

Bring Back the Don

SEASONAL UPDATE

FALL UPDATE 2002



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Use Your Fall Leaves – Save Time, Effort and Money

Michelle Reid, Task Force Member

If trees dot your yard, every fall you may face the exhausting chore of leaf collection and disposal. Instead of endlessly raking and filling costly paper bags, why not use fallen leaves to improve the health of your lawn, shrubs and perennials? Fallen leaves can be mulched to improve soil condition, composted to improve nutrient content, or strategically placed to insulate tender plants from the ravages of winter frost.

To turn leaves into a soil conditioner for the lawn, forget that rake! Either run your mulching mower over the leaves or shred a pile of leaves with the mower and apply to your shrub and perennial beds. Or simply leave them on the lawn.

Another way to recycle your fallen leaves is by composting. Compost improves garden soil by increasing organic matter and improving soil drainage. To compost, alternate 6" layers of leaves with 1" layers of soil, moistening each layer with water. Cover the entire pile with a layer of soil and cover with plastic. Turn your pile every few weeks and add moisture if it becomes dry.

Worried about frost damage? Rake leaves over your perennials and around your shrubs in November. The leaves will provide insulation while helping the soil to retain moisture. Early in the spring, rake the leaves out and add them to the compost pile, or dig them into the beds. So, this fall help the environment and spoil your plants by reusing or recycling your leaves.

Basic Tree Identification

Michelle Reid, Task Force Member





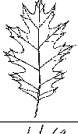







If you've come out to one of our tree planting events, have you ever wondered what you planted? What it will look like when it's mature? How you could identify it when you visit the Don? Believe it or not, even professionals and long time members of Bring Back the Don sometimes have trouble identifying trees.

Before beginning to identify trees and shrubs, you need to recognize the different types of trees and the basic tree parts used in identification. In the summer, it is easiest to identify trees using tree shape, bark texture and colour, leaves and fruit.

There are two basic types of trees found in Canada:

1. **Deciduous trees** shed their leaves in the fall. Many deciduous trees have broad, flat leaves and produce flowers, which develop into seeds. Deciduous trees produce four types of seed; a winged seed called a samara, a nut, a pod or a fleshy fruit. Oaks, maples and ashes are examples of deciduous trees found in the Don Valley.

2. **Coniferous trees** have narrow, hard leaves. These leaves are called needles or scales. Coniferous trees are usually evergreen. Evergreens do not lose their leaves in the fall and remain green all year. Coniferous trees do not produce flowers; they produce cones. Pine, spruce and cedar are examples of coniferous trees found in the Don Valley.

Common Name	Botanical Name	Tree Type	Tree Shape	Leaf	Fruit	Bark
Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	Deciduous				Grey, long thin, flake
Red Oak	Quercus rubra	Deciduous				Grey, ridged
White Pine	Pinus strobus	Coniferous				Dark brown, scaly
White Cedar	Thuja occidentalis	Coniferous				Reddish brown, shedding

Images taken from: *Trees in Canada* by J. L. Farrar, Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., Ottawa, 1995

Want to learn more about trees and how to identify them? Pick up one of these great books: *Trees in Canada*, by J. L. Farrar, Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., 1995; *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees: Eastern Region*, by Elbert L. Little, Knopf, 1980; or *Taylor's Guide to Trees, based on Taylor's Encyclopedia of Gardening*, by Norman Taylor, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987.

Issues Update

John Wilson, Task Force Chair

Two years ago, the Don Regeneration Council's report card was called "A Time For Bold Steps". Now is the time for major commitments from government to take "bringing back the Don" to a higher level.

Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Management planning process has worked for several years to detail options for stormwater management. One thing is certain. Making appreciable improvements in Don River water quality will be costly. Now is the time for you to look at options and tell politicians how much clean water means to you. You can e-mail Tracey Ehl, Works & Emergency Services Department at Tracey_ehl@city.toronto.on.ca for information.

City staff are currently preparing a Don Valley Corridor Transportation Study. Your councillor needs to know your views on sustainable transportation to evaluate this study's recommendations when they are completed.

Environment Canada is conducting stakeholder consultations on its designation of road salt as a toxic substance. Bring Back the Don is advocating for firm reduction targets and broad public awareness programs to help reduce the salt load in our river. Environment Minister David Anderson needs to know your thoughts.

Toronto's Snow Disposal Feasibility Study is complete. It responds to our advocacy by recommending that - in the long term - the use of valley lands for snow disposal be discontinued. The report also recommends steps toward this goal. These include mitigation measures at two valley snow dump sites, and purchasing and evaluating a portable snow melter that may eventually replace the valley snow dumps, and improved environmental monitoring. We will press Council to act decisively on these recommendations.



Bring Back the Don

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events happen rain or shine, and usually last a couple of hours.

For more information about any of our planting events, please call 416-392-0401.

Plantings

Attention Students and Teachers:

Our planting events are a great way for students to learn about environmental issues in an outdoor setting, and have a lot of fun! Weekday events are scheduled with school groups in mind and usually run from 10 a.m. – noon, rain or shine. A weekday event schedule may be obtained by contacting Keri at 416-392-0373. Please note that we ask groups of 10 or more to register with us in advance of the event.

High school students are welcome to gain volunteer hours with Bring Back the Don at our weekend planting events. Please see the schedule below and contact Keri at 416-392-0373 or e-mail driver@city.toronto.on.ca if you have any questions.

Planting Events

Plantings are fun for families, individuals and groups. We provide shovels, gloves and other tools. You just need to wear sturdy shoes and clothing that can withstand a little dirt.

Riverdale Park East Wetland

Sunday, September 22,

10 a.m. - noon

Tree and shrub planting at the new wetland in Riverdale Park East. Located on the west side of Broadview Avenue, just north of Gerrard Street East. Meet at the base of the south-facing slope.

Don Valley Brick Works

Sunday, October 20, 10 a.m. - noon

Tree and shrub planting in the park behind the buildings. The Don Valley Brick Works is located on the west side of Bayview Avenue, just south of Pottery Road. Look for the brick buildings. Meet at the parking lot.

Community Event

Greening the Don Narrows

Sunday, September 29,

10 a.m. - noon

Community Event at Joel Weeks Park. Come celebrate community efforts to Greening the Don Narrows. Featuring pancake breakfast, ceremonial tree planting, and lots of fun and games. The park is located at the corner of Thompson and Carroll Streets.

Volunteers

Task Force Sub-Committees

- Our Communications Team works on exciting education and outreach projects.
- If you are interested in learning more about the Task Force's habitat restoration and water quality projects, join our Projects Team.
- The Policy/Planning team examines policy and strategy issues.
- The Funding Team researches opportunities for new funding partners.



Visit to Don Valley Brick Works

Photo: Susan Hughes

Canada-Mexico Study Trip, 2002

Susan Hughes, Study Committee Member

As part of an exchange program organized by the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa and the Museum of Natural History in Mexico City, a study group of professionals from Mexico City visited Toronto to explore the Don River Valley and learn more about the work of organizations and municipalities such as the Task Force to Bring Back the Don and the City of Toronto. The program was designed to strengthen north-south collaborations, sensitize participants to conservation of biodiversity issues, and show the complexity of the interventions needed to ensure a viable future. A key goal was to build a network of alliances between organizations and individuals to share information, expertise and strategies.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Other Peoples' Events

Lost Rivers Walks

Sunday, September 15, 2 p.m.

"Development & Nature" at Taylor/Massey Creek. Start at the SE corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Crockford Boulevard, and end at Terraview-Willowfield Park. Leader: Richard Anderson.

Sunday, December 15, 2 p.m.

"Three Creeks for The Magi" Nature and three lost creeks with a Christmas theme. Start at Lawrence & Yonge (SW corner), and end at North Toronto Community Centre. Leaders: Helen Mills and Peter Hare.

Toronto Islands Sand Dune Restoration

Sunday, September 15 & 29, 10 a.m.

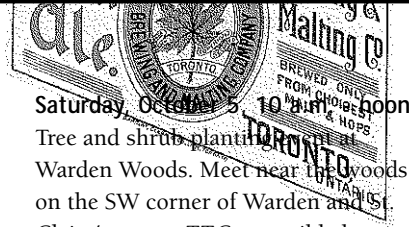
Herbaceous, tree and shrub planting in partnership with the City of Toronto, Toronto Bay Initiative and Evergreen. Meet at 10 a.m. outside the ferry terminal gates, city side (located immediately west of the Weston Harbour Castle at Queen's Quay and Bay Street). Ferry ride to Hanlan's Point is free for volunteers.

Friends of the Don East

Saturday, September 21,

10 a.m. - noon

Come visit Leaside's forest treasure, Crother's Woods Environmentally Sensitive Area. Join FODE and the City of Toronto for a free guided walk through a forest recognized for its "regionally rare plant species and high quality tolerant hardwood habitat". Meet in the Loblaw's parking lot on Redway Road, at the top of the hill to the North Toronto Treatment Plant. For more information call 416-466-9153 or e-mail fode@web.ca



Saturday, October 5, 10 a.m. - noon

Tree and shrub planting in Warden Woods. Meet near the woods on the SW corner of Warden and Clair Avenues. TTC accessible by Warden subway station. Equipment will be provided. For more information call 416-466-9153 or e-mail fode@web.ca

Toronto Bay Initiative

Saturday, September 21,

10 a.m. - noon

Spadina Quay Wetland Planting, at the base of Spadina Avenue at Queen's Quay.

Bruce Trail Club Hike in the Don

Sunday, September 22, 10 a.m.

Level I Urban Hike, 10 km. Moderate pace, for Beginners and Families.

Explore the Don Valley with the Task Force to Bring Back the Don. We will start and end at the Broadview subway station and see Riverdale Park, Chester Springs Marsh, and Todmorden Mills. Call Dave Tyson, 416 966-1379 or John Routh, 416 694-4680.

Todmorden Mills Wildflower Preserve Planting event

Saturday, September 28,

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Planting in the meadow, wetland and forest land of the preserve. Meet at the main parking lot. Drinks will be provided, but please bring a lunch.

Riverdale Farm Tree and Shrub planting

Saturday September 28,

10 a.m. - noon

Plant trees and shrubs at the Farm in partnership with Green Thumbs Growing Things, the Riverdale Farm Advisory Committee, and the City of Toronto Natural Environment and Horticulture Section. Meet at the end of Winchester Street. Call 416-876-1480 for more information.

Water in the City Walk with RiverSides Stewardship Alliance

Sunday, September 29, 10 a.m.

Learn about the water flowing through the city's underground sewer system, the effects of stormwater on our lake and rivers, and what you can do to be part of the solution. Meet outside the Chester subway station. Call RiverSides at 416-392-1983 to register, or e-mail riversides@riversides.org.

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Saturday, October 19, 9 - 11 a.m.

SEMINAR: "A Bird in the Hand" at Tommy Thompson Park. For more information on this and other seminars, contact the TRCA at 416-661-6600 or visit www.trca.on.ca.

Citizens' Environment Watch (CEW)

is looking for existing groups or individuals to "adopt" one of four stream monitoring sites. Benthic macroinvertebrate (water bugs) monitoring will be done in association with the TRCA in the Lower West Don River (E. T. Seton and Wilket Creek Parks), the Lower East Don River (Charles Sauriol Conservation Area) and Mimico Creek (Echo Valley Park). Training will be provided. For more information please contact Jeff Borisko at 416-978-4144 or visit us at www.utoronto.ca/envstudy/cew/cew.htm.

Kidz Page



Creatures of the Don Valley-

T	B	R	I	N	E	T	B
R	A	G	B	T	A	I	I
E	C	D	O	K	R	B	N
E	T	Y	P	D	F	B	S
D	O	B	S	O	H	A	E
C	E	A	X	D	L	R	C
E	L	T	R	U	T	E	T
O	N	S	E	K	A	N	S

- INSECTS
- RABBIT
- SNAKES
- TADPOLES
- TURTLE
- BATS
- BIRDS
- COYOTE
- DEER
- FOX



Trees

The Oak is called the king of trees,
 The Aspen quivers in the breeze,
 The Poplar grows up straight and tall,
 The Peach tree spreads along the wall,
 The Sycamore gives pleasant shade,
 The Willow droops in watery glade,
 The Fir tree useful timber gives,
 The Beech amid the forest lives.

Sara Coleridge

Cross off the creatures in the puzzle above and the letters that are left are the animal's hidden message to you.



 Hidden Message

Word Scramble

1. _____
 v r i r e

2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
 s f h i e s r t e o f x



Don River Quiz

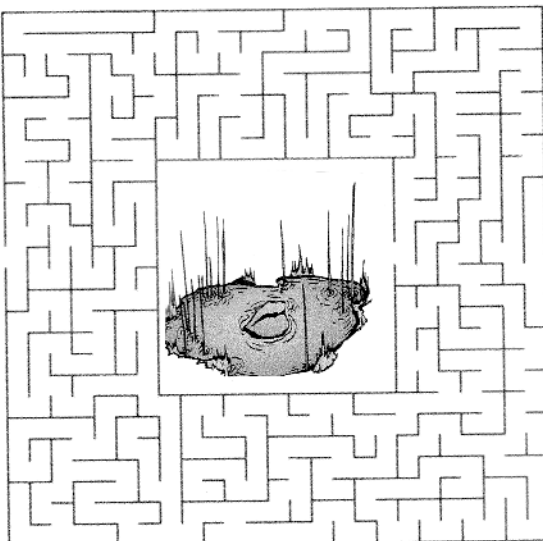
1. How large is the Don Watershed?
 - a. 1000 square km
 - b. 36 square km
 - c. 360 square km
2. What is the largest cause of pollution in the Don River?
 - a. industrial waste
 - b. storm water runoff (water from streets after it rains)
 - c. fertilizers/pesticides from farms
3. The Don River used to freeze in the winter, why doesn't it freeze now?
 - a. because of the salt used to de-ice roads and highways in the winter
 - b. because it flows too fast
 - c. because of global warming
4. Where do the sewer grates on the streets empty into?
 - a. a water treatment facility
 - b. the nearest local lake or river
 - c. the log ride at Ontario Place

Don't peak!!

Answers

1. c, 2. b, 3. b, 4. b

HELP!! Put me back in my pond, HURRY!!



DID YOU KNOW?

BREWERIES IN THE DON RIVER VALLEY

Paul Leggett, Task Force Volunteer

Breweries were an important industry in the Don Valley in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Their owners often became prominent citizens, active in the political life of the city.

For example, the Davies family played a major role in Toronto's brewing history. Thomas Sr. opened the Davies Brewery on the west bank of the Don River just north of the present day Queen Street bridge. Today, one of the original brick buildings is being converted into residential condominiums. His older son, Thomas Davies Jr. was a member of Toronto City Council and is credited with arranging for Riverdale Park to be set aside in 1876. He is also known for having promoted the straightening and widening of the lower Don River, the so-called Don Improvement project. In 1878, his younger son, Robert built the Dominion Brewery on Queen Street, between Sumach and Sackville Streets. The brewery was to become world famous for its ales and lagers. Production continued for over 60 years until 1936.

Learn more about the sites and history of the Don at the new Web site of the North Toronto Green Community, www.lostrivers.ca Also, Ron Fletcher's book *Over the Don* contains a series of historically-based vignettes about the area and its occupants. For a copy, call 416-461-9695.

BRING BACK THE DON/SERVE CANADA BANNERS

The Task Force to Bring Back the Don would like to thank the Bank of Nova Scotia and Serve Canada for allowing us to install our new banners on their building at 543 River St. Thanks also to artist and past Task Force Member Marie Day, who created the design and supervised the painting, Councillor Pam McConnell and her staff for their assistance, the Toronto Community Foundation for their financial support, and the energetic Serve Canada Interns and staff for their help in painting the banners. The banners were manufactured and installed by Sign-a-rama.



Banners installed on 543 River St. building



THANKS TO OUR 2002 FUNDING PARTNERS!

So far this year, funding for Task Force projects has come from: City of Toronto, Environment Canada, Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, Unilever Canada, Toronto Remedial Action Plan, The Pat and John McCutcheon Charitable Trust, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, GAIA Branksome Hall Student Environmental Club, The York School, and many others.

Bring Back the Don also thanks the many individuals, corporations, school groups and community organizations that have participated in our projects and have contributed to "bringing back" the Don watershed.

DOING RESEARCH ON THE DON?

A collection of Don River materials is housed in the Urban Affairs Branch of the Toronto Public Library at Metro Hall, 55 John Street (John at King). Call 416-397-7241 for more information.

BRING BACK THE DON

The Task Force to Bring Back the Don is a 23-member citizens' group sponsored by the City of Toronto that works to "bring back" a clean, green and accessible Don River watershed.

The Task Force to Bring Back the Don
Metro Hall
23rd Floor
55 John Street
Toronto ON M5V 3C6

For information about events or activities, please call 416-392-0401, or e-mail us at driver@city.toronto.on.ca.

Bring Back the Don events are also posted on the City of Toronto's Web site: www.city.toronto.on.ca/don

