



The Pitch Pine Post

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A national park on your doorstep

Finding the balance in one of Canada's most accessible national parks

Located next to one of Canada's busiest transportation routes, the 401 highway, St. Lawrence Islands National Park is within a 3-hour drive of more than 25% of Canada's population.

For a park that's also ranked as one of the country's smallest, the challenge of maintaining a healthy ecosystem is immense. However, many people and many organizations are working hard to ensure that this busy part of eastern Ontario also remains one of the most biodiverse parts of the country.

Visitor experiences, research programs, education opportunities and community partnerships are only a few of the many



Photo: Brian Morin

Park interpreter Emily LaBonté explores the shoreline with visitor Kayla Morin of Cornwall. Through research and education, St. Lawrence Islands National Park works to protect the unique 1000 Islands environment while providing quality visitor services to the more than 70,000 people who visit the park each year.

things happening at St. Lawrence Islands National Park. Read on to find out more about the activi-

ties, wildlife, and people at the national park on your doorstep.



Photo: Parks Canada

The black rat snake, a threatened reptile, is one of the many species monitored at St. Lawrence Islands National Park. Park researchers, often in cooperation with other organizations, coordinate more than 15 different species studies each summer.

Turtles and snakes and trees, oh my!

An update on ecosystem research & why you should care

Why should we care if black rat snakes become extinct? Why should we help the local turtle populations? How do we know that species are disappearing?

St. Lawrence Islands National Park is involved in numerous research projects to

monitor the health of the 1000 Islands ecosystem. From eagles to snakes to wetlands, the latest news on the park's ecological monitoring and why you should care can be found in this issue of the Pitch Pine Post. Read on!

Theatre draws crowds

The Parks Canada Players theatre troupe, which includes piper George Muggleton (below), brought history to life across eastern Ontario this past summer with a series of very popular plays. The theatre will return with a second season of plays in 2007. Find out more on page 10.



Photo: Simon Lum

The Superintendent Says...

By Gord Giffin, St. Lawrence Islands National Park Superintendent

A National Park On Your Doorstep – St. Lawrence Islands National Park, as a part of the Parks Canada family of national parks, national historic sites, marine conservation areas, and heritage waterways, is committed to a future where natural values are seen as the foundation of a sustainable economy and a high quality of life.

We are dedicated to building public awareness, valued programs, relevant visitor experiences, and support throughout the region. We share this vision and commitment with many other partners and communities. This newspaper is a window on our work and that of our partners. Our spring 2007 issue will feature our vision for visitor experiences and programs for next summer and the future.



Photo: Doug Rawlinson

Bald eaglets Spirit and Phyllis were fitted with backpack transmitters in June. The young eagles have taken off for other parts of the continent, but may return in the winter for the excellent fishing in the open waters of the St. Lawrence River. Follow their journey online at www.bsc-eoc.org.

(700 miles) to the east coast of James Bay.

The two eaglets from the lone bald eagle nest on the St. Lawrence River will be tracked for up to four years to help researchers learn more about their habitat requirements and behaviour.

Many regional residents and organizations such as the St. Lawrence Bald Eagle Working Group, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Bird Studies Canada, and St. Lawrence Islands National Park have been actively working to monitor and increase the number of bald eagles in the St. Lawrence River by conducting eagle censuses, installing nesting platforms, and coordinating transmitter studies.

The two satellite transmitters fitted on the St. Lawrence eaglets this year were sponsored by the LCBO Natural

Heritage Fund, TD (Toronto Dominion) Friends of the Environment Fund (Kingston chapter), Kingston Field Naturalists, North Leeds Birders, and private citizens Ken and Joan Stewart and Joyce Medcalf. The eagle tracking project would also not be possible without the generous cooperation of the private citizens who own the island where the eagle nest is located.

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) began nesting on the St. Lawrence River in 1999 after nearly 60 years of absence. It is hoped that some of the young raised from the 1000 Islands nest will soon return to begin nests of their own.

As long as their transmitters continue to function properly, Spirit and Phyllis can be followed through "Eagle Tracker" on the Bird Studies Canada website at www.bsc-eoc.org.

Track local eagles online

St. Lawrence eaglets receive transmitters and travel the continent

In typical adolescent fashion, the two young bald eagles



Photo: Doug Rawlinson

The majestic bald eagle is slowly making a comeback in the 1000 Islands region. Satellite transmitters on young bald eagles will provide information about eahabitat requirements.

from the St. Lawrence River nest have taken off to explore areas far from home. Wearing backpack transmitters, the siblings have chosen different paths - one opting for an autumn up on James Bay, the other choosing to visit Quebec's eastern townships and New England.

Spirit, sponsored by the LCBO (Liquor Control Board of Ontario), left the river in mid-August. Except for a short visit to New Hampshire, she has spent most of her time since then south of Trois Rivières, Quebec.

Her sister, Phyllis, is the more adventurous of the two, travelling more than 1100 km

More than 200 landowners participate in study

Vegetation data will be used to create a community atlas for land planning decisions

The St. Lawrence Islands National Park Ecological Land Classification (ELC) crew has been working with approximately 200 private landowners this summer season to gather information about soil, vegetation, topography, and forest types in Eastern Ontario.

In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the data will be used to identify different vegetation communities throughout the 1000 Islands ecosystem. The data also feeds into a Community Atlas that will be produced by the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve to help local groups and regional residents make sound land use planning decisions.

The ELC team would like to

thank all of the enthusiastic landowners who participated in the program this summer.

"Working with landowners was rewarding to both parties," said ELC crew member Janice Ball. "Landowners had the chance to share stories about the property's history and natural elements that they cherish and in turn we had a chance to share our ecological knowledge."

This season's fieldwork marks the end of the second year of the Ecological Land Classification Project. The final year of the project will be spent analyzing data and creating fine-scale vegetation maps of the region.

For more information about the Ecological Land Classification Project, call 613-923-5261.



Photo: Parks Canada

Parks Canada's Ecological Land Classification technicians Mary Beth Lynch (left) and Oliver Reichl used GPS (Global Positioning System) and plant identification skills to locate and classify vegetation plots across the 1000 Islands ecosystem over the past two years. The data collected will be used to create a map of the landscape that can be used by governments and private citizens for land use planning.

Turtle study has positive impact on local population

An intensive two-year research project on map turtles and stinkpot turtles along the river is now coming to an end. The research, conducted by University of Ottawa master's student Marie-Andrée Carrière, was the first study in the 1000 Islands area to focus on these two species at risk.

Few studies have been done on these turtles anywhere in North America and Carrière uncovered invaluable information on both species.



Photo: Marie-Andrée Carrière
The stinkpot turtle, a threatened species, is easily recognized by its high-domed shell. The stinkpot lives in shallow water along the shore, making the species vulnerable to shoreline development.

A total of 360 individual map turtles (*Graptemys geographica*) were caught between Mallorytown Landing and Rockport over the two years of the study. This is good news for a species listed as special concern (for more information about levels of risk, see page 5).

Although the number 360 may seem high at first glance, Carrière warns that this population number does not necessarily indicate a healthy population.

"We can't compare this number to previous population estimates so we don't know if numbers are growing or dropping," Carrière warned. "However, we can now work to monitor the population to ensure it is stable and not declining."

St. Lawrence Islands National Park would like to continue to monitor this population to collect some first-ever long-term information on map turtles.

Fewer stinkpot turtles (*Sternotherus odoratus*) were caught during the study but these turtles are inconspicuous, camouflaging well with the muddy bottom they burrow in. The low capture number raises some concern for the area's population but further monitoring will shed more light on the status of these little-known turtles.

An important message from Carrière's study is that stinkpots occupy the shallow waters along the shoreline, often hiding under lily pads



Photo: Marie-Andrée Carrière
A juvenile female map turtle covered in zebra mussels after emerging from her hibernation site in May. The transmitter on her back allowed researchers to locate the turtle hibernation site.



Photo: Marie-Ange Gravel
Researcher Marie-Andrée Carrière wades through a river wetland in search of a stinkpot turtle. More than 35 turtles were tracked during an intensive, two-year study of northern map turtles and stinkpot turtles in the St. Lawrence River.

and in cattails. This threatened species is therefore very vulnerable to shoreline development, underlining the importance of keeping our shorelines natural to help protect their habitat.

Carrière's study has already had a positive impact on local turtles. After numerous turtles drowned in commercial fishing traps last summer, Carrière's data was used to impose specific date restrictions for these traps to be set within the bay of concern. Since then, not a single turtle drowning has been recorded in that area.

Although the two-year turtle study was done in collaboration with St. Lawrence Islands National Park, turtles were found not only on park

land but often on or near private landowner property. The support and involvement of these landowners was invaluable to the study and a highlight of Carrière's experience.

"I want to send a personal thank you to everyone I had the opportunity to encounter and talk with out on the river," Carrière said. "Conservation of these species is ineffective without the awareness of the public. The landowners I had the chance to talk with were not only interested but always looking to help. The willingness and involvement of everyone in the region is something I will take with me from this experience and is an essential part of the turtles' survival in the area. Thank you!"

Looking Back...



Photo: National Archives of Canada (C20527)

80 years ago

A tour boat docks on Beau Rivage Island around 1930. Beau Rivage Island near Gananoque has been part of St. Lawrence Islands National Park since the park's establishment in 1904.



Photo: Parks Canada

30 years ago

A young visitor on West Grenadier Island uses a piece of hose to blow water onto the "fire" on the island welcome sign in the mid-1970s. West Grenadier became a part of the national park in 1905.

Promising new habitat creation program for black rat snakes

You can get involved!

Black rat snakes are vanishing from the 1000 Islands Ecosystem. This is an alarming fact that has encouraged regional residents, researchers and organizations to develop a promising black rat snake (*Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta*) habitat creation program.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, residents of the 1000 Islands region, Queen's University Biological Station, the Leeds County Stewardship Council and St. Lawrence Islands National Park are participating in this project, which began in 2003. Its aim is to create safe egg-laying locations for female black rat snakes.

Did you know?

The harmless black rat snake is Canada's largest snake. Most adults reach lengths of 1.5 to 1.8 metres (5-6 feet).

"Females normally nest in compost piles, brush and leaf piles, dead trees and decomposing logs," explains Melissa Francis who leads the Artificial Nesting Site program at St. Lawrence Islands National Park.

"Racoons, a parasitic beetle and unknowing humans all pose a threat to the mother snake and her eggs. Since our black rat snake populations are declining, the mothers, eggs and young need all the protection we can give them."

Black rat snakes are nationally and provincially designated as 'threatened,' which means that they will face extinction if help isn't provided to them.

One major threat to the population is a lack of suitable places for females to lay their eggs. Female black rat snakes do not reach sexual maturity



Photo: Josh Van Wieren

A female black rat snake exits a nesting box after checking out its interior. Local landowners have been able to attract this endangered snake to artificial nesting sites and have witnessed successful hatching.

until 9 or 10 years of age so when they lay their eggs, these eggs are ten years in the making and a huge contribution to the diminishing population.

Females often share nesting sites and return during every reproductive year, which makes a single nesting site crucial to species survival.

The artificial nesting site program is a very low cost, low maintenance and potentially effective way to provide a safe haven to mother snakes and their eggs. Two site designs are being exper-



Photo: Parks Canada

Artificial snake nesting boxes are designed to blend into their surroundings. Boxes are filled with organic debris and closed to prevent predators from finding and eating the snake eggs.

imented with, both with their own advantages and disadvantages. The ultimate goal of the boxes is to keep raccoons and other predators out while

allowing the females to enter the box, lay their eggs and enabling the eggs to hatch in a safe environment. The nesting sites blend well into their surroundings and are filled with leaves, hay, wood chips, manure and other organic debris.

Staff at St. Lawrence Islands National Park have had numerous inquiries into the program and are pleased with the interest people are showing.

"Species monitoring and recovery programs can become much more effective when local citizens are involved. Species such as the threatened black rat snake do not know to stay within a protected area such as St. Lawrence Islands National Park. This is why individuals from beyond protected area boundaries are needed to assist this species in strengthening its population," explains Chris Bellemore, Park Interpreter-Species at Risk at St. Lawrence Islands National Park.

The nest box program, only in its third year, has already been successful.

"A regional resident involved in this nesting site program near Landon Bay reported that 14 eggs were laid in his nesting site with 9 successful hatches," said Francis. "This was a very positive result of the project and it is predicted that the success will continue to spread."

Are you interested in learning more about this project? Would you like to construct an artificial nesting site on your property? Please contact St. Lawrence Islands National Park at 613-923-5261 or email us at ont-sli@pc.gc.ca.



Photo: Parks Canada

What you can do to help the snakes

Contact St. Lawrence Islands National Park if you would like advice, assistance, or information on constructing an artificial nesting site on your property.

Create spots on or around your property for female black rat snakes to lay their eggs. Compost piles, manure heaps and leaf/brush piles are ideal. Remember that black rat snakes can keep your mice populations down while remaining a quiet and shy member of your backyard environment.

Spread the word about the declining black rat snake population and what people can do to help.



Photo: Parks Canada

A few plants and animals are disappearing So what?

Human health and well-being depends on the environment. If you think the connections between human health and ecosystem health are difficult to find, let's consider three basic needs for all living things, including humans: food, water, and shelter.

Our food, ultimately, all comes from the land and water. Agricultural productivity depends on a relatively stable climate (adequate sunlight, water, and temperature) to grow the foods we need. One third of human food also depends on wild pollinators - bees, moths, and other insects - for fruit and other plants to properly grow.

Water quality depends on the health of our natural water sources. Lakes, rivers, and groundwater become polluted when natural vegetation and animal species are not present to remove contaminants or pre-

vent soil erosion.

The natural environment also provides us with shelter. The ozone layer blocks harmful UV radiation, healthy forests improve air quality, and a stable climate can prevent extreme temperatures, violent weather, drought, and flooding.

In addition to the basic needs of food, water, and shelter, humans also depend on a healthy ecosystem to prevent and cure disease and illness. The majority of prescription drugs and medicines are derived from natural sources. Perhaps the cure to cancer lies undiscovered in some plant, animal, or fungus.

A healthy ecosystem is essential for healthy human

populations. But what makes a healthy ecosystem? Let us compare the functioning of an ecosystem to the functioning of a car. A car runs most effectively with all of its parts present and in working order. If a tire, spark plug, or fuel is missing, the car will not provide you with the benefits you enjoy. Ecosystems work in the same way. If a component of the ecosystem, such as a snake or turtle species, is removed, the ecosystem ceases to work as it should.

This is why it is important for each one of us to take an interest in the species with which we share the planet. A healthy environment full of native plant and animal species also has economic benefits and helps make the Thousand Islands area a beautiful and enjoyable place to live.

Ecosystem health is directly related to human health. We need clean air and water to survive.

Ecosystems are like cars - all parts are needed to keep them functioning and healthy.

Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)

CATEGORIES OF RISK

An example of a species native to the 1000 Islands ecosystem that fits each category is listed in italics.

More than 30 of the plants and animals listed as at risk in Canada live in the 1000 Islands area.

Extinct - A species that no longer exists. *Passenger pigeon.*

Extirpated - A species that no longer exists in the wild in a certain area, but occurring elsewhere. *Tiger salamander (Great Lakes population).*

Endangered - A species facing imminent extirpation or extinction. *American ginseng.*

Threatened - A species that is likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed. *Black rat snake.*

Special Concern - A species of special concern because of characteristics that make it particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. *Northern map turtle.*

Not at Risk - A species that has been evaluated and found to be not at risk. *Red-tailed hawk.*



Black Rat Snake
Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta

- Size: 100-200 cm
- **Uniform black or black with slightly lighter blotches**
- Throat and lips are whitish
- Newborns (appr. 35 cm) are greyish with reddish-brown blotches; a dark line extends from each side of the jaw through the eyes and over the top of the head



Northern Water Snake
Nerodia sipedon sipedon

- Size: 60-100 cm
- Pale grey to dark brown
- Dark squares separated by light bands down the back
- **Has a thick body**
- Newborn snakes (appr. 21 cm) have distinct reddish-brown blotches



Eastern Milk Snake
Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum

- Size: 50-90 cm
- Pale to medium grey or brown
- Large brown blotches bordered by black alternate with smaller ones down the side of the body
- **Y- or V-shaped pattern on back of neck**
- Newborns are shiny and creamy-white with reddish blotches



Eastern Garter Snake
Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis

- Size: 48-70 cm
- Black, olive or brown with 3 yellowish to reddish stripes
- Occasionally find all-black individuals (no stripes - called melanistic)
- **A yellow line extends from behind the eye to the nostril**



Northern Ribbon Snake
Thamnophis sauritus septentrionalis

- Size: 45-65 cm
- Black, olive or brown with 3 yellow stripes
- Occasionally find all-black individuals (no stripes - called melanistic)
- **A yellow to white half-moon shaped spot in front of each eye**



Smooth Green Snake
Ophiodrys vernalis

- Size: 35-65 cm
- **Grass green in colour**
- Newborns are bluish-grey or olive-grey and shiny



Northern Ringneck Snake
Diadophis punctatus edwardsii

- Size: 25-35 cm
- Grey to bluish-slate coloured
- **Bright yellow ring around neck**
- Belly is the same yellow as the ring around the neck



Northern Brown Snake
Storeria dekayi dekayi

- Size: 20-35 cm
- Light to dark brown, brownish-grey or reddish-brown
- **Two parallel rows of small blackish spots run down the back**
- Small black mark behind each eye
- Newborn snakes are black with a cream band around the neck



Northern Redbelly Snake
Storeria occipitomaculata

- Size: 20-30 cm
- Brown, grey or black
- Three light to yellowish diamond-shaped spots on neck (may be fused, appearing as ring)
- **Orange-red belly**
- Newborn snakes are very dark and have whitish ring around the neck

Who's Who Snake Clues

Illustrations: Charles Douglas, reproduced courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Canada.

Park initiates long-term wetland study

St. Lawrence Islands National Park's park ecologist, Josh Van Wieren, has been at the forefront of a wetland monitoring project that will become a nation-wide standard.

"Wetlands are one of the most biologically diverse and important ecosystems in Canada," said Van Wieren. "Municipal, provincial, and national organizations are searching for ways to monitor wetlands, but there has been no standard method to evaluate the overall health of freshwater wetlands across Canada."

To address this problem, Van Wieren and Parks Canada's monitoring ecologist for the Great Lakes bioregion, Paul Zorn, reviewed more than 300 wetland monitoring protocols across North America and chose six measures to give an accurate picture of long-term wetland health.

Annual assessment of amphibians, aquatic vegetation, landscape elements, macroinvertebrates, marsh birds, and water quality will help to paint a picture of the status of wetlands across the country.

Using the new standard protocol, data can be collected by organizations with varying levels of expertise and then compared regionally and nationally. The protocol has been designed in partnership with Canada's Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Net-



Photo: Parks Canada
Park ecologist Josh Van Wieren (right) and resource conservation student Tyler Kydd do a preliminary check on the aquatic macroinvertebrates collected during wetland monitoring. Van Wieren has played a key role in developing a nation-wide standard for monitoring the health of wetlands, one of Canada's most important ecosystems.

work (EMAN), which has already established national standards for monitoring the health of the country's forests.

The new wetland monitoring protocol was successfully piloted by St. Lawrence Islands National Park and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority in 2006. Next year, the program will be expanded across the country.

Canada has one quarter of the world's wetlands and it is essential that we act as good stewards and protect these vital natural areas.

"Wetlands filter our drinking water, provide recreational activities and are critical to a variety of plant and animal

species," Van Wieren explained. "Yet they are quickly disappearing."

In some areas of Canada, as much as 70 percent of the original wetlands have been lost. Many remaining wetlands are under pressure from stresses including pollution, human development, and invasive species.

Local residents and conservation organizations can participate in the wetland monitoring project through St. Lawrence Islands National Park's Citizen Science initiative. If you have a wetland on your property and would like to learn more about its health, call 613-923-5261.

Beach bean: Beach what?!

Beach bean! It's a rare Ontario plant found within St. Lawrence Islands National Park. The park has been monitoring this sensitive species since 1990 and despite its past struggles, the existing population seems to be healthy and strengthening.

Unlike many plants, beach bean (*Strophostyles helvola*) survival does not seem to be



Photo: Parks Canada
Resource conservation technician Brian Farkas (standing) and student Spencer Casselman measure the growth of rare beach bean plants on a park island.

affected so much by high levels of human visitation as by weather fluctuations and high water levels.

Before this summer, beach bean grew on only one park island. In June, park staff planted seeds at an additional location within the park. The successful growth of this new beach bean population is a promising step towards assisting the species' survival in Ontario.



Photos: Parks Canada

The common tern (top), with its forked tail and black cap, is more streamlined and agile than the ring-billed gull (below). Terns are also fascinating to watch in flight as they hover and then plunge headfirst into the water for fish. The two species compete for nesting habitat.



Photos: Parks Canada

Not very common anymore

Contrary to their name, common terns are not very common around the 1000 Islands area anymore. The Great Lakes region population is currently estimated to be about 2000 - significantly less than the 20,000 birds that called this area home in 1954.

One of the major factors affecting common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) populations is competition with ring-billed gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) for nesting territory. St. Lawrence Islands National Park has implemented a very simple but effective measure to help the river's tern population.

Park staff have installed a material very similar to fishing line in a grid-like pattern

across a small island on the St. Lawrence River. Because ring-billed gulls are unable to hover in the air like terns, they cannot land on the island. Terns, on the other hand, can land and successfully nest without competition from the more aggressive gulls.

The Save The River organization has also undertaken steps to improve artificial nest sites on channel markers on the U.S. side, where most of the 1000 Islands tern fledglings are produced. Save The River and St. Lawrence Islands National Park have involved local residents in monitoring tern nests each summer. For more information visit www.savetheriver.org or call the park at 613-923-5261.

Did you know?

Many plant and animal species are rare in Canada because they reach the northern limit of their range in southern and eastern Ontario.

In addition to the harsher climate, habitat is scarce because this is the most developed and populated part of the country.

Search for muskellunge

Park partners with Muskies Canada for young-of-the-year surveys

Protection of spawning habitat is essential for the survival of the popular game fish muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*). With this in mind, Parks Canada has partnered with Muskies Canada and the Ministry of Natural Resources to conduct annual young-of-the-year surveys in the St. Lawrence River.

During seine netting surveys, all young fish captured in shallow shoreline spawning areas are recorded. This has led to the discovery of important muskellunge spawning habitat in several places along the river.

Concerns about the health of the local muskellunge population were raised last summer

when an alarmingly large number of dead muskellunge were floating to the surface of the St. Lawrence River. Muskies deaths are worrying to both sport fishermen and ecologists. At the top of the aquatic food chain, a problem with the health of this fish can indicate potential trouble for smaller fish and other river species.

Although the causes of last year's die-off are still unknown, the event was not repeated to the same degree this year. On the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence, only about 10 dead muskellunge were collected in 2006, compared to at least 60 in the summer of 2005.

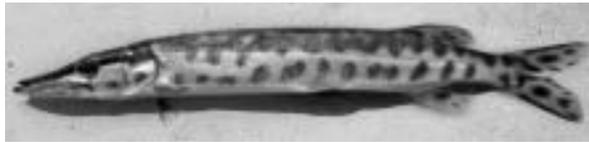


Photo: Josh Van Wieren

Muskellunge young-of-the-year (above) are caught in seine nets (below) during annual surveys by park staff and Muskies Canada (www.muskiescanada.ca). Surveys have revealed important spawning habitat along the St. Lawrence River. This popular game fish is one of Canada's largest freshwater fish.



Photo: Josh Van Wieren

Healthy osprey population

You may have seen the stick-laden platforms perched on posts on islands, near the river channel markers (or sometimes on them!), and even along the 1000 Islands Parkway. These platforms serve as artificial nesting sites for the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and have helped increase the number of nesting pairs in the 1000 Islands.

The recovery of osprey populations after the era of DDT was limited by human development and lack of prime nesting habitat (large dead or open-top trees near the river).

The artificial platform project, initiated by the Canadian Wildlife Service, the

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and St. Lawrence Islands National Park, and later continued by the Leeds County Stewardship Council, has increased the region's osprey population from a couple of nesting pairs in 1992 to 36 nesting pairs in 2006 on the Canadian side alone.



Photo: Parks Canada

The osprey has made a remarkable recovery in the 1000 Islands, thanks in part to artificial nesting platforms. The birds are now also nesting in trees, always near water for easy access to fish.

been built by the ospreys in natural treetop sites. No new artificial nest platforms will need to be installed in the near future. For a bird that was once a rare sight along the river, that's an encouraging sign of a healthy recovery.



Photo: Parks Canada

Unlike many species monitored at the national park, white-tailed deer are not at risk of disappearing. In fact, deer in the 1000 Islands ecosystem are doing so well that they are overabundant, a serious problem for forest health.

Too many deer

One species at no risk of disappearing in the 1000 Islands ecosystem, and indeed across most of Ontario, is the white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*).

Warmer winters, abundant food sources, and lack of natural predators (wolves and cougars) all contribute to the high concentration of deer in the area.

For the past 14 years, St. Lawrence Islands National Park has been monitoring deer populations. Recent surveys have confirmed that deer are negatively affecting forest health on some of the park islands. Some plant species have been eliminated by deer browsing as overabundant deer populations eat

their way across the islands. Future forest health is jeopardized when no young seedlings are allowed to grow and replace older trees.

Human safety is also at risk, as motor vehicle collision data indicates that the number of deer-related vehicle accidents has been rising steadily over the past 20 years.

Long-term deer monitoring is allowing local resource managers to make informed decisions regarding the management of this species. Management options to ensure healthy, sustainable deer populations will be considered in the next year. Local residents can help by not feeding deer.

Too little deerberry

Deerberry exists in only two locations in Canada. As one of the last remaining Canadian homes for this threatened species, St. Lawrence Islands National Park dedicates special efforts to preserving the rare plant.

Deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum*) closely resembles blueberry and is often in competition for habitat with its more common relative. Habitat disturbance, fire suppression, and lack of genetic diversity may all threaten the survival of deerberry in Canada.

St. Lawrence Islands National Park conducts annual surveys of the plant where it exists in the park. Efforts are also being made to re-introduce seedlings to other appropriate areas in the park to strengthen the species' population.

In addition to the research and monitoring, park staff and visitors are being made aware of this species.

"Staff are provided with the tools to accurately identify the plant so that when hiking trails are being maintained, deerberry are kept safe," explained Brian Farkas, Resource Conservation Technician.

Park visitors are also encouraged to stay on marked trails to protect this rare plant in one of its last Canadian homes.



Photo: Parks Canada

Deerberry blooms early in the summer.

Landowners get involved in CSI: Mallorytown

Citizen science initiative will help residents learn more about their land

Did you know that private landowners own nearly 98 percent of all property in the 1000 Islands Ecosystem? St. Lawrence Islands National Park's Citizen Science Initiative (CSI) is a program designed to involve local residents in ecological monitoring on their own properties.

The 1000 Islands ecosystem supports an astonishing variety of life, including 54 mammal species, 99 fish species, and more than 1500 vascular plants. How are these populations doing against pollution, habitat fragmentation, and other threats to ecosystem health?

"St. Lawrence Islands National Park is made up of small pieces of protected habitat within the 1000 Islands ecosystem," said Oliver Reichl, St. Lawrence Islands National Park citizen science coordinator. "To truly understand the changes that occur in an ecosystem, long-term studies

of entire communities are needed."

For citizens or groups who have suitable property and are willing to make an annual time commitment of 1-8 hours, Parks Canada will provide equipment, material, training, and technical support, and will provide volunteers with a full report of data.

Monitor your forests, wetlands, or streams. You don't need to be a scientist - and we provide the equipment.

There are four ways to participate:

1. Monitoring Forest Health

The Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) has a standard protocol to measure forest health. Plots are intended to be long-term and volunteers visit annually to collect data on tree health, salamanders, decomposition, worms, seedlings, and woody debris.

2. **Monitoring Wetland Health** Wetland plots, like EMAN forest plots, are intended to be relatively permanent, revisited annually, and the source of statistically sound and consistent

data about wetland health. Volunteers will survey exotic flora, breeding birds, frogs and toads, benthic invertebrates, and water quality.

3. Monitoring Rivers & Streams

Essentially a subset of the wetland monitoring program, volunteers simply measure water quality by collecting benthic invertebrates and water samples from rivers and streams.

4. Reporting Rare Species

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) maintains a comprehensive database of plants and animals that occur in the province. Reporting sightings of "at risk" species is an important aspect of monitoring their populations. Anyone can report a species occurrence to the MNR's Natural Heritage Information Centre simply by filling out an online form. To find out more, visit nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/nhic_cfm

"For property owners, land managers, and area residents in general, the benefits of participating in an environmental monitoring program are many," Reichl said.

Monitoring programs can help people make informed property management deci-

sions and assess the impacts of environmental stressors, and can provide sound scientific data for lobbying.

You don't need to be a scientist to participate - all you need is an interest in ecology and preserving the quality of life for all living things in the 1000 Islands ecosystem.

To get involved or learn more about the Citizen Science Initiative, call 613-923-5261.



Photo: Chris Bellemore

Local resident Julius Brokloff takes notes on while resource conservation technician Brian Farkas (centre) demonstrates research protocol during a fall Citizen Science workshop at Mallorytown Landing.

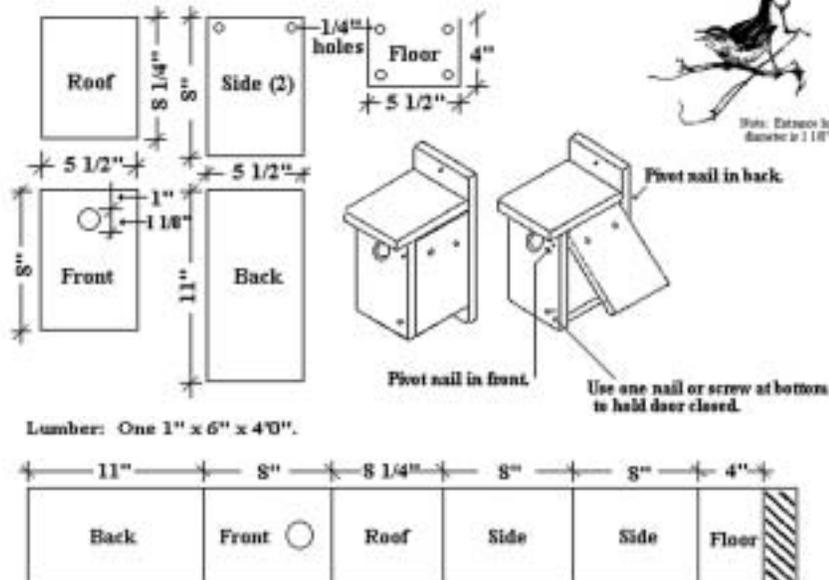
Improve wildlife habitat in your yard

Building a nesting box is an easy and rewarding way to improve wildlife habitat in your own yard.

More than 20 birds in Canada build their nests in natural cavities such as holes in dead trees. Unfortunately, dead trees are often cut down and prime nesting sites are frequently taken by aggressive house sparrows and European starlings.

The pattern on the left is for a simple and effective bird box. For chickadees and wrens, make sure the hole is 1 1/8". A larger hole (up to 1 1/2") will allow larger species such as swallows and nuthatches to get in, but will also provide access for the house sparrows.

To keep birds coming back to your box each year, clean out the old nest every fall.



Lumber: One 1" x 6" x 40".

For more information and other nest box dimensions, visit http://library.fws.gov/Bird_Publications/house.html

Diagram and wren drawing: North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Landowner Profile

Gene and Joan Martin enjoy benefits of carefully managed property

The Martins are proof that caring for your property pays off. Walking, exercising their dogs, cross country skiing, fire wood collection and maple syrup production are only a few of the activities they enjoy in their expansive backyard.

At the same time, Gene, a Mallorytown native and Joan, who hails from Newfoundland, aim to protect all of the species on their property. Black rat snakes, beavers, fishers, northern flying squirrels, deer, great blue herons, otters, wild turkeys, milk snakes and snapping turtles have all found a home with Joan and Gene.

Having such a variety of species enhances the enjoyment of being outdoors. The beavers' engineering activities and the otters' playful antics are always a pleasure to observe.

The Martins have also

noted the functional benefits of some species. For instance, they find the large number of black rat snakes on their property is excellent for rodent control.

Gene and Joan highly recommend to local residents that everyone develop a plan for their land.

"Property owners should take a good look at their property and develop a plan that will allow the property owner and the animals and plants to co-exist," said Gene. "It doesn't have to be a fancy plan but before you start cut-

ting trails or creating ponds or other major changes, make sure you have thought it through because once you cut a tree down it is gone."

The Martins also create and enhance habitat for some of their species. As black rat snakes favour brush and leaf piles, Gene and Joan have placed large piles of organic debris to the sides of their walking trails. Nesting boxes for various birds also welcome numerous species to live on their property.

St. Lawrence Islands

National Park commends Gene and Joan Martin for their interest and concern for the natural environment in the 1000 Islands Ecosystem. Collectively, landowners in the area can make significant improvements to our local environment.

If you are interested in making positive changes to your property, "A Guide to Stewardship Planning for Natural Areas" can be obtained from the Leeds County Stewardship Council. For more information, call 613-342-8526 or visit www.ontariostewardship.org/leeds. The Grenville Land Stewardship Council (613-342-8528, www.ontariostewardship.org/grenville) can also provide resources and advice.

Are you a local landowner? Would you like to be profiled in the next Pitch Pine Post? Call us at 613-923-5261.



Photo: Courtesy of G. Martin

Joan and Gene Martin walk with their dogs Dixie and Shiloh through the property they manage for firewood, maple syrup, and recreation. Their property is also home to a wide variety of plants and animals.

From the community...

Biosphere Reserve grows to meet demand

By JUSTIN BRISBANE,
Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve
Research & Resource Analyst

Following four years of building bridges towards a sustainable way of life, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve is expanding its boundaries.

Pending United Nations approval, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve (FABR) is expecting to announce the expansion project before the New Year. The expansion will increase the size of the FABR by about one-third, and encompass Frontenac Provincial Park.

"The Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve is in the process of expanding to include South Frontenac Township and the Provincial Park. The township contains core conservation locations as well as a vital section of the Algonquin to Adirondack wildlife corridor," said FABR Executive Director Don Ross. "We're looking forward to working with conser-

vation and community groups to create new partnerships and build community capacity."

The FABR serves as a networking tool connecting a litany of ecological, cultural and historical community organizations. Mr. Ross said this project will increase oppor-

roughly stretch from Brockville to the east, Odessa to the west, Westport to the north and the 1000 Islands to the south.

Widely considered the most biodiverse destination in North America, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve serves as a hub for groups interested in



tunities for all FABR partners.

The Frontenac Arch Biosphere was initially recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 2002. It is one of more than 400 UNESCO Biosphere Reserve sites around the world, and the 12th in Canada. Following the expansion announcement, the FABR will

promoting a sustainable lifestyle. By providing resource support, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve provides networking opportunities to help foster cultural, ecological and economic opportunities.

Currently, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve is facilitating numerous projects, including the following:

- **Regional Economic Development:** A sustainable tourism project aimed at promoting the Biosphere Reserve as an economic and ecological leader.
- **Conservation initiatives:** Studies such as the Species at Risk project (see page 2) aim to preserve habitat along the Algonquin to Adirondack wildlife corridor.
- **Tourism initiatives:** www.paddle1000.com offers nine self-guided canoe and kayak routes through the historic 1000 Islands. The guides offer historical, cultural and ecological information.
- **Cultural projects:** Initiatives such as the Local Flavours program bring locally grown produce and products to your dinner plate.

To learn more about the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, visit www.fabr.ca, or call 613-659-4824.

Akwesasne's Voice

Traditional use of black ash highlights importance of a healthy environment

St. Lawrence Islands National Park is working in close cooperation with the Mohawk of Akwesasne, a community of approximately 21,000 that straddles the boundary between Canada and the United States at Cornwall. The park recognizes the strong ties that the community of Akwesasne has to the natural world. Richard David, assistant directory of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of the Environment, writes about traditions that are kept alive by the people living at Akwesasne today.

Shekon (greetings)

As I sit on my back porch sipping Labrador tea, watching the sun rise to its full glory on the Akwesasne horizon, I anticipate another beautiful day. I give thanks to our Creator and thank him/her for allowing me to see another day, another sunrise, and enjoy the beauty of Creation. The birds are singing in the background and off in the distance I can hear the rumbling of a freight train passing through Cornwall.

Akwesasne residents still practise some of our culturally significant crafts, including the making of black ash splint baskets. For thousands of years, these skills have been passed down from generation to generation. It is mostly the women who make baskets, with most of them now making fancy baskets that are works of art themselves. The men often make utility baskets. Utility baskets include pack, picnic, hominy sifters, laundry, potato, apple, and wedding baskets, just to name a few.

The supply of black ash splint is the major drawback because it is limited. Our people have to travel hours to go get the logs that have the qualities that make a good basket log. These logs are then debarked and pounded with the blunt side of an axe along its length thus releasing the annual rings (splint) of the log. The outer layers are lighter and are prized by the fancy basket makers, but are also used by utility basket makers. The inner dark layers are also used by both. The splint is then cleaned by scraping the outer sides and it is then split to make even thinner splints. These are then woven into baskets.

The black ash tree is in need of help. Over cutting, habitat intrusion and loss, pollution, lack of applied management practices, disease, and a naturally low reproductive capacity have jeopardized the supply for current and future basket makers. This has not gone unnoticed and the call has gone out to many concerned First Nation environmentalists, foresters, and conservationists. Enlisting the aid of many highly skilled and motivated forestry agency personnel, action is being taken to counter the loss of the black ash tree.

Traditional basket making highlights the cultural importance of maintaining a healthy and diverse environment. The black ash tree is only one of the many plants and animals valued by people living along the St. Lawrence River today. To learn more about the Mohawk of Akwesasne, visit www.akwesasne.ca.



Photo: Courtesy of Richard David

Members of Akwesasne display handmade black ash splint baskets. Ensuring biodiversity and a healthy environment is crucial for keeping alive cultural traditions such as basketmaking.

Parks Canada summer theatre draws crowds across eastern Ontario

From ghostly murders to tense battles, visitors to Parks Canada sites in eastern Ontario watched Canada's history come to life through theatre this past summer.

A troupe of seven actors travelled to more than ten different locations to perform five plays written by actor/director John Muggleton.

The shows ranged from spooky re-enactments of ghost stories along the Rideau Canal to a highly interactive portrayal of life at Fort Wellington during a rebellion battle in 1838.

"Our goal was to engage and entertain the audiences," said Muggleton. "Theatre is a great way to learn and experience the history of the site by watching a play, or, in the case of the 'Prisoner of Prescott,'



Photo: Simon Lunn

being part of it." Melody Lavictoire tells the story of the last duel in Upper Canada while writer and director John Muggleton prepares his pistol during "Spirits Rising" on the Rideau Canal.

Parks Canada - telling Canada's stories

In addition to St. Lawrence Islands National Park, Parks Canada administers four national historic sites in eastern Ontario. Each tells a different story of Canada's past.

Fort Wellington National Historic Site, Prescott. This British fort was built in 1813 to defend the border with the United States. The fort is restored to its 1840s appearance.

Laurier House National Historic Site, Ottawa. The home of two Canadian Prime Ministers, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and William Lyon Mackenzie King.

Bellevue House National Historic Site, Kingston. The home of Canada's first Prime



Photo: Simon Lunn

Caitlin Delaney leads visitors into the caponniere, an underground bunker at Fort Wellington, during the interactive "Prisoner of Prescott" show.

Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald.

Rideau Canal National Historic Site, Kingston to Ottawa. An early 19th-century canal still in operation, this waterway was originally built as a military route but is now popular for recreation. The Rideau Canal will celebrate its 175-year anniversary in 2007. Find out more about celebrations and events at www.rideau175.org.

Discover more about Canada's national parks, national historic sites, and national marine conservation areas at www.pc.gc.ca.

Next year's performances will feature new plays at each site. To learn more about the Parks Canada Players, call 613-995-4110 or visit www.johnmuggleton.com/ParksCanadaPlayers.htm.



Summer Snapshots



Photo: Rice Honeywell

Above: Children at the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve Nature Day Camp got a closer look at the nesting osprey at Landon Bay. More than 100 local children learned about nature at the camp in 2006. The camp is organized by the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve and is sponsored by the Town of Gananoque, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, the Barbara Heck Foundation and St. Lawrence Islands National Park.



Photo: Parks Canada

Above: Boomer the Beaver greets visitors to St. Lawrence Islands National Park on Parks Day. Canada's Parks Day is a nation-wide celebration of national, provincial, and community parks and historic sites on the second Saturday of July. The 2006 event at Mallorytown Landing included special guests from the Reptile Rainforest amphibian and reptile show and the Canadian Raptor Conservancy bird of prey demonstration.



Photo: Parks Canada

Above: Students from Front of Yonge Public School in Mallorytown helped plant trees and shrubs at St. Lawrence Islands National Park as part of a grade seven field trip in June. The students played interactive games to learn about their role in the ecosystem, then assisted with naturalizing an area of the park.



Photo: Parks Canada

Left: Four-year-old Payton Barkley holds a garter snake at Mallorytown Landing in August. The Visitor Centre was the temporary home for several local animals this summer including green frogs, grey tree frogs, a green snake, a painted turtle, and several species of fish. Short-term visitors included several beetles, caterpillars, and tadpoles.



Photo: Parks Canada

Above: Park interpreter Crystal Ernst holds a bullfrog for visitors Halle (age 9) and Logan Bailey (8) of Athens. The children took part in weekly Nature Kids programs at the Mallorytown Landing Visitor Centre.

The Parks Canada Charter

OUR MANDATE

On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations.

OUR ROLE

We are guardians of the national parks, the national historic sites and the national marine conservation areas of Canada.

We are guides to visitors the world over, opening doors to places of discovery and learning, reflection and recreation.

We are partners, building on the rich traditions of our Aboriginal people, the strength of our diverse cultures and our commitments to the international community.

We are storytellers, recounting the history of our land and our people — the stories of Canada.

OUR COMMITMENTS

To protect, as a first priority, the natural and cultural heritage of our special places and ensure that they remain healthy and whole.

To present the beauty and significance of our natural world and to chronicle the human determination and ingenuity which have shaped our nation.

To celebrate the legacy of visionary Canadians whose passion and knowledge have inspired the character and values of our country.

To serve Canadians, working together to achieve excellence guided by values of competence, respect and fairness.



Photo: Parks Canada

Above: Cheryl Robinson (right) and Tamzin El-Fityani bundle up for a rainy day of fieldwork. They assisted with several monitoring projects including forest health, black rat snake populations, and deerberry. Robinson and El-Fityani, both of Brockville, are just two of the 15 local high school, college, and university students hired by the park each year. Student jobs range from field assistant to student interpreter to maintenance crew.

Tell us what you think!

Did you enjoy reading this issue of the Pitch Pine Post? What else would you like to read about? Send us your comments and suggestions!

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Every step counts

Taking care of the trails

Any trail through a natural area has an impact on the environment. Trails open the way for invasive species carried on peoples' clothing and pets' fur. Garbage inevitably finds its way into the environment and every footstep compacts the soil beneath the path, affecting water runoff and reducing the likelihood that a plant will be able to grow there.

However, visitor recreation is important because trails can also have a *positive* impact on the environment. We grow to appreciate, respect, and protect natural areas after having an enjoyable experience within one. The challenge in national parks and other protected areas is to find a balance between visitor use and habitat protection.

At St. Lawrence Islands National Park, the balance is found by maintaining trails for hikers and cross-country skiers who wish to visit quiet, undisturbed wilderness. Visitors are asked to leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but pictures, and to stay on marked trails.

Trails are open to the public at Mallorytown Landing and at the Landon Bay Centre. Trails are also maintained on most park islands during the summer months. Assessment and rehabilitation of trails will begin

this spring at the new Jones' Creek and Landon Bay properties. Long-term plans include self-guided trail pamphlets and more recreational opportunities for hikers and paddlers.

What's the trouble with motorized vehicles?

Besides the safety concerns for hikers and skiers, motorized vehicles are not permitted because of the environmental damage the machines cause.

The weight and power of ATVs and snowmobiles compact the soil, changing water flow and preventing plant growth. In hilly areas and where the soil is thin, ATV trails can cause severe erosion, polluting nearby waterways. Air and noise pollution are also forms of environmental damage.

Tire ruts through soft soil collect water, making the trails unfit for hiking and again preventing the growth of plants. The problem becomes worse with the widening of trails to bypass deep ruts. It can take years for a natural area to recover, and sensitive plant species may never recover.

Responsible ATV users can use recreational trails at established ATV sites on private land, such as Vanridge ATV Trails near Mallorytown.

Best natural view of the 1000 Islands

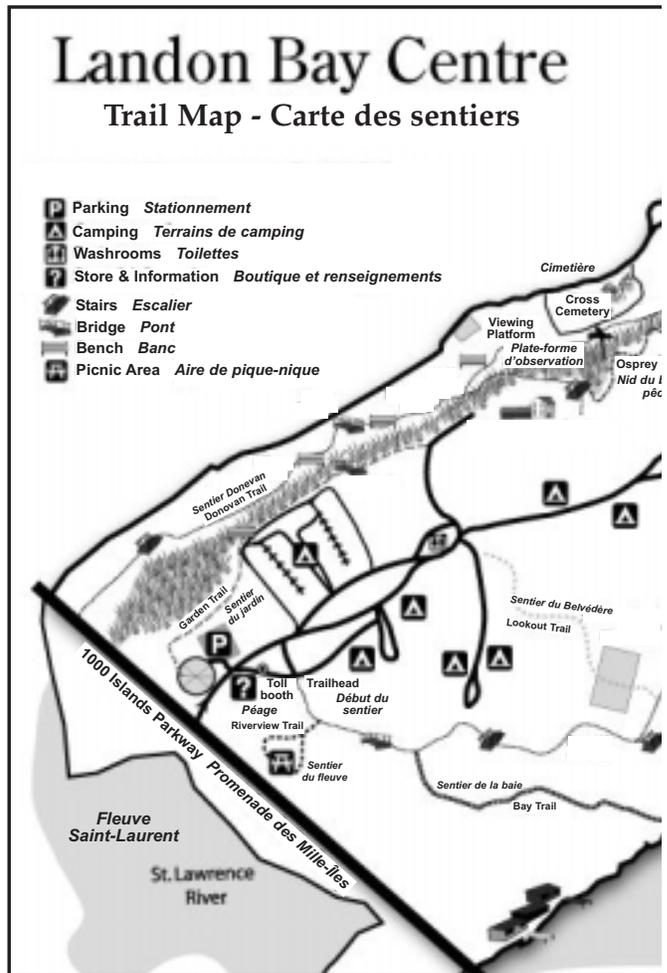
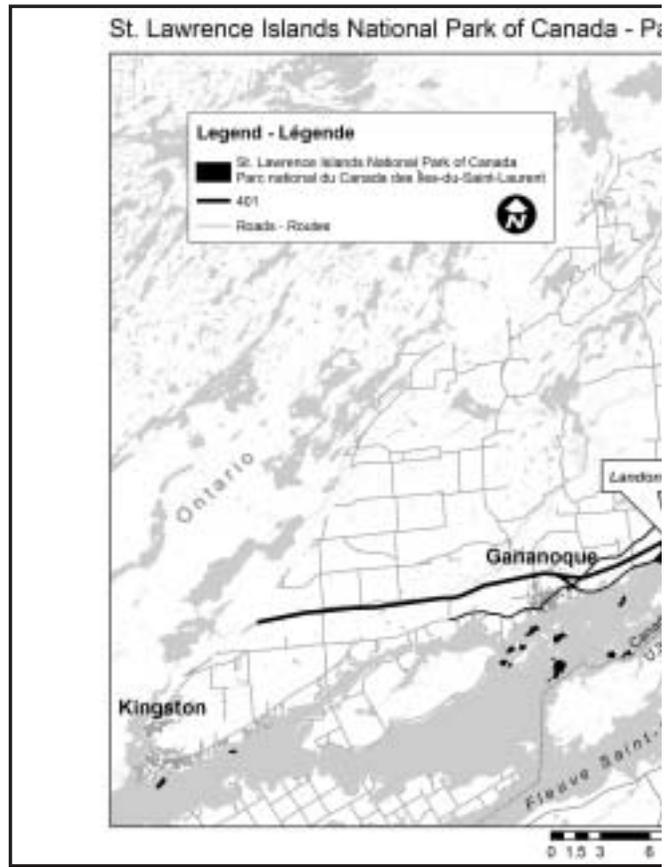
The Landon Bay property is one of the best places to see the variety of habitats and diversity of wildlife that define the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve.

Several kilometres of trails wind past a beaver pond, osprey nest, hemlock forests, rocky outcrops, and grassy meadows. From the scenic lookout, visitors have what has long been considered the best natural view of the 1000 Islands. Benches, boardwalks, and bridges all add to visitor enjoyment of a fantastic property "where beauty abounds and nature obliges."

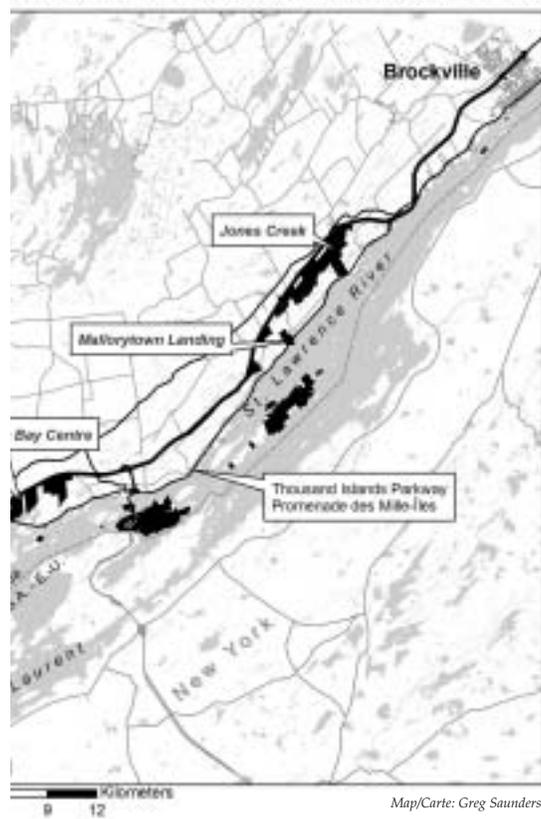
Ownership of the Landon

Bay Centre property was transferred to Parks Canada last autumn, but the Barbara Heck Foundation, established in 1964 to preserve the natural assets of the property, will continue to administer the campground and established trails as part of a long-standing lease.

The Landon Bay Centre is located at 302-1000 Islands Parkway. Trails are of easy to medium difficulty and are open year-round. Trail fees are \$4.00 per adult. Fees are collected on an honour system at the trailhead during the fall and winter. For more information, visit www.landonbay.org.



Parc national du Canada des Îles-du-Saint-Laurent



Map/Carte: Greg Saunders

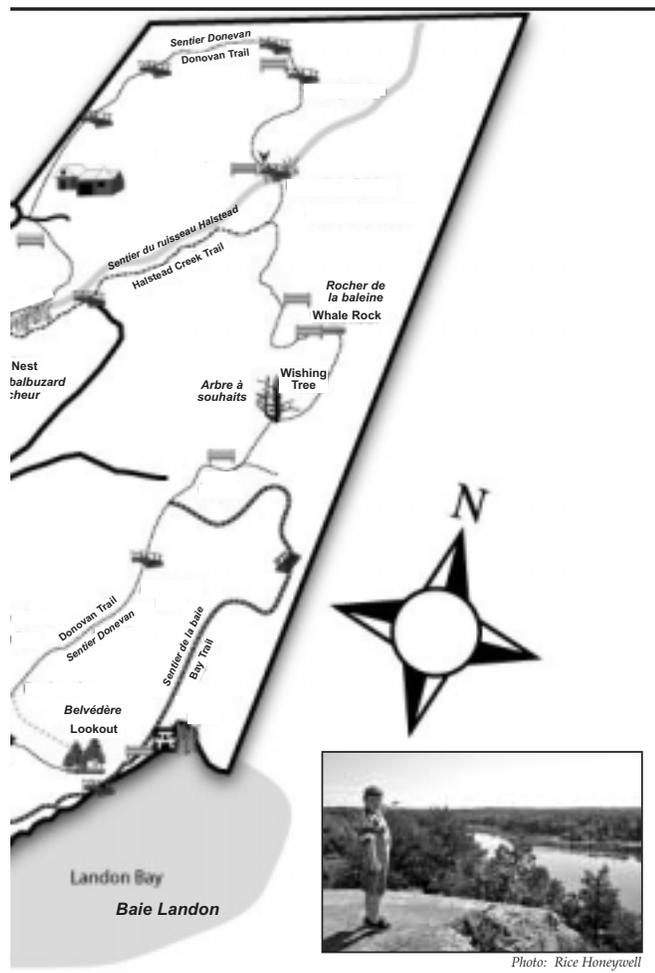


Photo: Rice Honeywell

Chaque pas compte

La protection des sentiers

Tout sentier qui traverse une aire naturelle a des répercussions sur l'environnement; les sentiers ouvrent la voie aux espèces envahissantes dont les graines sont transportées sur nos vêtements et sur la fourrure des animaux. De plus, les déchets aboutissent inévitablement dans l'environnement et chaque pas compacte le sol sous le sentier, ce qui modifie le ruissellement des eaux et réduit les chances qu'une plante puisse pousser.

Cependant, il est important que les visiteurs puissent se divertir, car les sentiers peuvent également avoir des effets positifs sur l'environnement. On finit par apprécier, respecter et protéger les aires naturelles après y avoir vécu une expérience agréable. Le défi qui se pose dans les parcs nationaux et autres aires protégées consiste à trouver un équilibre entre l'utilisation qu'en font les visiteurs et la protection de l'habitat.

Au parc national des Îles du Saint Laurent, on parvient à trouver cet équilibre en entretenant des sentiers pour les randonneurs pédestres et les fondeurs qui désirent visiter des étendues paisibles à l'état sauvage. On demande aux visiteurs de ne laisser que la trace de leurs pas, de ne prendre que des photos et de rester dans les sentiers balisés.

Les sentiers sont ouverts au public à Mallorytown Landing et au Landon Bay Centre; ils sont également entretenus dans la plupart des îles du parc pendant l'été. L'évaluation et la remise en état des sentiers débiteront ce printemps dans les nouvelles propriétés de Jones Creek et de Landon Bay. Les plans à long

terme comprennent notamment la production de dépliants pour les sentiers d'interprétation autonome et l'ajout d'activités récréatives pour les randonneurs pédestres et les pagayeurs.

Quel est le problème avec les véhicules motorisés?

En plus d'être préoccupants pour la sécurité des randonneurs pédestres et des skieurs, les véhicules motorisés sont interdits en raison des dommages qu'ils causent à l'environnement.

Le poids et la puissance des VTT et des motoneiges compactent le sol, ce qui modifie le régime d'écoulement de l'eau et empêche la croissance des plantes. Dans les régions montagneuses et où le sol est mince, l'utilisation des pistes de VTT peut entraîner une importante érosion, ce qui pollue les voies navigables avoisinantes. La pollution atmosphérique et acoustique constitue également une forme de dommage environnemental.

Les ornières creusées par les roues dans le sol meuble recueillent l'eau, ce qui ne permet pas la pratique de la randonnée dans les sentiers et empêche, encore une fois, la croissance des plantes. Pire encore : les sentiers s'élargissent, car on tente de contourner les profondes ornières. Une aire naturelle peut prendre des années à se régénérer et les espèces végétales vulnérables risquent de ne jamais se rétablir.

Les utilisateurs de VTT responsables peuvent utiliser les sentiers récréatifs des sites de VTT reconnus situés sur des terres privées, comme ceux de Vanridge ATV Trails, près de Mallorytown.

La plus belle vue naturelle des Mille-Îles

La propriété de Landon Bay est l'un des meilleurs endroits pour admirer la variété d'habitats et la diversité de la faune qui caractérisent la réserve de la biosphère de l'arche de Frontenac.

Plusieurs kilomètres de sentiers sillonnent la propriété où l'on peut voir un étang à castors, un nid de balzard pêcheur, des forêts de pruche, des affleurements rocheux et des prés verdoyants. Le belvédère est connu pour offrir aux visiteurs la plus belle vue naturelle des Mille Îles. De plus, des bancs, des promenades de bois et des ponts agrémentent la visite de cette magnifique propriété d'une grande beauté où la nature s'impose.

Le Landon Bay Centre est devenu la propriété de Parcs Canada l'automne dernier. Cependant, la Fondation Barbara Heck, créée en 1964 dans le but de préserver les biens naturels de la propriété, continuera d'administrer le terrain de camping et les sentiers aménagés en vertu d'un bail à long terme.

Le Landon Bay Centre est situé au 302, promenade des Mille-Îles. Les sentiers, dont les niveaux de difficulté vont de facile à moyen, sont ouverts à l'année. Le coût d'entrée est de 4 \$ par adulte. L'automne et l'hiver, le paiement des droits au début des sentiers est une question de confiance. Pour de plus amples renseignements, visitez le www.landonbay.org (en anglais seulement).