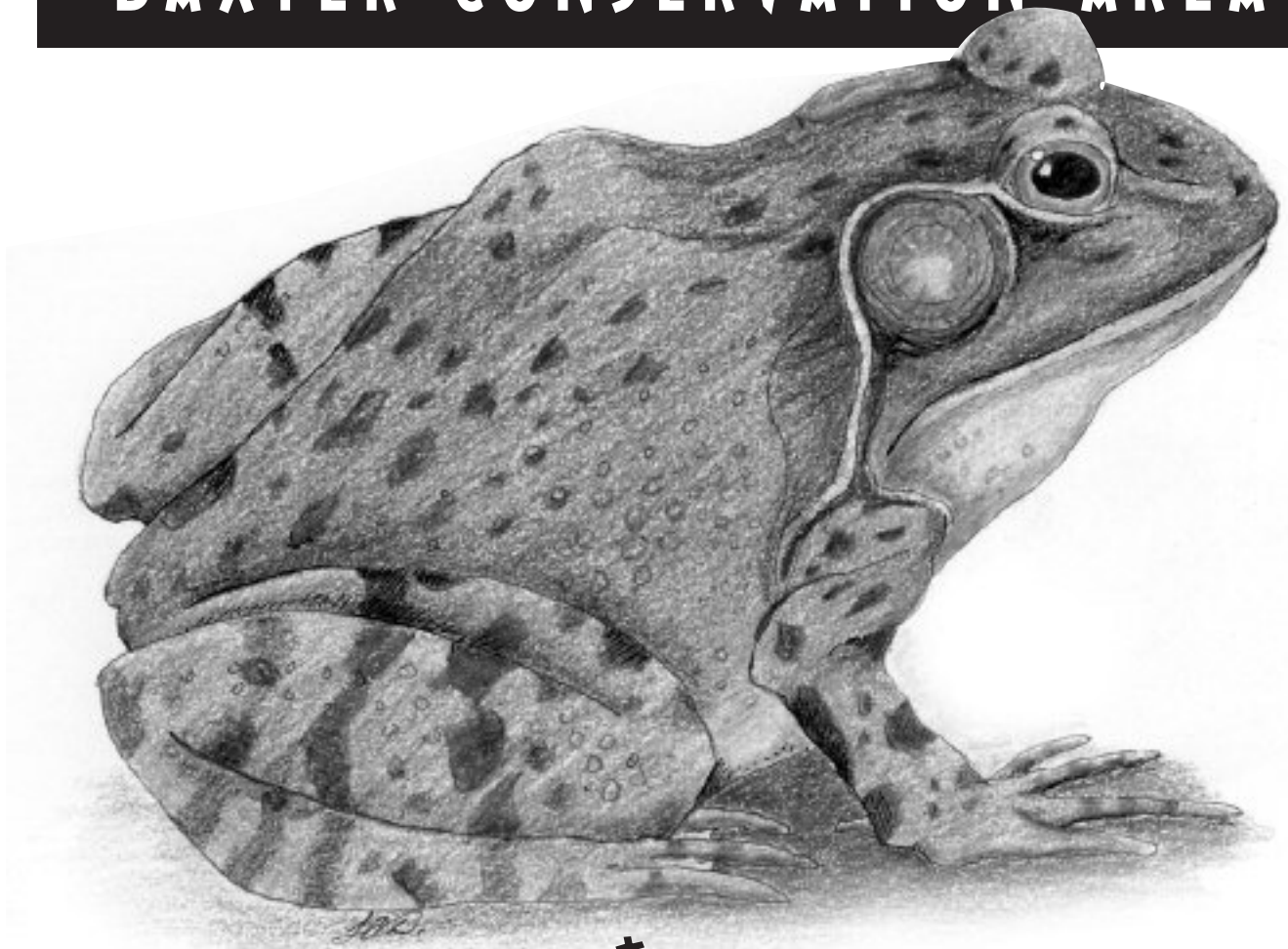


# BAXTER CONSERVATION AREA



## Outdoor & Environmental Education

**Baxter Conservation Area** is located on the shores of the Rideau River, five minutes south of Kars and North Gower. It is owned and operated by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Baxter is 170 acres of mixed forest, open meadow, wetlands, beach, group camping areas and nut tree plantation. There are five kilometers of trails and boardwalks that provide wonderful, safe access for forest, meadow and wetland exploration.

**The Patrick McManus Interpretive Centre** is Baxter's program headquarters which can accommodate two to three classes as a starting point for an exciting day of outdoor learning.



**Our philosophy at Baxter** is to provide students with a strong understanding of our natural world, how it functions and how we, as humans, fit into it. All our programs are interactive and experiential to provide students with a "hands-on" approach to learning about natural science in our "Ecology Lab."

If you don't see a program that meets your group's objectives, please give us a call – and our Interpreters will create one for you!

# SPRING

Program descriptions are general guidelines – please let us know if you have specific objectives that you would like us to accomplish with your classes.

Spring is the season of rebirth and renewal and is a very active time at Baxter! It is also our most popular season – so book your program early!

Brackets indicate the grade level programs are recommended for, but not limited to.

## Pond Ecology (K-6)

By exploring Baxter's pond, students will experience the diversity of plant and animal life in a freshwater pond habitat. Through the identification of some of the "indicator species," students will understand exactly how fragile this ecosystem is and what we can do to protect it.



Students will use dip nets, basins, magnifiers and fact sheets to get "up close and personal" with the reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates of this beautiful habitat.

## Wonderful Wetlands (4-12)

*(also available in the Fall)*

With a thorough investigation and exploration of the Baxter marsh, students will gain an understanding of the diverse but fragile and vital ecosystems that we call wetlands. We will be able to identify the four wetland types in Ontario as well as the plants and animals that inhabit them.

Students will also learn the functions of wetlands, the impact humans have on wetlands and what we need to do to protect and preserve wetlands.



## Insect Ecology (K-6)

Come and get a close-up look at this largest, but most misunderstood, group of the animal world. Using nets and bug jars, students will explore Baxter's meadow and learn about the structure of insects, their colouration and their defences. From the smallest springtails to the largest butterflies and moths, we will discover the diversity of insects and why they are so important to the rest of the animal world.



This program compliments Pond Ecology well and the two go well together as a full day of program.

## Animals and Habitats (1-4)

*(also available in the Fall)*

Through a variety of interactive games, students will learn about the animals at Baxter and the habitats they live in; birds, mammals, insects, amphibians and reptiles. Where do they live and what do they need to survive?

## Instincts for Survival (4-7)

*(also available in the Fall)*

How do animals survive in their habitats? What are the skills of a predator? What is the human impact on animal life? Do you have the instincts for survival?

This active wide game will help students understand some of the realities of the animal world and have a bunch of fun!

## Eastern Ontario Children's Water Festival (4)

*(May 18, 19, 20, 2005)*

This exciting program comes to Baxter for three days only in May. Developed for the Grade 4 curriculum, students travel around the site in small groups, stopping at about 30 interactive "discovery centres", learning everything there is to know about water. Discover all about water conservation, how wells and waste water systems work, the water cycle, water pollution, creatures of the pond, water filtration and erosion, plus a whole lot more! Call us for program and registration information.

# FALL

Fall is a beautiful time at Baxter and a great way to start the school year – and there are NO mosquitoes!!!

## The Seeds of Change (K-3)

Fall is a wonderful time of year to explore the change of seasons. By looking at leaves and seeds, students will understand the concept of change, the life cycle of plants, and how the forest prepares for winter.

Where do seeds come from? What do they look like? Where do they go and how do they get there? Make a seed collection to grow at school.



## Fantastic Forests (3-7)

What is a forest? What are the differences in forest types? Who makes this habitat home? By exploring the Baxter forest, students will understand the differences in a forest profile and what makes a healthy forest.

Older students can follow the tree identification trail using a simple dichotomous key.



## Unearthing Soil (3-7)

Is soil living or non-living? By exploring the forest floor, students will discover all about fungi, lichens and the creatures that call soil home.

See decomposition in action in nature's giant composter!



## Endless Energy (4-6)

*(also available in the Spring)*

How does energy affect our lives? Following the energy trail, students will discover the ways we create energy, how energy is used and cycled through the plant and animal world.



## Wayfinding (3-7)

Through practical experiences, students will learn all about maps, how to “read” them and use them effectively. Identify landmarks and topographical features, then use your map to follow a course through the Baxter forest.

Older students will learn to properly use a compass with their maps.

# WINTER

Baxter transforms into a fantastic winter wonderland with many opportunities for learning about the natural world and enjoying the winter weather.

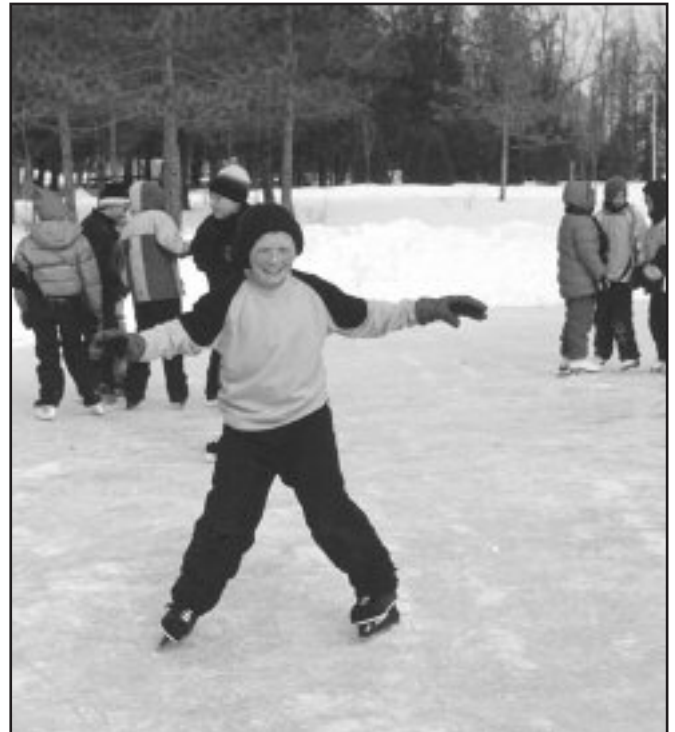
Visitors can slide on “Mt. Baxter,” skate on the pond, roast a hot dog lunch over the campfire and warm up with a mug of hot chocolate.

## Winter Ecology (2-7)

When exploring the forest at Baxter in winter, students will understand how plants and animals adapt to their cold environment. Follow animal tracks to see where they're going and discover the secrets of snow and why it is so important to the plants and animals.

## Snowshoeing (3-7)

Come and experience one of the oldest forms of transportation in Canada! Students will learn how to safely travel with snowshoes and, once comfortable, follow the snowshoe trail through the forest and maybe even try snowshoe games.



For more information about Baxter, fees and to book your program, please contact:

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