



Rouge Park staff Lilian Lam and Fenella Hood setting up the Rougemobile for another busy day

Habitat, Sweet Habitat...

The Rouge Park's mobile outreach education van, the Rougemobile, had an outstanding summer! The multilingual staff brought our interactive kids' activity and display about wildlife habitat in the Rouge Park to farmers' markets, day camps and GTA tourist spots to reach over 4000 people this season. Outreach efforts were concentrated on the North part of the Park and watershed this summer, in addition to a five-day spot at the Canadian National Exhibition—a first for the Rouge Park! The Rougemobile also made an appearance on CityTV's Breakfast Television to talk about wildlife habitat in the Rouge. The staff did an excellent job of profiling the Rouge Park and our goals and objectives. The Rougemobile was so popular, many people asked if they could come back next year!

Transfer of Provincial Lands for Rouge Park

It has been a long, but worthwhile, process. Lands that were owned by the Province of Ontario that are within the Rouge Park boundary, south of Steeles Avenue, and along the Little Rouge River from Steeles Avenue north to 16th Avenue have been approved for transfer of ownership for Rouge Park purposes. The Rouge Park Alliance, the multilateral body which oversees the management of the Rouge Park, will manage these lands in partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The final agreement will be completed and approved by the end of 2001. "Acquiring these lands means preserving a variety of valuable habitat types in the Rouge watershed. Everyone at the Rouge is excited that this process has finally been completed and the Rouge Park can protect these lands for years to come," said Ron Christie, Chair of the Rouge Park Alliance.

Rouge North Management Plan..... page 3

Transport Canada Federal Greenspace Project page 2

Apply for funding for projects in the Rouge Park page 2

Upcoming events page 4

Become a River Keeper!



Become a River Keeper and join other private landowners who help to protect the Rouge River and improve the health of our local ecosystem. Call 905-887-2174 to find out what you can do.

Rouge Park works with Federal Government to

Since the Government of Canada made a \$10 million contribution to the Rouge Park Alliance, the Federal government has played an active role in the development of the Rouge Park. The Park uses this funding to support the work of community groups and other agencies in their efforts to protect, enhance and restore the Rouge Park and watershed. The Federal Government is represented on the Rouge Park Alliance by Derek Lee, MP (Scarborough-Rouge River) and John McKay, MP (Scarborough East). In March 2001, the Federal Government made another effort to support the Rouge Park by announcing its intention to designate parts of the former Pickering airport lands on the Oak Ridges Moraine for Rouge Park purposes. "The Federal Government has shown their continuing support and commitment to the Rouge Park by ensuring that lands are set aside to provide for the protection of a major natural corridor linking the Oak Ridges Moraine to Lake Ontario," said Ron Christie, Chair of the Rouge Park Alliance, at the March announcement.



March 2001 Federal Greenspace Initiative announcement, Stouffville, Ontario. L to R: Karen Kraft Sloan, MP (York North), Bryon Wilfert, MP (Oak Ridges), Minister of Transport, David Collenette, Derek Lee, MP, Dan McTeague, MP (Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge), John McCallum,

Transport Canada is the lead agency for the Federal Government in the process to determine the future of these lands. As part of this process, Transport Canada has engaged stakeholders, including the Rouge Park and community groups, in discussions about the final vision for the protection of all of the Federal lands on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Public consultations will be held in fall 2001. Details will be available on the Transport Canada

WorldWildWeb

This issue: Web sites for kids

Mad Scientist Network: <http://www.madsci.org>
Fun facts and educational experiments for kids of all ages. Learn about the science behind natural phenomena around the world and in your own backyard. Kids should be supervised by an adult when conducting experiments.

Royal Ontario Museum: <http://rom.on.ca/biodiversity>
The ROM has an interactive and fun collection, the Hands On Biodiversity Gallery. Visitors to the gallery will discover the complex relationships among all living things, and learn that biodiversity is everywhere, even in their own backyard. Visit the gallery's web site, then visit the gallery!

YES Mag - Canada's Science Magazine for Kids:
<http://www.yesmag.bc.ca> An interesting look at "Nature's Engineers" in the "Structures" section of the site. YES Mag also profiles kids in science, if you are super at science, they want to hear from you!

Eco-Facts

The Rouge Park is located at the northernmost tip of Carolinian Canada...
AND is an official Carolinian Canada site...
AND is the 6th largest of the 38 sites...
The Carolinian Canada Zone contains more nationally rare species of plants and animals than any other region in Canada!

Natural and Cultural Heritage Projects in the Rouge

Did you know that the Rouge Park assists in funding projects that protect, restore and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Rouge Park and Rouge River watershed?

In 2001, we funded 17 exciting projects throughout the watershed. If you looked at the top of the Richmond Hill municipal offices this past summer, you may have been surprised to see three fledgling peregrine falcons roosting there. To reintroduce this native species of bird to the Rouge, we were partners with the Canadian Peregrine Falcon Foundation and had great volunteer assistance from the Richmond Hill Field Naturalists.

In the southern end of the Rouge, the local group NEST has been developing criteria for significant heritage trees. This information will build a database to help future seed collection and ecological restoration efforts in the Rouge, and help with planning for the protection of some of the stronger and more mature trees in the Rouge. Rouge Park funding has also assisted the Town of Markham, the Milne Park Conservation Association and the TRCA in major renaturalization work at Milne Park. Significant wetland restoration, tree planting and other initiatives will be implemented in various phases; work is still being done this fall and will continue into 2002. Part of the greater Rouge Park, Milne Park itself was expanded by roughly 26 hectares by lands transferred from the Ontario Realty Corporation for Rouge Park purposes.

It doesn't stop there! Rouge Park funding has gone towards planting over 23,000 trees and shrubs, creating fish bypass channels, planting wildflower meadows, wetland creation projects, frog monitoring training workshops and endangered species habitat restoration. It's not only funds that make these projects possible, it's also the many volunteers who help us to help the Rouge.

If you would like to apply for funding for a project in the Rouge watershed, contact Barb Casier at the Rouge Park at 905-713-6022. The deadline for submitting projects for 2002 funding is October 15, 2001. If you

Progress on Rouge North Management

Since the creation of the Rouge Park in 1995, the goal has been to develop a management plan for the lands in the park north of Steeles Avenue, similar to the 1994 *Rouge Park Management Plan*, which covers the lands south of Steeles Avenue. The Rouge Park Alliance, the management board that oversees the Rouge Park, has commissioned intensive studies, and held extensive public consultations, to complete the Rouge North Management Plan. Approved by the Alliance in spring 2001, the *Rouge North Management Plan* is a framework document that requires practical strategies for implementation for each municipality and government agency that will be adopting it in its jurisdiction. The process of developing these strategies has been ongoing since spring 2001 and the Rouge Park Alliance and Rouge Park staff will have an implementation strategy completed by the end of the year. Once it is ready, the municipalities on the Rouge Park Alliance are expected to move forward to adopt the *Rouge North Management Plan* into their official plans and planning processes.



Above: View of the Little Rouge River in Markham

Implementation and adoption of the Rouge North Management Plan is an exciting time for the Rouge Park, "The Rouge Park is unique in many ways, but the process for developing the Rouge Park North that is outlined in this plan is innovative and unprecedented," said Lewis Yeager, General Manager for the Rouge Park. By

Events

October 15 - 20 Rouge Park Week

October 15 10:00am Rouge Park Tour - Rouge Park Alliance members visit community projects throughout the Rouge Park and watershed. By invitation only.

October 16, 2001 7 :00pm-9:00pm, Rouge Park Heritage Music night. Experience a sampling of music representing groups who have settled in the Rouge, to be held at the beautiful Cedarena in Markham. Weather permitting, call the Rouge Park at 905-713-6007 for more info. FREE

October 18, 2001 7:00pm, Rouge Park Awards night at Toronto Zoo, Atrium. All are welcome, call the Rouge Park, 905-713-6007 for more info. FREE

October 20, 2001 8:00am Rouge Valley Foundation's Hike for the Rouge 2001. Walks run "rain or shine". Meet at Rouge Valley Conservation Centre, Toronto. Info/pledge forms, call 416-431-6591.

October 20, 2001 All day event. TRCA tree planting and bird box building workshop at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Stouffville. Guided nature hikes in the morning and afternoon. Runs "rain or shine". Call Bruce's Mill at 905-887-5531 for info. FREE

October 20, 2001 9:00am The Town of Markham and York Rouge Scouts shrub planting at Toogood Pond, Markham. Visit the Markham web site at www.city.markham.on.ca for info.

October 28, 2001 1:30pm Save the Rouge monthly walk. Local history. Meet at parking lot on Tywn Rivers Drive, east of bridge over Little Rouge River. FREE

November 3, 2001 10:00am Milne Park Conservation Association and TRCA host a volunteer tree, shrub and aquatic vegetation planting at Milne Park, Markham. Call 416-661-6600 X5394 or 905-294-3200 for info.

November 25, 2001 1:30pm Save the Rouge Morningside Tributary nature walk.

Rouge Park Vision

The Rouge Park will be a special place of outstanding natural features and diverse cultural heritage in an urban-rural setting, protected and flourishing as an ecosystem in perpetuity. Human activities will exist in harmony with the natural values of the park. The park will be a sanctuary for nature and the human spirit.

Rouge Park Goal

To protect, restore and enhance the natural, scenic and cultural values of the park in an ecosystem context, and to promote public responsibility, understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this heritage.

We welcome your submissions of events info, news, stories and photos. Mail info to:

Rouge Park
Connections newsletter
50 Bloomington Rd West, 3rd
Floor Aurora, Ontario L4G 3G8
or e-mail us at
rougepark@rougepark.com

Sorry, we cannot return items submitted.

Connections is published by the Rouge Park Alliance.

We are pleased to announce that Lewis Yeager has been appointed General Manager of the Rouge Park. He brings us 30 years of experience in ecology, watershed management and park planning in the private and public sectors.



Prior to joining the Rouge Park, Lewis was a non-partisan researcher with the Ontario Legislative Assembly and has spent much of his career as an executive in the environmental consulting sector. Lewis has also served as a government biologist in northern Ontario, was a scientist with Environment Canada's Erie Critical Coastal Interface Study, and taught ecology and human biology at York University in Toronto. Lewis completed undergraduate studies in zoology at the University of Western Ontario and graduate research in ecology at York. He also teaches

On a similar note, we are pleased to welcome Barb



Casier as the new Rouge Park Natural and Cultural Heritage Program Manager. Barb is a graduate of the University of Guelph Department of Biology Honours Program where she focused on ecology and zoology. Barb's career includes work at Point Pelee National Park and the Essex Region Conservation Authority in areas of public