



HIGH PARK COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Newsletter and Calendar – January to June 2009

About us

The aim of the Volunteer Stewardship Program (VSP) is to have fun while helping to restore the natural environment of High Park with a group of like-minded and friendly volunteers. VSP activities provide an excellent opportunity to learn more about native plants and the natural environment and to meet people who appreciate the value of having nature in the city!

High Park is home to several terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems: the Black Oak Savannah, with plants at the northernmost limit of their range, and Boreal Forest at the southernmost limit of its range plus ponds, streams and Toronto's largest natural body of water north of Lake Ontario; Grenadier Pond. VSP helps to protect the natural environment and precious ecosystems for future generations of people and wildlife.

VSP volunteers work in conjunction with the City of Toronto Restoration Crew and Horticulture staff to restore, conserve and expand the natural environment. Special efforts are paid to the restoration of the Black Oak Savannah, once extensive in North America but now rare and so significant that it has ANSI designation (Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. VSP year-round environmental stewardship activities include collecting local seeds in fall, winter cleaning and preparing seeds for planting in the native plant greenhouse, planting outside in the spring and fall and restraining or removing invasive exotic monocultures during the spring, summer and fall (there's a lot of them). The VSP native plant sales in the spring (May 3, 2009) are very popular. In the winter when work outdoors isn't possible, VSP presents several talks pertaining to the native plants, their ecosystem components and the natural environment.

Meetings

VSP meets at 10:30 a.m. on the first and third Sunday of each month (except January – the only meeting is on the 18th and the month of December, 2009). Additional special sessions are added as needed. For work sessions we gather in front of the Grenadier Café and Teahouse in the middle of the park. Our educational presentations (mostly in winter) are at the Howard Park Tennis Club, 430 Parkside Drive, Toronto, ON M6R 2Z3 (south of Bloor from Keele).

Join VSP! Get more information!

It's easy to join the Volunteer Stewardship Program – just come out to one of our events! To be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail with your contact information to vsp@highpark.org or visit our web site to fill out a volunteer form at <http://www.highpark.org>. You will find more information and pictures from some of our events by clicking on the VSP icon. You can select the events that interest you from the Calendar page and have a reminder sent or add them to your own Outlook Calendar. Email notices are also sent from info@mail.evite.com. Please add it to your safe senders list.

Our book, **Rare Plants of the Endangered High Park Black Oak Savannah** is now available. Plant and habitat guide, history and stewardship resources all in one compact and entertaining booklet. All proceeds go to restoration work in High Park. Contact vsp@highpark.org to order a copy and send a cheque payable to High Park Initiatives for \$15 plus \$3.00 shipping to: High Park Initiatives 95 Lavinia Avenue, P.O. Box 108, Toronto, ON, M6S 3H9.

We look forward to working together with you to nurture the natural environment of High Park!

Volunteer Stewardship Program
c/o High Park Community Advisory Council
P.O. Box 108, Swansea Town Hall, 95 Lavinia Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3H9
Phone: (416) 392-1748 for a recorded message, www.highpark.org or contact vsp@highpark.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS Winter/Spring 2009 HIGH PARK VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

WHERE: Meet at the main entrance of the Grenadier Café and Teahouse for all events **except** presentations which are held at the **Howard Park Tennis Club (HPTC), 430 Parkside Drive**. Suitable clothing for greenhouse and outdoor sessions should include non-skid boots and layers as conditions are changeable.

WHEN: Sunday events run from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and take place rain or shine. Plans are subject to change, depending on weather, growing season and other uncontrollable factors.

See www.highpark.org and check the **Calendar** page or the **VSP** section for more information on our group and events. **No time commitments required; just come to the events that interest you.** We will sign documents you provide for any volunteer hour requirements. Contact vsp@highpark.org for more information.

January 2009						
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February 2009						
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March 2009						
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April 2009						
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May 2009						
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June 2009						
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28	29	30				

Jan. 4	No meeting Jan 4th
Jan. 18	Birds, Bees, Butterflies and Bats (HPTC) The Social Lives of Plants 1: how flying creatures interact and affect plants and how plants influence the fliers. Four experts talk about each of the "Bs" followed by Q & A
Feb. 1	Greenhouse – Seed Cleaning with Horticulture staff
Feb. 15	VSP Presentation – Animals and Insects (HPTC) The Social Lives of Plants 2: How walking and crawling creatures affect plants and how plants influence animals and insects. Q & A follows the talk by four experts.
March 1	VSP Presentation - Holistic Ecosystem (HPTC) Four talks by four experts: what makes up a whole ecosystem, how water, soil and air affect the ecosystem and how healthy ecosystems need connected corridors
March 15	Greenhouse – Transplanting with Horticulture staff
April 5	Urban Forestry New Volunteer Training/Orientation Session. (HPTC) Welcoming new volunteers for 2009 Season City staff will provide overview of the forestry program in High Park and discuss volunteer opportunities
April 19	Outside Work Session - Nursery Work or Boulevard Bed Clean-up with Forestry Crew/Horticulture staff
April 29	Special session Plant Sale Preparation Greenhouse- 6:30 to 8:30 pm with Horticulture Staff
May 3	VSP Native Plant Sale at the Greenhouse (11-2)
May 17	Garlic mustard control with VSP leaders
June 7	Savannah Planting at All Star Site with Forestry Crew
June 21	VSP field trip - site TBA