

### Conservation Master Plan for the Coves!

With enough key land acquisitions in the Coves Subwatershed, the City of London recently embarked on the preparation of a conservation master plan (CMP) for the Coves environmentally significant area (ESA). A CMP serves as a guideline document for the purpose of defining the boundary of the ESA and providing a 10-year management direction for the area. The first steps in this process are to:

- Conduct a detailed field based inventory to collect information on plants, wildlife, natural processes and the cultural impacts of the Coves ESA. This inventory began earlier this spring, and will continue until the end of September.
- Develop an environmental management strategy based on the evaluations of the natural inventory. This management strategy will form the basis of the CMP and will include recommendations for: management zones of different areas within the Coves ESA, trail type and location, areas of restoration and naturalization, wildlife habitat zones, and opportunities for education and stewardship.

The development of a CMP takes 1-2 years and involves participation and input from both the public and other agencies, with the final approval made by Municipal Council. The first public open house was held on June 9 at the German Canadian Club, where local landowners, residents and the public had a chance to voice concerns and talk with the City of London as well as members of North-South Environmental Inc., the firm doing the natural inventory. More open houses will be held in the future as the development of the CMP progresses.

For many years now, Friends of the Coves has requested a CMP for the Coves ESA to ensure proper management of this sensitive and unique area. This is indeed an exciting move forward for the Coves!



This bench at the intersection of Horton St and Springbank Drive offers a picturesque view of the East Cove Pond, which is part of the Coves ESA.

### The 411 on the Coves ESA

- The City of London currently recognizes a 43-hectare area as the Coves ESA, though this area could change with evaluation of the current natural inventory being done.
- The Coves ESA biological significance includes: at least **90 bird**, **5 reptile**, **7 amphibian**, **14 fish**, **14 mammal** and **262 plant** species, including urban sensitive and rare species.
- The Coves ESA geographical significance includes: being the most distinct oxbow formation in London, being adjacent to the Thames River Corridor, containing habitat of species sensitive to urban pressures, and providing a natural corridor for species migration.



## Cove Life Blog!

Chas Jones, our summer intern student, has started a new blog about the Coves. Check out [www.londoncovelife.blogspot.com/](http://www.londoncovelife.blogspot.com/) to learn about Cove life!



### Thom's Presidential News

These are busy times and for those in attendance at the public input session at the German Canadian Club on June 09, it was a good news story. North-South Environmental Inc. has begun the inventory work that will lead to the Conservation Master Plan for the Coves Environmentally Significant Area. This is something that Friends of the Coves has been pressing the City to get at for a number of years now.

The Million Tree Challenge is another significant good news story and the launch of this initiative in Harris Park on June 17 was very well attended. ReForest London is to be commended for getting this under way particularly when it can have a noticeable and positive impact on air quality in the City. Friends of the Coves is pleased to be part of this initiative as well.

One final observation is that the cleanup of the Valspar property appears to be continuing with several crews working on the site. We are pleased to have Chas Jones working with us full time this summer as part of the federally funded Canada Summer Jobs Program. Our thanks of course to Ed Holder our local MP for bringing this program to our attention.

We will try to keep you posted and trust that good news will continue!

~ *Thom McClenaghan*

### TREE-mendous Volunteers!

This spring, over 560 native trees of over 15 different species were planted in the Coves Subwatershed by hardworking volunteers. Planting native vegetation is important as it protects biodiversity in the Coves, offers habitat for native wildlife, and is accustomed to the local climate, meaning less energy input (water, fertilizer and pesticides) is needed.

At the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Coves Clean Up in April, 35 trees were planted in Greenway Park, in the buffer along the west pond. Encouragingly, volunteers who helped with this year's clean up efforts commented that less garbage was seen in the Park than previous years.



The damp weather didn't dampen the spirit of these local Girl Guide group members!

On a very rainy May 1 morning, about 15 members of a local Girl Guide group planted 75 trees and shrubs in Springbank Flats Park. Motivated by the steady rainfall, all trees were in the ground within two hours. Their dedication in less than ideal conditions was greatly appreciated!

And during the week of May 2-6, many grade 6, 7 and 8 students from Kensal Park French Immersion P.S. worked hard to plant over 450 trees and shrubs in Greenway Park, in the naturalization areas along Greenside Ave and Horton Street W.

Friends of the Coves would like to send out a huge "THANK YOU" to the Girl Guides of Canada for the generous monetary donation that helped to pay for a portion of the tree plantings this spring, as well as to all of the volunteers who got their hands dirty. You guys are "TREE-MENDOUS"!

## Unique Euston Park

Situated near the middle of the Coves Subwatershed, at the southern tail end of the Coves environmentally significant area (ESA) lays Euston Park, an 11 ha greenspace. The land that Euston Park occupies has seen great change over the centuries, as is expected in an urban center. Archeological remains uncovered in and around the vicinity of Euston Park are indicative of prehistoric Neutral sites of the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Fast forward a few centuries to the late 1800's, and we find the McArthur Farm extending into half of Euston Park. The area of Euston Park was later subjected to aggregate extraction before becoming a landfill in the early 1960's. After the landfill was capped in 1971, vegetation was planted to help stabilize the soil.

The open grassland ecosystem that now exists in the park has seen a decline throughout the entire country, and is especially rare in urban areas. Besides offering park users fantastic passive recreational opportunities such as birding, hiking, nature photography and kite flying, Euston Park also has the distinction of being home to a newly listed species at risk. The Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) is a ground-nesting songbird that requires grassland habitat to survive, and this May was listed as threatened on the federal species at risk list. A major factor in this species becoming endangered is loss of suitable habitat, which further highlights the need for conservation and wise stewardship of Euston Park. One way we can help the Eastern Meadowlark survive and thrive in Euston Park is by keeping dogs on leash at all times, as ground-nesting birds are highly vulnerable to harassment and predation by dogs.



Mowed trails allow visitors to criss-cross Euston Park, with a great view of the unique grassland ecosystem from the top of the hill.



This photo illustrates how vulnerable the ground-nesting Eastern Meadowlark is to off-leash dogs. (photo from [www.junglewalk.com](http://www.junglewalk.com))

Though the vast open nature of the park may seem like a great place to let your dog run free, Euston Park is not an off-leash dog park, and it is actually illegal to let your dog off leash, as illustrated in signs at various entrances into the park. So, on your next outing to Euston Park, think about its varied past and realize how fortunate we are to have a piece of land right in the city that supports a variety of wildlife, including species at risk. And please keep your dog on leash.

Archaeological information taken from "The Archaeological Component of the Coves Subwatershed Study" by D.R. Pulton & Associates Inc., June 2004.

## Upcoming Events

- **Euston Park clean up - Tuesday, July 12, 5-7pm**
- **Swallowtail Grove Butterfly Garden work party - Tuesday, July 19, 5-7pm**
- **For the month of July, Friends of the Coves will be accepting your e-waste for proper disposal, free of charge!**

(see the events section at [www.thecoves.ca](http://www.thecoves.ca) for more details)

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

### BECOME A MEMBER

Every member is one more voice in support of protecting the Coves ecosystem.

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are always needed to help out with our many projects.

### DONATE

FOTCSI is a charitable organization depending entirely on fundraising (#89976 0813 RR 0001)

#### Memberships

Individual membership (annual) .....	\$25
Family membership (annual) .....	\$35
Non-profit organization (annual) .....	\$75
Corporate membership (annual) .....	\$200
Lifetime individual membership .....	\$200
Lifetime family membership .....	\$300

#### Donations

I pledge support to Friends of the Coves Subwatershed Inc. with a donation of:

\$.....

*Tax deductible receipts will be issued for all donations.  
You can donate by credit card online at [canadahelps.org](http://canadahelps.org)*

#### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this form and send it along with membership fees or donations made by cheque to:

Friends of the Coves Subwatershed Inc.  
111 Elmwood Ave. .E., London, Ontario, N6C 1J4



This monarch caterpillar was spotted on milkweed in Swallowtail Grove butterfly garden in late June.

## I'm making compost, right?

Many people understand the benefits of composting- kitchen scraps and yard waste are diverted from the landfill, while eventually producing material rich in nutrients that can be added to vegetable and garden beds to help plants grow. Many people engage in composting activities in their backyard, or even in their house with vermicomposting.

So, if I throw my kitchen scraps and yard waste over my fence into the natural area behind my house, I will be helping to enrich the soil which will help the forest plants grow, right?

Well, not exactly. In fact, this action harms the natural area. Though it may seem like I'm composting, dumped waste smothers native vegetation, can contain harmful chemicals, and may introduce seeds of plants that are not native to the area. Often times non-native plants can become very invasive, out competing native vegetation for valuable nutrients, reducing biodiversity of the area, and decreasing essential habitat that native wildlife require to survive.

Dumping yard waste into a ravine further compounds the issue, as heavy loads at the top of a bank can lead to bank erosion and slumping. Unstable slopes pose a danger to people, can affect the structural integrity of buildings, and load the Cove ponds with sediment, which in turn affects quality of water and habitat.

Instead of dumping kitchen and yard waste into a natural area, throw it in a compost bin. Yard waste can also be put in a certified compostable bag for curb-side pick-up. Click here for scheduled pick-up dates of yard material in London:

[www.london.ca/d.aspx?s=/Garbage/zonemap\\_pdf.htm](http://www.london.ca/d.aspx?s=/Garbage/zonemap_pdf.htm)

## Contact Info

111 Elmwood Ave. E.  
London, Ontario, N6C 1J4

Tel: 519-640-5397  
Web: [www.thecoves.ca](http://www.thecoves.ca)  
Email: [contact@thecoves.ca](mailto:contact@thecoves.ca)

Office visitors, please enter through east side door where Friends of the Coves sign is found. If locked, ring doorbell.

### Staff:

Mia King, Program Manager  
[mking@thecoves.ca](mailto:mking@thecoves.ca)

Chas Jones, Outreach Intern  
[cjones@thecoves.ca](mailto:cjones@thecoves.ca)

### Board of Directors

Thomas McClenaghan, B.A. ~ President  
Gary Kay, M. Eng. ~ Vice President  
Ian Cousins, B.A, LLB ~ Secretary

Eric Shepherd, M.D., M.Sc.  
Rachel Bezner-Kerr, PhD. ~ Director  
Eric Pemberton, PhD. ~ Director

Doug McAndless, M.Ed., C.D. ~ Director  
Steve Trujillo, OTReg. (Ont.) ~ Director