

Prescribed Burn & Restoration Plans

Prescribed burns are part of a long-term plan to restore black oak woodlands and savannahs in the park. On April 14th, 8.7 ha (across 4 sites) were burned. Weather conditions were very favourable, the process went smoothly, and the degree of burn was very good. The procedure was well-covered by the media (see links on the [Prescribed Burns](#) page) and community response was favourable.

The burned areas are expected to green up again quickly. The results of the burn will be monitored. More planting is planned for two of the burn sites, the north savannah and the All-Star savannah, as well as random in-fill planting at other sites. Solarization will be used to prepare the sites first (covering the area with black plastic sheeting for a full growing season) to eliminate unwanted plants, such as the vigorous brome grass, that may have survived the burn.

Weir at South End of Grenadier Pond

An adjustable weir at the southwest corner of the pond is meant to regulate the pond's water levels, and serves an important role in maintaining the pond's ecosystem. At our request, discussions are being held with Toronto Water and TRCA to confirm that the weir is being operated according to protocol and to clarify who has responsibility for doing this.

Picnic Site Removal

Several years ago, an infrequently used picnic site southwest of the baseball diamond and north of the labyrinth was determined to be unsuitable due to its proximity to restoration areas. The picnic tables and concrete pad were recently removed by the City. This will considerably lessen foot traffic in the adjacent restored savannah, thereby helping it to better establish itself. Restoration plans for the site itself will be carried out 2011-2012.

Grenadier Pond Interpretive Signs Project

So far, seven articles have been written and the next step is to prepare the sign version. The first grant application was unsuccessful so a new application has been submitted to another potential source. The heron prototype sign is to be produced and installed later this year.

If you would like to participate in this project as writer or editor, please contact Ken Sharratt, the project leader, at signs@highparknature.org.

Beaver and Cormorant Activity

Beavers have been more active in the last couple of years at the north end of Grenadier Pond and have recently moved up the slope, threatening some of the larger, more valuable tree species. Key trees have been wrapped in mesh. We were advised to notify **311** immediately if this activity blocks the channel between Wendigo Pond and Grenadier Pond.

A member of the public expressed concern regarding the increased number of cormorants at Grenadier Pond. TRCA and a cormorant expert at York University advised that the pond does not provide the required secluded nesting conditions, so these birds are only "loafing" here, and are not a threat to fish stock or habitat.

Wild Bee Research Project

Scott MacIvor, a PhD candidate at York University, is conducting a study of wild, cavity-nesting bees in the urban environment, and has obtained permission to install a number of "bee condos" in the park. Solitary sand bees are abundant in High Park's savannahs. See the [Restore/Research](#) page for more information.

Sewage Overflow

In mid-March a sewage overflow affected the marshy area at the northwest edge of Grenadier Pond. The pumping station near Ellis Park Road had failed due to a blockage in the pipe that leads uphill to the west. While the pump was out of commission and already being attended to, someone in the neighbourhood poured diesel fuel down a sewer grate and this was part of the material that overflowed into the adjacent marshy area. The Ministry of the Environment was called in and a clean-up carried out. A protective boom remains in place and the site continues to be monitored. We will be following up on the current situation and also to see what protections are in place for the future.

Events

- High Park Nature participated in the Ontario Nature regional meeting on April 16 and will have a table at the High Park Nature Centre open house on May 1.
- High Park Native Plant Sale will be held on Sunday, May 8, 11 am to 2 pm outside the Greenhouse.
- Check out the new [Other Items of Interest](#) page (under My Park) for a number of events within and outside High Park, such as the "Places of Natural Discovery" Conference at Humber College on May 25/26.