite rare and the last four sightings anywhere in the Greater Toronto Area

were as follows: a flock of 13 (all females and young) seen in High Park on 15 April 1896 by George Pearce; a flock of 11 seen on Wells Hill (Bathurst/St. Clair area) on 22 October 1896 by J. Hughes Samuel; a flock of 10 seen along Etobicoke Creek on 16 May 1900 by Oliver Spanner; and the final birds, a flock of 5 seen over Centre Island on 6 July 1900 by J. Hughes Samuel. By 1900 the birds had effectively become extirpated from the wild (with the last Ontario sighting of 2 in Penetanguishene on 18 May 1902) and the last members of the species were all older birds in captivity that showed no success in efforts at captive breeding. The last male Passenger Pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoo in 1910, leaving the sole surviving female, which finally died on 1 September 1914.

When I think of the tragedy of the Passenger Pigeon I am always reminded of a portion of Aldo Leopold's moving elegy to their demise, his 'On a Monument to the Pigeon' published posthumously in 'A Sand County Almanac' (1949): "We have erected a monument to commemorate the funeral of a species. It symbolizes our sorrow. We grieve because no living man will see again the onrushing phalanx of victorious birds, sweeping a path for spring across the March skies, chasing the defeated winter from all the woods and prairies of Wisconsin. Men still live who, in their youth, remember pigeons. Trees still live who, in their youth, were shaken by a living wind. But a decade hence only the oldest oaks will remember, and at long last only the hills will know. There will always be pigeons in books and in museums, but these are effigies and images, dead to all hardships and to all delights. Book-pigeons cannot dive out of a cloud to make the deer run for cover, or clap their wings in thunderous applause of mast-laden woods. Book-pigeons cannot breakfast on new-mown wheat in Minnesota, and dine on blueberries in Canada. They know no urge of seasons; they feel no kiss of sun, no lash of wind and weather. They live forever by not living at all." Today I am also recalling this famous quote on extinction by naturalist William Beebe: "The beauty and genius of a work of art may be reconceived, though its first material expression be destroyed; a vanished harmony may yet again inspire the composer; but when the last individual of a race of living beings breathes no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again."

Glenn Coady

Reprinted with permission

THE FRIENDS AT WORK AGAIN

A wonderful addition has been made to the Park this Fall with the construction of a new viewing platform on the edge of **Watersnake Pond**. Money was raised through the Friends sufficient to cover the cost of labour and materials for this project. The work was undertaken entirely by Park supervisory and support staff.

The new platform and access ramp replaces a badly deteriorated structure with a larger, more structurally sound facility. After being on the

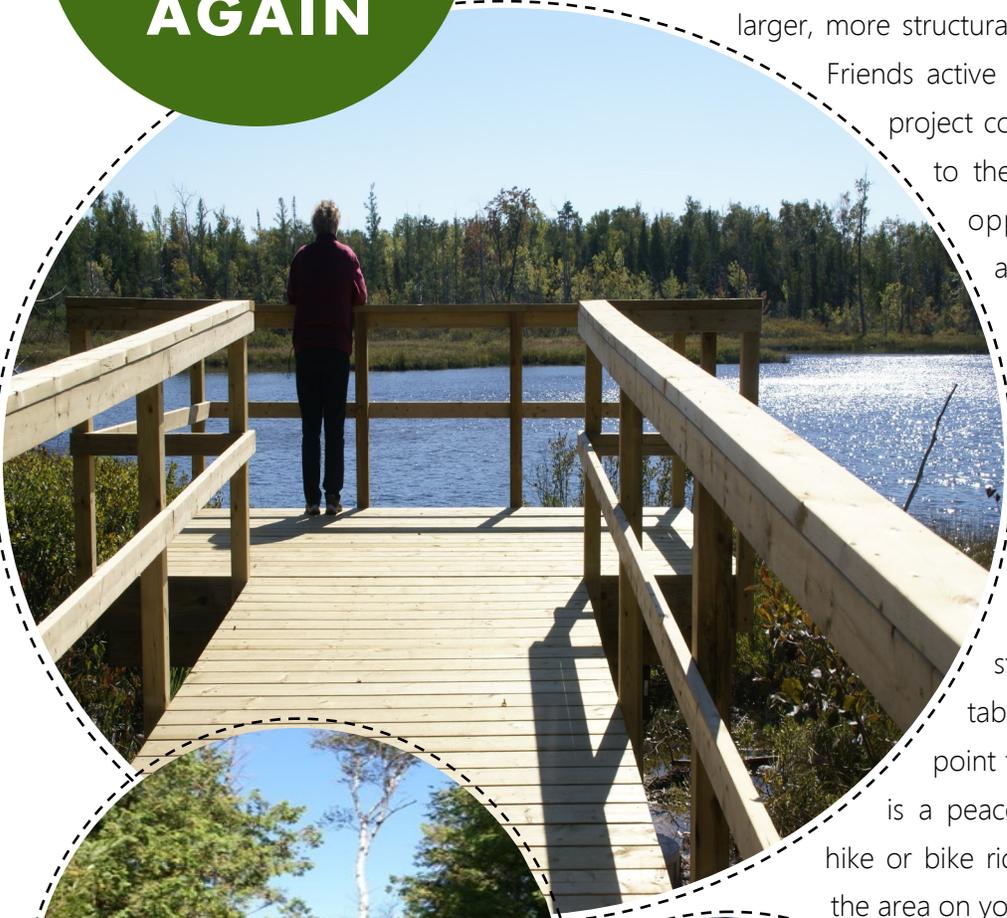
Friends active list for several years, it is nice to see project completion following many refinements to the design to match changing funding opportunities, the environmental assessment process, park priorities and construction staff availability.

Watersnake pond can be accessed by following **The Old Shore Road Trail** south from the Huron Campground beach parking area.

The area at the junction point with the short link trail leading into the structure has been enlarged and picnic tables provided. It is a great destination point for a lesser used area of the park and

is a peaceful location for a lunch break on a hike or bike ride. Be sure to include an outing to the area on your next visit.

*Article and Photos by Doug Martin
Friends Member and Volunteer*



Did you know? Over 100 years ago, Old Shore Road Trail was a transportation route for those travelling between the Lake Huron Communities of Kincardine and Southampton.

Find out more interesting facts through interpretive panels located along the trail, and check for other trail resources and information at the Visiting Centre.

HIKE THIS TRAIL!

Watersnake Pond is on a short side trail of **Old Shore Road Trail**, located south of Huron Campground. Old Shore Road is a 7km trail running the full length of MacGregor Point Provincial Park. The entire trail will take approximately 3 hours to hike and 1.5 hours to bike.



Photo: Sarah Martin

UPCOMING EVENTS AT MACGREGOR POINT

Witches in the Woods

October 17th, 18th and 19th, 2014

Witches in the Woods, celebrates Hallowe'en and the forest creatures closely linked to it! Campers decorate their sites, trick or treat, and explore nature in the fall. Special events include a Nocturnal Noises Night Hike, Scavenger Hunt, Pumpkin Carving, Campsite Decorating Contest, Campfire cookout, and Trick or Treating.

Be sure to check out the *Witches in the Woods Haunted Trail* and test your courage while walking through a MacGregor Point Campground in the dark . . .

(Note: Witches in the Woods Haunted Trail will be scary and is not recommended for children 12 and under, individuals who are pregnant, have a history of heart issues, epilepsy, or other health concerns. This is a Park sponsored event and is not associated with the Friends of MacGregor Point Park.



Photo: Kaylin Nutt

Weekly Events at MacGregor Point Provincial Park Visitor Centre

The Visitor Centre is closing for the winter season but be sure to come back in the spring for a series of interpretative programs including: Meet the Naturalist; Children's Programs; Guided Hikes; Outdoor Recreation; Guest Speakers and Special Events as scheduled.

Christmas Bird Count

Friday January 2, 2015

A dedicated group of volunteers will identify and record bird species in MacGregor Point Provincial Park and surrounding area. Come out and help count our area birds! For more information call Matthew Cunliffe at 519-389-6231 or 519-389-9056

Family Day and Snowfest

February 14th, 15th and 16th, 2015

Come out to the park for some family fun winter activities! More details and information to come!!



For more information and full program details visit www.friendsofmacgregor.org, email us at fompp@bmts.com or

MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPOTTED TURTLE

If you have a photo, story, memory, newsletter idea, event, advertisement, etc. you would like included in the Spotted Turtle Newsletter please send it to the attention of Sarah Martin at friendsofmacgregor@gmail.com and you may be featured in an upcoming issue! All submissions are greatly appreciated!



Wild for the Arts



Wild for the Arts is a community based cultural event that celebrates nature as a source of inspiration for creativity amid the autumn beauty of MacGregor Point Provincial Park. The Wild for the Arts Festival includes live music, drop-in art, dance, theatre and family fun! Visual arts include paintings, drawings, pastels, collage, photography and sculpture, stained glass, decorative art, pottery, jewellery, quilting, weaving, and wood work. Written works include poetry, fiction, and non-fiction; either commercially or author published.

A feature of the program is the Campsite Studio Tour where visitors have the opportunity to appreciate the arts in a natural setting.

Be sure to come out next year, September 19th and 20th, 2015



Highlights from the 2014 Wild for the Arts Festival



Photos: Doug Martin

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBERS

Michael La Blance	<i>President</i>	malablance@bmts.com
Jim Coles	<i>Projects Committee</i>	jcoles@gbtel.ca
Lana Baldwin	<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	klbaldwin@bmts.com
Bruce Mc Kechnie		bmckech@bmts.com
Linda Mason	<i>Memberships</i>	masonfam@bmts.com
Kerry Jarvis	<i>Marketing Committee</i>	kerryjarvis@kerryjarvis.com
Andrea La Blance	<i>Store Manager</i>	malablance@bmts.com

MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE BOARD

Matt Cunliffe	<i>Park Liaison</i>	matthew.cunliffe@ontario.ca
Norah Toth	<i>Ex-Officio, Recording Secretary</i>	ntoth@rogers.com
Sarah Martin	<i>Newsletter</i>	friendsofmacgregor@gmail.com

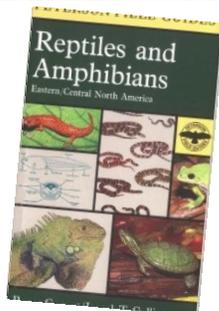
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS? EMAIL A CURRENT MEMBER, OR fompp@bmts.com FOR MORE INFORMATION.

WHAT AM I?



Learn the calls and other fun facts about frogs . . .

Try the Peterson Field Guide, A Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians, Eastern and Central North America.



The *Peterson Reptiles and Amphibians: Eastern and Central North America*, field guide is a great resource tool in the field which features detailed descriptions of over 500 species and subspecies. Since the first edition was published in 1958, it is a concise and comprehensive guide meant to highlight markings that are useful for field identification. With full colour illustrations, in-field photographs, and full colour distribution maps this is a must have guide!

CONFIRM YOUR ANSWERS ON PAGE 11

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS

for **May 22 to May 25, and May 28 to May 31, 2015**
for next year's Huron Fringe Birding Festival.

Registration starts on February 1st, 2015. Program details are available online by January 15th, 2015 on the Friend's website: www.friendsofmacgregor.org

Visit our blog for more information on the festival:
<https://huronfringefest.wordpress.com/>



Photo: Huron Fringe Wordpress Blog (Ed Nanni)



Photo: Sarah Martin

From right to left, Friends Board Member Kerry Jarvis, and Friends Members Melitta Smole and BJ Martin share smiles at Port Elgin Pumpkinfest.

Below, Park staff member Matt Cunliffe educates Pumpkinfest visitors about MacGregor Point's animals.

YOU CAN VOLUNTEER . . .

Representing the Friends of MacGregor Point Park at the annual Port Elgin Pumpkinfest is just one of the many ways you can volunteer with the Friends. Contact the Visitor Centre Staff if you are interested in volunteering!

VISITOR CENTRE & HURON FRINGE SHOP



Photo: Sarah Martin

The Visitor Centre and Huron Fringe Gift Shop are now on fall/winter hours, open for special events only. Be sure to check back in the spring for new exhibits and information about MacGregor Point!



Photo: Sarah Martin

Dinner is served at the Buchan Manor

Article and Pictures submitted by Liz Addison



[continued on page 9]

The Event . . .

Think of a “memorable meal”. We all have had at least one special meal that really stands out. It might have been for a special event like a birthday or anniversary where you were surrounded by family and friends. It might have been somewhere you travelled on a beautiful sunlit vacation. Perhaps it was the mouth-watering food that made it special. On October 8, several Friends of MacGregor Point Park had one of those memorable meals.

It all started back in May with the Huron Fringe Birding Festival banquet and silent auction. Norah Toth donated dinner for 6 people at her beautiful old historic home in Owen Sound. These dinners were the “hot items” for the bidders, bringing in about ½ of the total revenues for the auction. So the bidding was on! The meals were auctioned in pairs – 3 pairs accounted for the 6 meals. And the winners were (drum roll)



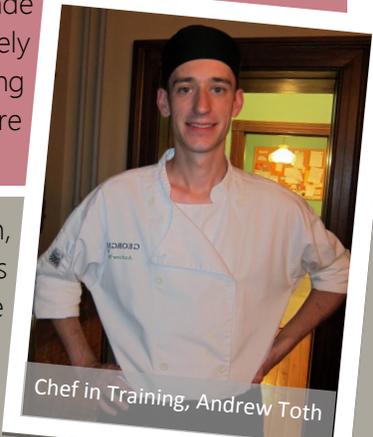
Peter and Arlene Richards

Liz Addison and Bruce Edmunds

Carole Lupton

But wait! Where is the 6th? Mike (Whyte) was feeling a bit under the weather, but he insisted Carole come without him. Mike is a gourmet cook and was soooo looking forward to the evening. Thoughtfully, chef-in-training Andrew made up a lovely sampler box for him to enjoy. When Carole got home, she showed Mike photos of the evening and he was thrilled with his take-away. He intends to ask Chef-in-training Andrew if he will share one of his recipes.

Andrew made up a lovely



Chef in Training, Andrew Toth

The Venue . . .

Talk about ambience! Norah treated us to a brief history of Buchan Manor, which has been in her family since it was built in 1855. The thick walls make all the windows recessed with deep window sills. The 13’ high ceilings leave lots of room for the elegant décor. It was one of the end points on the Underground Railway back when American slaves were heading north to escape their oppressors.

Not only does Norah live in a beautiful location, but it just so happens that her son, Andrew, is studying to be a chef at Georgian College! He refused to let us call him “Chef Andrew”. He says he still has a ways to go, but you’d never know it – not by judging the quality of his creations.

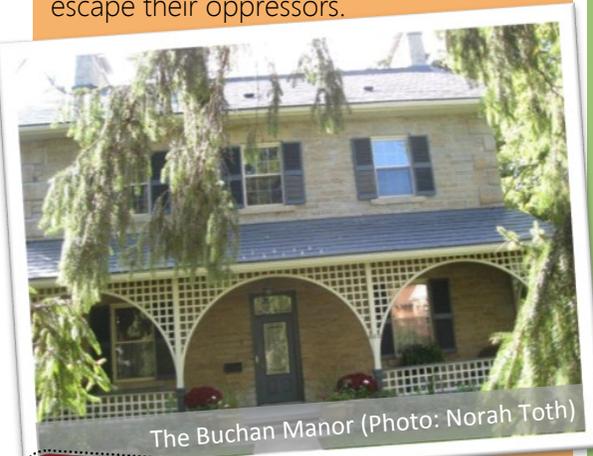
The Food . . .

Take a look at this beautiful 8-course dinner! (See Menu, & numbered images on Page 8)

I hope you’ve been noticing the elegant dinnerware – most of these beautiful dishes are family heirlooms. How special do you feel when someone brings out their best china in your honour? Exquisitely inscribed cutlery too – not just the regular old flatware for us. And what else, but fine crystal wine glasses! Oh – how could I forget the wine! Andrew provided us with several wine pairings with dinner as well. He takes great pride in his pairings and was willing to step out of the box. New Zealand Lamb was paired, not with wine, but with a beer made from New Zealand Hops, made locally at the Kilannen Brewery (Owen Sound, Ontario).

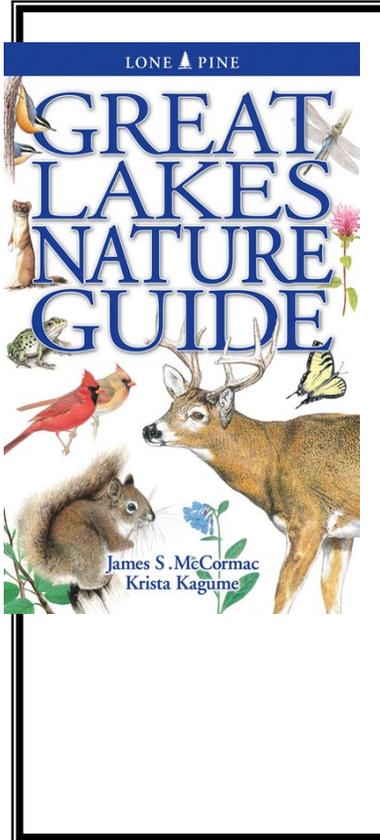


All in all it was just a wonderful experience and a memorable meal on all fronts: food, ambience, and the company of good friends. Many thanks to the Toths for their generous donation to the Birding Festival.



The Buchan Manor (Photo: Norah Toth)

“Andrew’s dinner made me think of the old adage, ‘people who give you their food give you their heart.’ (Cesar Chavez)” - Liz



BOOK OF THE ISSUE

Great Lakes Nature Guide James McCormac and Krista Kagume

As the leaves start to change to their beautiful Autumn hues, hints of Christmas start to fill retail stores. With this in mind, I wanted to feature a guide that would make an excellent gift for a budding naturalist, or someone new to the area. Lone Pine is a trusted producer of Ontario guides such as *Mammals of Ontario*, *Trees of Ontario*, *Wetland Plants of Ontario*, and *Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada*, and *Great Lakes Nature Guide* is no different. The guide provides identification information, some fun facts, and habitat information on the most common species in our area. The guide sets the stage with an introduction about the Great Lakes ecosystem, and the neat features found within. It then moves on

to explore the Animal Kingdom, with sections on Mammals, Birds, Amphibians & Reptiles, Fish, and Invertebrates. The sections on the Plant Kingdom are located toward the back of the book and include Trees, Shrubs & Vines, and Forbes, Ferns & Grasses. Though it is not meant to replace your Sibley or Peterson field guide, it is a compact guide making it seem much more accessible to someone new to using a field guide, or for someone who is interested in learning the most common species in our area. *Great Lakes Nature Guide* is sold for \$19.95, or \$16.95 with your Friends Membership card.

*Bookworm Kathleen
2014 Visitor Centre Staff*

Visit www.lonepinepublishing.com to see what other books they have on topics including . . . Nature, Gardening, Outdoor Recreation, Ghost Stories, History & Biography, Seasonal and more!

HELP US PROMOTE THE FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR POINT

We are trying to make the Friends of MacGregor, and the work of the Friends better known amongst campers, Park visitors, naturalists, nature enthusiasts, surrounding communities, and all throughout Ontario who have a vested interest in MacGregor Point Provincial Park, Ontario Parks, and nature.

We are asking every reader to help us do this by spreading the word about the Park and the work of the Friends by promoting us in your community, online, and at any event you attend.

We have flyers and newsletters of the work and message of the Friends we can make available to you. Please feel free to pass on the friends website, and encourage those you know to become a member of the Friends of MacGregor Point Park.

<http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org/>

[NEW MEMBERS CAN FILL OUT THE ENCLOSED MEMBERSHIP FORM]

CONNECT WITH THE FRIENDS



<http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org/>



NEWSLETTER | friendsofmacgregor@gmail.com
FRIENDS | fompp@bmts.com



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PORT ELGIN, ONTARIO
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VISITOR CENTRE | (519) 389-6232



"@ FOMPP "



"The Friends of MacGregor
Point Park"

A THANK-YOU TO THE FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR POINT PARK

*Kathleen Houlahan
2014 Visitor Centre Staff*

We've had another wonderful summer season at the MacGregor Point Visitor Centre filled with some incredible new programming, special events, and guest speakers. However, the leaves are starting to change which means our summer staff are all going back to their respective Universities for another year of school. I'll also be heading out shortly to head back to Kingston to start my third year at Queen's University for Environmental Science..

At the Visitor Centre, campers frequently ask the staff what they're taking in school, assuming we're all budding biologists. However many are surprised to find out that within our staff, only two of us fall within the natural sciences. When I started my first year working at the Visitor Centre, I was entirely on Friends contracts for the

summer and was keen to tell anyone who would listen that I was heading off for a wonderful adventure in England studying philosophy. Yet, during that summer I absolutely fell in love with MacGregor Point and the many varied ecosystems of the Bruce Peninsula. Though I did go off and study Philosophy that first year in England, when it came time for me to head back to Queen's university in Canada, I decided to switch my major to Environmental Science so I could continue to learn about the natural world around me!

And so, I wanted to extend my sincerest thanks to the Friends of MacGregor Point for providing me, a student with no science background, with a job three summers ago now. This job has changed the whole course of my life, I daresay for the better.

**In the Apple,
How Many Seeds?**



**In the Seed,
How Many Apples?**

Photo: BJ Martin

~ Anonymous



Photo: Sarah Martin

PUMPKIN PIE ANYONE ?!

IMAGE TAKEN AT PORT ELGIN PUMPKINFEST GROWERS TENT!
THE BIGGEST PUMPKIN THIS YEAR WAS OVER 1,500 POUNDS!

WHAT AM I? ANSWERS: 1 SPRING PEEPER 2 WOOD FROG 3 AMERICAN TOAD 4 GREEN FROG 5 NORTHERN LEOPARD FROG

BEE RESEARCHERS RAISE WARNING FLAGS ABOUT NEONICOTINOID PESTICIDES

Neonicotinoid-coated seeds are a common agricultural crop for most Canadian corn and soybean growers, but may have deadly side effects for bees and other wildlife. The use of these seeds has been deeply debated for over a decade, dividing farmers, beekeepers and scientists and has resulted in a modern day environmental battle. Neonicotinoids are used in everything from corn and canola, to flea collars for pets. Some believe this version of insecticide which coats the plants as they mature is responsible for the decline in honey bees. Recent research highlights that 70% of bees tested last spring were exposed.

The science may still be under debate, and some feel a balance can be made in the use of these products, but are bees the next canary in the coalmine?

DID YOU KNOW

- ◆ DECLINES IN HONEY BEE POPULATIONS MAY BE A WARNING SIGN OF A LARGER ECOLOGICAL PROBLEM
- ◆ NEONICOTINOID PESTICIDES ARE PERSISTENT IN SOIL AND WATER, AND HIGHLY MOBILE IN ECOSYSTEMS
- ◆ EUROPE HAS BANNED POPULAR AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES CONTAINING NEONICOTINOID, WHILE CANADA AND THE U.S.A ARE CAUTIOUS, SAYING MORE EVIDENCE IS NEEDED
- ◆ CROP ROTATION, IMPROVED PLANTING TECHNIQUES AND PEST RESISTENT CROPS CAN ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR PESTICIDES IN AGRICULTURE.



Photo: Shutterstock Stock Photos

Bee article information compiled from CBC News Broadcast, Janet Thompson, May 27, 2014

The Friends of MacGregor Point Park are looking for volunteers!

If you are interested in getting more involved with **The Friends of MacGregor Point Park** we are looking for eager individuals to help! For 2015 we need to fill the Friends President/Gift Shop Manager/Membership Secretary and Fundraising Chair positions.

Wild for the Arts is looking for dedicated committee members! For 2015 we are in need of individuals to help: build the festival program and events; assist with sponsorship; work on promotions; or take on the treasurer role.

Not local? Don't worry! We are happy to correspond through phone and email! Help your local park, help with a local arts festival, network with interesting people, hone and develop a whole new set of skills and best of all have fun!

If you are interested and would like more information please contact Matthew Cunliffe @ 519-389-6231 or email fompp@bmts.com – even if you are not interested in the positions above, we are always looking for new help!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP WITH THE FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR

The Friends of MacGregor Point mission is to be "Naturally Connected", while believing in the support of the values of Ontario Parks, and those of MacGregor Point Provincial Park, the preservation of natural, historical and cultural aspects of the MacGregor Point environment, and the basic principles of environmental conservation.

The projects and programs provided by the Friends help ensure that the natural legacy of MacGregor Point Provincial Park will remain for future generations. Projects are undertaken with funding from membership fees, donations from individuals and various fundraising projects. The Friends of MacGregor are proud of the projects undertaken with the help of many supporting partners.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE . . .

- The seasonal Spotted Turtle Newsletter
- Notice of special and "Member Only" events
- A 15% discount at the Huron Fringe Shop (nature gift shop located in the Visitor Centre)
- Free access to WIFI at the Visitor Centre

Please complete the form below and MAIL to: FRIENDS OF MACGREGOR 1593 BRUCE ROAD 33, RR#1, PORT ELGIN, ON, N0H 2C5
You can also renew your membership ONLINE by visiting: <http://friendsofmacgregor.org/page/join-the-friends>

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

PROVINCE: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE NUMBER: () _____

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS * * In order to keep membership costs down and to be environmentally friendly, our newsletter is distributed to members via email. Alternate arrangements for members who do not have internet access can be made by contacting the Spotted Turtle Editor, or Membership Chairperson

EMAIL ADDRESS

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE CONTACTED TO VOLUNTEER AT FRIENDS EVENTS? YES

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY INDIVIDUAL (\$20) FAMILY (\$30)

DONATION \$ _____ OFFICIAL TAX RECEIPTS WILL BE ISSUED FOR ALL DONATIONS

TOTAL \$ _____

PAYMENT: CHEQUE VISA MASTERCARD

CARD NUMBER:

EXPIRY: 20

SIGNATURE: _____