



Around the Rideau

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN THE RIDEAU VALLEY

September/October 2017

Habitat Highlights

Black Rapids Creek Headwater Wetland Restoration — Is Thriving!

Last September, RVCA with the National Capital Commission and Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund constructed and enlarged a headwater wetland at Black Rapids Creek in Ottawa's Greenbelt. The wetland increases the ability to store flood water, improves water quality, increases biodiversity and habitat. This is the first year of monitoring which includes water levels, temperature, water chemistry, fish community, amphibian breeding and bird surveys. Plant surveys were also included and with our wet summer the vegetation that was planted last fall is thriving. Many birds, amphibians and turtles are taking advantage of this wonderful new habitat, they include:

Birds

- Swamp sparrow
- Savannah sparrow
- Killdeer
- Barn swallow
- Tree swallow
- Red-winged blackbird
- Cedar waxwing
- Spotted sandpiper
- American yellow warbler

- American goldfinch
- Song sparrow
- Great blue heron
- Mallard
- European starling
- American robin
- Grackle
- Morning dove

Reptiles

- Painted turtle

Amphibians

- Green frog
- Gray tree frog

- Spring peeper
- American toad

Fish

- Fathead minnow
- Brook stickleback
- Central mudminnow

Insects

- Dragonflies and damselflies

Staff and volunteers seine netting at Black Rapids Creek Wetland



Baxter Pond Gets Overhaul

The pond at the Baxter Conservation Area is receiving some TLC to improve habitat. RVCA staff and volunteers took the time to remove pond residents before the machinery moved in. The pond hosts a wealth of critters, including fish and amphibians. In all, over 4,000 fish, frogs, tadpoles and turtles were relocated including six largemouth bass and a brown bullhead with eight babies.

Right: Hardworking volunteers work away as this brown bullhead gets her 15 minutes of fame before heading to her new home.



Otter Lake gets Brushy!

Thanks to the Otter Lake Landowners' Association and RVCA, Otter Lake is a more interesting place for our aquatic friends to live. Brush bundles were installed for the first time in the lake. They will serve as habitat, rearing areas, hiding and resting places for fish.



Volunteer about to throw a brush bundle into Otter Lake

RVCA wants to send out a big thank you to all the partners and hard-working, dedicated volunteers that make these projects possible. For more information contact JENNIFER at ext. 1108 or jennifer.lamoureux@rvca.ca.

Outdoor Education

Plenty of Fall/Winter Programs at Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas!

Teachers — there are lots of fall and winter programs available now at Baxter and Foley Mountain! Sign up and let Mother Nature do the teaching! These outdoor education programs 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 provide students with a "hands-on" approach to learning about the natural world. Enjoy the last of the warm weather while learning about the changing seasons and how animals and plants hunker down and prepare for winter.

For a full list of outdoor education programs or to book a program online, visit www.rvca.ca/outdoor-education and select either Baxter or Foley Mountain. For information on Baxter contact ANDREA at 613-489-3592 or andrea.wood@rvca.ca, for information on Foley Mountain contact LEAH at 613-273-3255 or leah.roberts@rvca.ca.





A bucket of butternut seeds

Butternut Seed Collection

On September 4, RVCA staff plus three dedicated volunteers and one tree climber embarked on a butternut seed collection adventure at a local island. The group paddled two kayaks, a small row boat and one slightly leaky canoe to collect 2,100 butternut seeds from two healthy, pure butternut trees. Despite being literally up the creek short of paddles the group was able to tow the climber with his gear and ferry the haul of butternut seeds safely to shore, proving the point that butternut seed collectors never give up! Total seed collection for this fall is 17,000 seeds from 27 butternut trees all across eastern Ontario. A huge thank you to this dedicated group for their work to save this beautiful, native species. For more information on RVCA's Butternut Recovery Program or to volunteer contact ROSE at 613-858-3678 or rose.fleguel@rvca.ca.

Tracking Fall Colours

The hallmark of autumn is the brilliant-coloured foliage and what better place to view it than Foley Mountain Conservation Area. Foley Mountain is famous for its spectacular fall display and mountain view over Westport Village! As days get shorter and temperatures cool, leaves switch off their chlorophyll-green, food-making processes. The green pigment disappears leaving yellow and oranges. Other chemical changes occur too, development of red anthocyanin pigments gives the reds and burgundies of dogwoods, sumacs and gives sugar maple its brilliant reds and oranges. Rainy overcast days tend to increase the intensity of fall colours. To learn more about Foley Mountain visit www.rvca.ca/conservation-areas or contact LEAH at 613-273-3255 or leah.roberts@rvca.ca.

Lake Links — Save the Date!

Don't forget to save the date for the 15th Annual Lake Links workshop. It will be held on Saturday, October 21 at the Perth Civitan Hall, Perth, Ontario. This year's theme is "Beyond the Shoreline-Science to Stewardship." To register, please contact Karen Ballentine at Watersheds Canada at ballentine@watersheds.ca or 613-264-1244. A \$20 registration fee, payable at the door, will include lunch and refreshments. For more information contact MEAGHAN at 1192 or meaghan.mcdonald@rvca.ca.



RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation (RVCF) is a registered environmental charity that works to protect and conserve the lands and waters of the Rideau Valley. We build partnerships and seek individuals, groups and businesses that want to get involved in the vital work of taking care of our beautiful watershed environment.

Government funding covers basic operations of the Conservation Authority, but not all the essential local programs that work so hard to improve our watershed's health. That's where the Foundation comes in.

The RVCF — thanks to donations from watershed lovers like you — directs critical funds to programs that ensure environmental conservation and promote long-term watershed health and sustainability. Donations drive on-the-ground efforts such as tree planting, shoreline naturalization, species at risk protection and so much more!

Your donations help the Foundation and all their partners do the important work of protecting our Rideau watershed. If you believe healthy families and healthy communities start with a healthy watershed — donate today so our work can continue. Visit www.rvcf.ca to make a donation or contact MICHAEL at 613-692-6823 or michael.poliwoda@rvcf.ca to talk about what you can do. Taking care of our environment benefits us all — and the biggest risk to our environment is doing nothing.

To ensure we continue to have clean water, a healthy environment and a sustainable plan for the future, **grants and donations are critical**, not only to sustain, but also to improve our natural environment.



Improved boardwalk at Chapman Mills Conservation Area

Fingers Crossed ... We've Been Nominated!

Perth Wildlife Reserve, as well as our very own Rebecca Whitman, Foley Mountain Conservation Area Supervisor, have been nominated for Rideau Corridor Recognition Awards. The awards recognize and honour those who promote good design, environmental stewardship and economic development. The award also promotes public and youth engagement serving to protect, enhance, promote and celebrate the heritage value and sustainability of the Rideau Canal corridor. Winners will be revealed on October 6. Contact DAN for more information at ext. 1124 or dan.cooper@rvca.ca.

We are also happy to announce that the City Stream Watch Program has been nominated for a Canadian Museum of Nature's Nature Inspiration Award. City Stream Watch is being recognized for encouraging people to take an interest in natural history, creating links with nature and showing leadership in contributing to the preservation of nature. Winners to be announced on November 8. For more information contact JENNIFER at ext. 1108 or jennifer.lamoureux@rvca.ca.



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