

## Another busy year ahead for TRCA...

Across Toronto and Region Conservation's (TRCA) jurisdiction in 2008, TRCA staff and its partners planted 407,745 plants in their work to improve the terrestrial and aquatic habitat of the Greater Toronto Area. In the Etobicoke and Mimico Watersheds, 31,981 of these plants set down their roots.

It was a busy year in the Etobicoke and Mimico Watersheds with community members being engaged in stewardship and planting activities taking place from the headwaters in Caledon and Brampton down to the shores of Lake Ontario. With over 9,540 volunteers participating in 2008, the community showed its support for the restoration and protection of the natural systems of the watersheds.

In 2009, this important work will continue across both watersheds. In Brampton, restoration work will continue along the Upper Mimico, the Etobicoke Creek's Valleywood Park corridor, while in Mississauga restoration of the West Etobicoke Creek will carry on adjacent to Toronto Pearson. In Toronto, TRCA will work along the Mimico Creek, the Etobicoke Valley and the waterfront.

Toronto and Region Conservation and the cities of Brampton, Mississauga and Toronto, plan to initiate construction of over 10 kilometres of trails along the Etobicoke Creek in 2009 – the West Etobicoke Creek Trail will begin construction just south of the Hwy. 401



Malton volunteer Doug Storey plants along Mimico Creek

and run through Toronto Pearson to the northern Mississauga border; while TRCA staff will begin work implementing a trail adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth Way by Sherway Gardens, and start planning a trail to connect Brampton and Mississauga through Kennedy Valley Park at Hwy. 407 and 410.

Along the waterfront, the mouth of the Mimico Creek at Humber Bay Park will

receive a facelift with the creation of a new wetland; and, to the west at the mouth of the Etobicoke Creek, TRCA, Mississauga and Toronto, will begin implementing the Marie Curtis Park Master Plan.

New community action areas will get started in 2009 as well – community action areas are established as a way for TRCA to get input from communities

on environmental initiatives and to create ownership of projects. Both the South Etobicoke and Valleywood Community Action Areas have held their first meetings, but will start to dig into their first projects in 2009.

One of the exciting new community projects in the Etobicoke Watershed will be the Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan taking place in Brampton. The project aims to help a community not only retrofit its natural and aquatic habitat, but also assist residents in improving the energy and water efficiency of their homes, while promoting environmental landscaping practices.

Retrofitting and greening new developments will play a large role in TRCA's work in the watersheds in 2009 as the concept of eco-industrial parks take hold across the watershed. Partners in Project Green – an initiative to transform the industrial lands surrounding Toronto Pearson International Airport – begins offering programming to help businesses improve their environmental performance in 2009, while TRCA will begin working with their colleagues in Caledon to pursue eco-industrial concepts for their new greenfield industrial areas.

With all of this activity, there's no doubt the benchmarks reached in 2008 will be eclipsed by the work planned for 2009. Toronto and Region Conservation and its community partners are looking forward to another productive year protecting and enhancing the Etobicoke and Mimico Watersheds.

## The Living City

The urban reality of our watersheds is brought into sharp focus by the enormous growth, both greenfield and infill, expected to occur within and around these watersheds over the next 25 years. Promoting a balanced and integrated pursuit of social, economic and environmental objectives, The Living City® embraces the ecosystem concept as the foundation for the cityregion and strives towards achieving:

- Healthy rivers and shorelines
- Regional biodiversity
- Sustainable communities



Bantrel staff plant in Wildwood Park



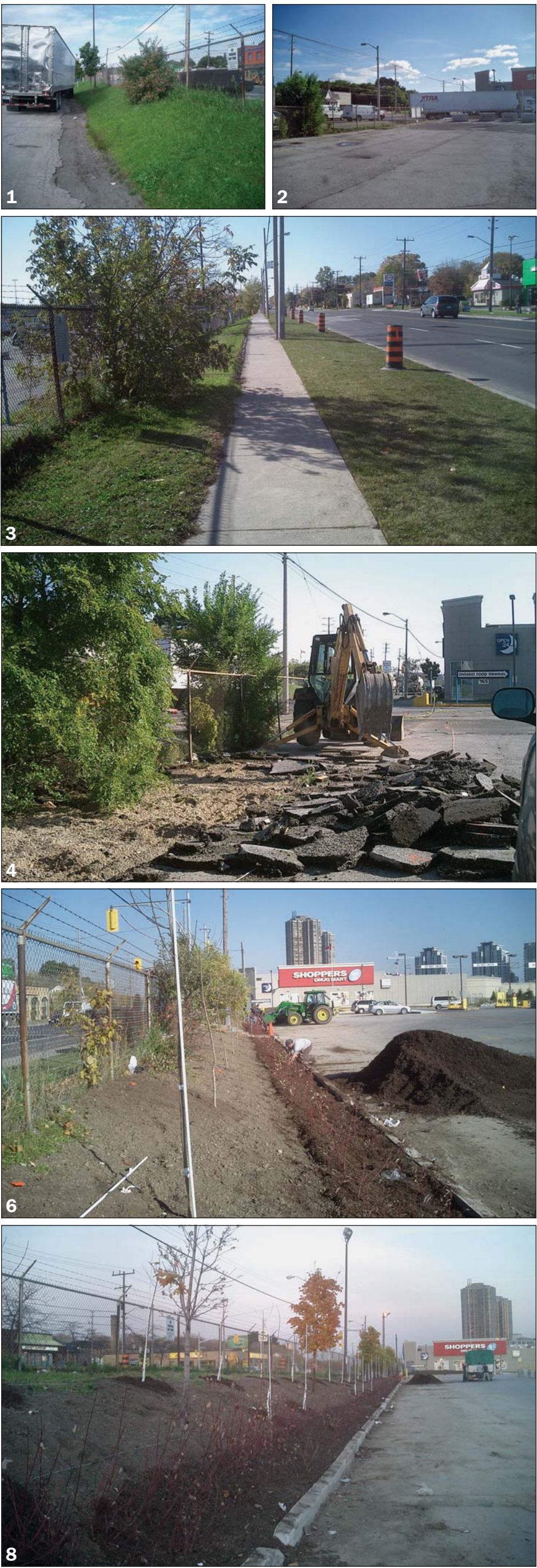
# Rainwater takes a new direction at the Ontario Food Terminal

Building on the naturalization of a 750-metre boulevard with 225 poplar trees in 2007, the Ontario Food Terminal (OFT), the City of Toronto, the University of Toronto and TRCA worked to install a 120 metre bio-swale at the Ontario Food Terminal entrance.

Bio-swales are planted depressions designed to collect stormwater runoff from roofs, parking lots and walkways, and allow water to infiltrate the soil and irrigate landscaping. The bio-swale at the OFT was designed to collect stormwater runoff from the facility's parking lot, and to introduce a landscaped buffer between the parking area and the Queensway.

Construction of the bio-swale involved the removal of the equivalent of 10 asphalt parking spots, and augmenting the soil in the existing grassed areas to accommodate the introduction of dogwoods, willows and native wild-flower grasses. Now, when the rain falls at the OFT, instead of washing along the parking area towards a storm sewer – picking up pollutants that can reduce water quality in the receiving Mimico Creek – it heads towards their newly vegetated bio-swale, where it can be filtered and used for either re-charging groundwater or onsite irrigation.

Funding for the project came from the City of Toronto's Community Program for Stormwater Management, Trees Across Toronto, TD Friends of the Environment, the Toronto Region Remedial Action Plan, the OFT and TRCA. Plans are in the works to continue the work at OFT in 2009 with naturalization efforts along Park Lawn Road.



## Trail Steward Project makes its way to Brampton

Based on its success in Malton, Mississauga an exciting new stewardship project will hit Brampton in spring 2009. The “Trail Stewards Project” will begin along part of the Etobicoke Creek Trail, between Sandalwood Parkway East and Williams Parkway East. The project has three components:

- 1) **To bring awareness to the Etobicoke Creek Trail:** Toronto and Region Conservation will create a trail map with help from community members who will help photograph and select trail highlights. A trail survey will be conducted. It will serve as a tool to understand current trail use patterns and the community's views on ways to improve it.
- 2) **Recruit community members as “Trail Stewards:”** Trail Stewards will take part in tree plantings, litter clean-ups, educational workshops and a nature walk series.
- 3) **Create outdoor education stations along the trail:** Community groups and schools close to the trail will receive curriculum focused activity books and a field kit to use at stations along the trail. These materials will guide teachers and group leaders through environmental activities on plants, birds, water and human impacts on nature.

Sign up to be a Trail Steward. Gain new skills, learn about the environment and get valuable volunteer hours. Attend three events and receive a free Trail Steward T-shirt or tote bag.

For more information, call 416-661-6600, ext. 5748 or email [jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca](mailto:jcorkum-gorrill@trca.on.ca)

Check out event details at [www.trcastewardshipevents.ca](http://www.trcastewardshipevents.ca)



### Photographs 1 to 8:

- 1 and 2 – before pictures of OFT parking lot.
- 3 – newly planted grass that replaced the asphalt median along the Queensway.
- 4, 5 and 6 – construction of the OFT bioswale.
- 7 and 8 – the finished OFT bioswale.



# Pearson Eco-Business Zone launched

## Partners in Project Green aims to transform Canada’s largest employment area

Sustainable business practices are becoming a competitive necessity. And businesses can do more for the environment by working together rather than separately. The Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) and TRCA, in partnership with municipal and regional governments, utilities and participating businesses, have embarked on an ambitious undertaking to put these principles into action. The objective is to transform the area around Toronto Pearson International Airport into a world-class eco-business zone. Once in place, the Pearson Eco-Business Zone will be the largest eco-business initiative (in terms of both land mass and employment) in North America.

Partners in Project Green will leverage the airport area’s many advantages – infrastructure, diverse industrial and commercial base, talent pool, and green spaces – to make it a hub of green innovation. The area is Canada’s largest employment district: comprising over 12,000 hectares of industrial and commercial land, 12,500 businesses, and 355,000 employees. Major sectors include automotive supply chain, logistics and warehousing, food processing, plastics, and aviation. It is an ideal location for co-operation to cut costs and minimize waste, pool materials and group purchases, and share best practices.

Toronto and Region Conservation has received multi-year funding commitments from the municipalities of Brampton, Mississauga and Toronto as well as the Region of Peel and the GTAA, to implement the initiative. Greater Toronto Airports Authority is taking a leadership role in the Partners in Project Green, while a variety of area businesses – Unilever, Bayer Inc., Woodbine Entertainment Group, Oxford Properties, Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Lange Transportation, Molson, and many others – have already completed energy and environmental projects and are reaping the business benefits.

With estimated total annual electricity use of close to 5.8 million MWh, natural gas consumption of 46 million GJ, and water use of 109 million m3, the area surrounding the airport represents enormous potential for conservation. To realize this potential a number of programs are available, including:

- An **Eco-Efficiency Program** that offers local businesses free walk-through assessments to identify energy, water and waste reduction potential, helps fund detailed audits, and provides assistance in implementing and financing projects.
- A **Green Parking Lot Program** that offers assistance for businesses looking to design green elements, such as permeable paving and bio-swales, into their parking lot (re)designs.
- A **Sustainable Energy Planning Program** that helps businesses develop and implement energy plans to reduce their resource costs.



In addition to these programs, Partners in Project Green is also working with its public and private sector partners on a number of projects, including:

- The development of a district energy system around the airport;
- Capturing organic waste from local food processors for a bio-gas facility;
- Working with large property owners on financing strategies to retrofit their building portfolios;
- Developing a region-wide resource reutilization networking to help

businesses turn their waste into revenue;

- Building a green procurement network to reduce the costs of purchasing and installing green technologies through bulk purchasing; and,
- Initiating a green job program to connect young people to new green job opportunities.

At the end of the day, the goal of the Pearson Eco-Business Zone is to take leading local businesses and make

them leaders in the world. So if a food processing company wants to be the most profitable, most efficient and greenest, they would look to Molson. Or if a transportation company wants to know how to operate off the grid, they would look to Lange. Partners in Project Green is all about working together to help local industry become green leaders in their sectors globally.

## Is Mimico Creek Dead?

Some of us remember when we could catch tadpoles in Mimico Creek. Some of us have seen pictures and heard stories of people swimming in Mimico Creek where it crosses under Royal York Road. Is it possible to do these things now? Will it be possible in the future? How can we help Mimico Creek return to its original state of health?

Mimico Creek flows 33 kilometres, beginning in its headwaters in Brampton, running past Toronto Pearson International Airport, under Rathburn Rd at Martingrove Rd, under Kipling Ave near Burnhamthorpe Rd, through Islington Golf Course, under the Gardiner Expressway near Park Lawn Rd and down to Humber Bay Park into Lake Ontario. It drains about 77 square kilometres of land.

The Mimico Creek watershed used to be almost entirely covered by forest. It now has only two per cent coverage. These forests have been replaced by hard surfaces which do not allow rainwater to be naturally filtered before it enters the creek. Instead arriving at the creek through underground aquifers and springs the most of the water enters in torrential blasts from pipes shunting water from rooftops, highways, parking lots and sidewalks, bringing any pollutants it picks up along the way with it.



On the positive side, the City of Toronto has a comprehensive plan for controlling stormwater and has passed by-laws regarding the use of pesticides and removal of trees. There are about 64 kilometres of walking trails in this watershed and more are being created to allow more recreational enjoyment of our natural environment.

Toronto and Region Conservation has specific targets with measurement standards, and key future actions with timelines. Toronto Pearson has made tremendous strides in controlling the negative effects of runoff and is recognized internationally as a model of environmental management. But what can each of us do to bring Mimico Creek back to health?

We can stop using harmful chemicals in our gardening and cleaning practices;

reduce our water consumption; plant native species in our gardens; stop dumping grass clippings, compostable materials and garbage into the creek; disconnect our rainwater downspouts; put pet feces, cigarette butts and other garbage into the garbage; use salt substitute to melt ice; and get involved with local environmental events, like garbage clean ups and plantings.

Our own lifestyle choices affect the health of the Mimico Creek. If we all do a little bit to change our ways, someday those images of yesteryear will return for future generations along the Mimico Creek.

**Submitted by Marilyn Hagerman** – Member, Islington Residents’ and Ratepayers’ Association, South Mimico Stewardship Group and Etobicoke-Mimico Watersheds Coalition of Toronto and Region Conservation



Every year, Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) and the Etobicoke-Mimico Watersheds Coalition complete community projects with partners from across the watersheds. Here are just a few of the projects we completed in 2008:

### Valleybrook Park gets greener

This portion of Etobicoke Creek flows through a park located within a highly developed Brampton residential area. The riparian zone is sparsely vegetated and the park contains a trail system used by residents.

Naturalization efforts continued in the area in 2008, with the addition of 3,920 plants, representing 9,490 square meter of restored natural areas. In addition to these newly restored natural areas, a 500 square meter wetland complex was constructed south of Bovaird Drive.

The plantings and wetland construction in this area will act to filter runoff before entering the creek and act as habitat for a variety of wildlife species.



Mulching of newly planted trees along the Etobicoke Creek in Brampton.



A young Malton tree planter at annual Malton Stewardship Day.

### Community action in Malton

The Malton community showed huge support for stewardship activities in 2008. Throughout the year, over 1,100 volunteers planted trees, cleaned-up litter, and learned about nature in Malton. In Wildwood Park and along Mimico Creek, 625 native trees and shrubs were planted in partnership with schools, businesses and community members.

Also in 2008 TRCA launched the Trail Stewards Project. Four outdoor activity stations were set up along the Malton Greenway Trail for schools and community groups to use. With help from the community, a map of the Malton Greenway Trail was created. This map highlights trail features and activity station locations. In spring 2009, Malton schools will be receiving an activity binder and a field kit to do these environmental activities.

To learn about events along the trail go to [www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca](http://www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca). You can also visit [www.trca.on.ca/malton](http://www.trca.on.ca/malton) to check out project newsletters, photos and trail maps.

### Peel students lead the day

This year TRCA engaged students across the Region of Peel with two large planting and stewardship events.

As part of the Peel Environmental Youth Alliance's Stewardship Day held annually every spring, TRCA invited five schools to Heart Lake Conservation Area in Brampton. Students were treated to a number of activities, including a nature walk and three planting stations, that resulted in 250 shrubs, 400 aquatics and 500 wildflowers being planted.

The event was replicated for Maple Leaf Day organized every fall by the City of Brampton. 350 students joined TRCA, Brampton and Peel staff at Wexford Park, where they planted 860 trees and shrubs along the Etobicoke Creek.



### Wetlands expanded at Maitland Park

Building on the wetland areas completed in 2006 and 2007 in Brampton's Maitland Park, in the spring of 2008, one of the wetlands in the park was expanded by 0.3 hectares to include the grassed area north of Williams Parkway.

The area was converted to a wetland by raising the existing trail and building a bridge at the north end, under which the water from the existing wetland could flow into the grassy area. The wetland will help improve water quality downstream, and provide essential habitat for local wildlife and waterfowl.

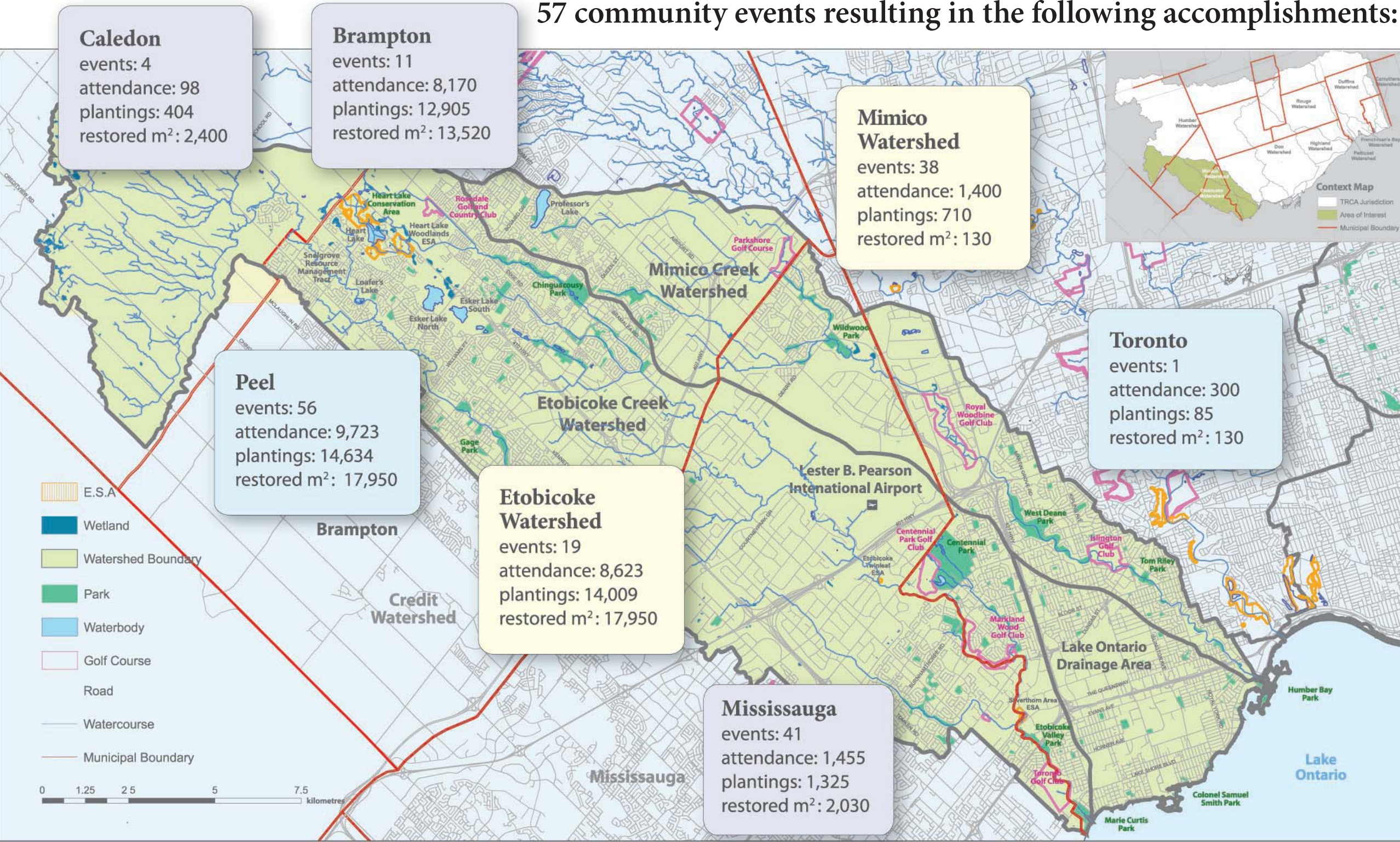
Through a series of plantings, 1,450 native deciduous, coniferous and shrub species were planted within the park, increasing the amount of vegetated area by 0.5 hectares.

### No green without Scouts and Guides

Spring and fall wouldn't be the same without the Brampton Scouts and Guides. This year they teamed up with Brampton and TRCA staff to do two plantings. In total, 1,860 trees and shrubs were planted by the Brampton Scout and Guides along the Etobicoke Creek in Wexford Park.



Members of the 55th Brownies and Sparks take a break after planting in Wexford Park.



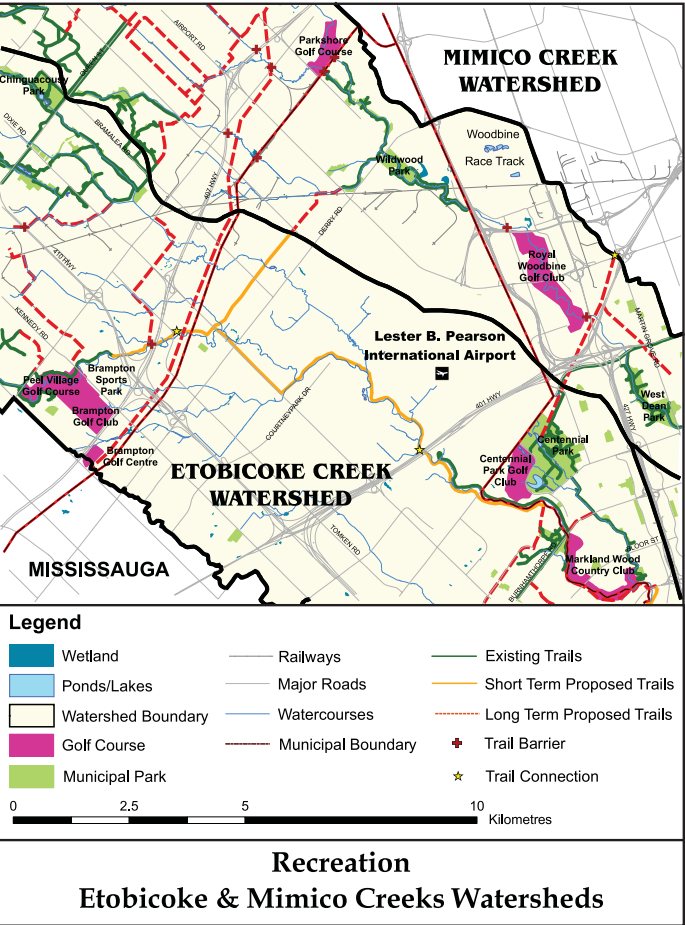
In addition to this, TRCA staff planted 17,262 plants across the Etobicoke and Mimico Watersheds, for a total of 31,981 trees, shrubs and wildflowers.

### Trail connection taking root

In 2008, Mississauga, Peel and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, continued to work with TRCA to establish a route for the West Etobicoke Trail. The trail will run along the Etobicoke Creek from south of Hwy. 401 by General Mills, through Toronto Pearson, north to the border of Brampton by Hwy. 407.

As part of the trail project, TRCA identified a number of restoration sites in the area and in 2008 restored areas at Britannia Road adjacent to Toronto Pearson and at Dixie and Derry Roads. These restoration initiatives will continue in 2009 and be expanded to Courtney Park Drive behind Pratt and Whitney.

Construction on the trail will begin in 2009. Eventually the trail will be connected through Brampton, allowing trail users to travel from the mouth of the Etobicoke Creek at Marie Curtis Park to Valleywood in Caledon.



### Green thumbs in Valleywood

Toronto and Region Conservation and its friends in Caledon's Valleywood continued their hard work in 2008, hosting four community stewardship events in the community, including two planting and gardening events.

In total the residents of Valleywood planted 360 trees and shrubs along the Etobicoke Creek, while enjoying a spring native plant sale and a fall organic lawn care workshop.

### Telus and Rogers answer the call

Building on their annual Day of Service, 130 Telus staff joined TRCA at the Region of Peel's Integrated Waste Management Facility on Torbram Road to restore a portion of the Mimico Creek in May of 2008.

In what was no doubt a record time for getting plants into the ground, the Telus employees were able to plant 1,350 trees and shrubs in just under one hour.

There was so much time left in their volunteer day, Telus staff watered every single plant by fetching water from the nearby creek with buckets.

Not to be outdone, Rogers' staff also joined TRCA for an event and helped create a butterfly garden with 1,200 wildflower plants in Brampton's Wexford Park.

### TRCA wins award

Toronto and Region Conservation was recognized by the Brampton Horticultural Society for its dedication to promoting, preserving and expanding natural spaces in the City of Brampton in 2008 and was presented with the J.A. Carrol Award at their annual general meeting.



Etobicoke-Mimico Coalition Member Bob Noble and TRCA staff, Chris Rickett, receive the J.A. Carrol award.

### New connections along the waterfront

Phase 1 of the Mimico Waterfront Linear Park officially opened in July of 2008. The park runs from Norris Crescent in the west, to Superior Avenue on the east. The area features new stone beaches, a sand beach, a 150-metre boardwalk and public trails for pedestrians and cyclists, along with new wetland and sand dune habitat areas.





# Meandering in on completion on the Upper Mimico

The Mimico Creek is one of the most degraded stream systems within the TRCA’s jurisdiction. It is entirely urbanized and approximately 59 per cent of it has been transformed from its natural state, either lined with concrete or straightened, resulting in poor water quality, high water flow events during rainfalls, and loss of aquatic and riparian habitat.

As part of an ongoing effort to revitalize and restore Mimico Creek, TRCA selected an aquatic habitat restoration site within a highly industrialized area in Brampton, known as Upper Mimico Creek. The project focuses on the area of Mimico Creek bordered by Steeles Avenue to the south and Queen Street to the north; the CN Brampton Intermodal rail terminal to the west; the A.J. Billes Canadian Tire Distribution Centre to the east, and a retired farm field to the northeast.

Prior to TRCA’s work, the conditions of the Upper Mimico Creek were severely degraded. The entire channel and portions of the floodplain had been lined with flexible concrete mattress and contained few meander bends. In an attempt to reduce the flow of water, three reinforced gabion drop structures had been placed throughout this portion of the stream. However the gabion structures were acting as physical barriers preventing fish migration to traditional spawning areas and causing fragmentation of habitat.

Toronto and Region Conservation devised a natural corridor design for the 1.2 kilometer stretch of Upper Mimico Creek, to restore natural channel form and function. The design was guided by a holistic approach which considered geomorphology, hydrology and downstream reaches with respect to benefits and constraints, and future land use changes. The design incorporated meanders and riffle pool sequences to reduce the energy of water flow, increase complexity, and promote natural sediment transport, thus improving fish and invertebrate habitat and enhancing the integrity of the trophic structure.

In 2007 the project began with the construction of 280 meters of the natural corridor within the upstream portions of the site. This included the creation of a half hectare wetland complex built adjacent to the stream, which works to control flooding, filter water and provide habitat to local wildlife. The project continued in 2008 with 580 metres of the creek being restored to its natural meander, including the planting of 1,800 trees and shrubs, the creation of two additional 0.2 hectare wetlands and the installation of woody habitat structures.

The final phase of the Upper Mimico Creek restoration project will take place in 2009 with a completion date of early 2010. Support for the project has been provided by the Region of Peel and City of Brampton.



Before



After

# Heritage Conservation helps Brampton win two major “Communities in Bloom” titles

The results are in! In 2006 and again in 2008 the City of Brampton competed in the Communities in Bloom competition. The City of Brampton walked away with the National award in 2006 and won the International prize in 2008 (over 100,000-population category).

Brampton was competing head to head against several other cities in Canada and around the world. Congratulations go out to the many competing municipalities in our population category.

Contrary to what some may believe, this friendly competition is not restricted solely to judging flowerbeds and hanging baskets. ‘Communities in Bloom’ is a way of assessing civic pride and the general ‘health’ of a community. The judges assess a range of factors. Judges award “Bloom Ratings” to participating communities for achievements in landscaped areas, turf areas, urban forestry, floral displays, community involvement, natural and heritage conservation, environmental awareness and tidiness.

The judges spent a few days in Brampton, during both competitions, touring facilities and viewing demonstrations of special projects. In both years the judges also enjoyed a brief helicopter tour of the

City, which vividly illustrated the vastness of Brampton’s urban forest, its valley lands, lakes, parks and cultural features.

The heritage component of the tour was tailored specifically to showcase heritage programs in various parts of the City including the Credit Valley, Churchville, Historic Bovaird House, cemeteries and downtown. There was also a “Community Showcase” and receptions at Chinguacousy Park.

In the 2008 competition, an intriguing ‘first person’ interpretation program was produced and staged in Brampton’s old municipal cemetery by a volunteer with the Brampton Historical Society and Brampton Heritage Board. The venue also allowed the City to spotlight its heritage cemetery conservation and urban design programs.

The City of Brampton stood out in all judging categories in both years. In the 2006 competition the single highest scoring category was in ‘Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation’. Brampton earned an impressive 118.5 points out of a possible 125. Cultural heritage conservation in Brampton was singled out for special mention with a national edition ‘5 Blooms Award!’

The City of Brampton can be justifiably proud of its efforts. A special bouquet should go out to all participants, including: City staff, Mayor Susan Fennell and our Council (particularly Councillors Hutton and Miles), the Region of Peel, the Horticultural Society, the school boards, local garden clubs, private corporate participants, Toronto and Region Conservation and the Brampton Downtown Business Association.

The participating heritage partners were: Brampton Heritage Board, Peel Heritage Complex, Historic Bovaird House and Brampton Historical Society. These groups showcased their intrinsic value to the City throughout the competitions, and demonstrated their commitment to the preservation, protection and promotion of our heritage. Great work everyone!

Submitted by Lerey Giles – member of the Etobicoke-Mimico Watershed Coalition of Toronto and Region Conservation.





# Heart Lake Conservation Area

## A Natural New Shoreline for Heart Lake! Heart Lake Shoreline Naturalization Project Completed

If you are a regular visitor to Heart Lake, you have probably noticed that the shoreline of the lake has undergone a dramatic transformation during the past few years. This transformation is the result of the Heart Lake Naturalization Project, an initiative developed to improve the quality of fish and wildlife habitat in the lake and provide a more natural and aesthetically pleasing appearance to the shoreline. We are happy to announce that in December 2008 the final phase of this project was completed.

For over 40 years Heart Lake Conservation Area has been a recreational destination. With the growing community in Brampton, Heart Lake is being placed under greater pressure to provide recreational and fishing opportunities to more people than in the past. For years TRCA has stocked Heart Lake with Rainbow Trout, due to the Lake’s inability to provide a good sustainable natural fishery. The naturalization of the shoreline of Heart Lake is a critical step towards rehabilitating a natural and self sustaining warm water fishery which will ultimately provide a more diversified population of fish species.

Restoration work to naturalize the shoreline began in 2000, on the east side of Heart Lake, restoring 240 metres of shoreline. During 2005, an additional 30 metres of shoreline along the west shore was naturalized. In 2007 restoration of the south and south-east shorelines began, and was carried out in three phases. Phase I and II took place in 2007 restoring approximately 160 and 140 metres respectively. The final phase was completed in December 2008, during which 150 metres of shoreline was enhanced.

Prior to restoration, much of the Heart Lake shoreline consisted of reinforced gabion stone structures, which created a 90 degree shoreline water interface. The gabion baskets placed during the 1960s worked to prevent soil erosion of the banks, however provided no habitat for flora and fauna species.

The main objective of the Heart Lake Naturalization project has been to transform the remaining gabion protected

shoreline into a natural system while maintaining the same engineering benefit, and creating near shore structural habitat better suited to the resident fish and wildlife community.

To complete this goal, gabion structures were replaced and a variety of naturalization and bioengineering techniques were applied. The old gabion baskets were opened and the stones used to re-grade the base of the naturalized shoreline. The existing slope was cut back and contoured down to the water level to provide the proper substrate and gradients for emergent aquatic and riparian plant communities to become established. Clean sand backfill was used to provide pockets in the slope for plant material. Live root wads and woody material were placed along the shoreline for the dual purpose of stabilizing the shallow near shore area and providing aquatic habitat and herptile basking areas. A log crib was constructed and placed within the immediate offshore area to act as structural habitat for resident fish species, as well as a small scale bass spawning shoal was added to the immediate offshore zone.

Following construction, a series of aquatic plantings and upland tree and shrub plantings were undertaken to increase bank and slope stabilization, provide fish and wildlife habitat, and improve water quality within the lake. Other enhancements through this project include the installation of two fishing node structures located along the west and south, the construction of a limestone screened trail that runs along the entire restored south portion of shoreline, connecting the nature trail from the east to the south shore, and a boat launch has been incorporated along the east shoreline to provide boat access to the lake.

This project has been a critical step towards rehabilitating and sustaining the aquatic communities within Heart Lake, and will ultimately provide improved wildlife habitat, a diversified population of fish species and improved recreational opportunities for visitors.



Come out and celebrate the grand opening of the **Wild Wetland Splash Pad** on **Saturday, May 23** at the Peel Children’s Water Festival at Heart Lake Conservation Area. Enjoy a day of fun with free access to the splash pad all day!

## Warblers at Heart Lake Let the Migration Begin!

Now that the end of winter is upon us we can start to think about the return of spring and one of its highlights, the return of our songbirds. The peak migration occurs in the month of May and the first half is especially good because the trees aren’t in full leaf and the mosquitoes aren’t in full bloodlust. The stars of this annual journey are the Wood Warblers – small, active and colourful birds that travel from the south to nest in the forests of Canada. Heart Lake Conservation Area is a great place to see them, with 25 different species recorded in the park. Some of the best areas to look and listen for them are listed below.



Black-throated Green Warbler

**Above the Beach House:** The trees above the beach can be an amazing spot for getting large numbers of warblers and other species such as Vireos and Orioles. The birds are usually most active in the morning from about 6 a.m. to 9 or 9:30 a.m. There have been occasions where there have been up to 15 warbler species in the trees at one time.

**Lakemount Picnic Ground:** Look in the brush around the edge of the picnic ground and in the trees by the parking lots where large mixed flocks move through feeding on insects. You might be able to see Brown Thrashers, Pileated Woodpeckers and Scarlet Tanagers in this area.

**Pond to the East of Lakemount Picnic Ground:** There is a pocket of

pine trees just off the road and around the trail that often has lots of warblers. Pine Warblers nest in this area and they usually can be seen and heard early in May. Don’t forget to have a look in the pond itself where you might be able to see Wood Ducks.

**Trail from the Beach to Lakemount Picnic Ground:** This is where you will find lots of Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroat nesting in the wetlands. There is also a good chance of seeing other species of warblers as well as sparrows, flycatchers and many of the common marsh birds.

## Location of Shoreline Restoration Work at Heart Lake



Shoreline restoration along South Shoreline, Phase I



After



Shoreline Restoration along the South-East Shore, Phase III



After

Heart Lake Conservation Area Updates:

The major renovations to the Beach Center at Heart Lake Conservation Area are nearing completion and are scheduled to be completed for the Park opening on April 18, 2009. The new design features include leading-edge sustainable features such as energy efficient lighting, low flow fixtures, metered faucets, motion sensors and much more. The patio and fireplace have been retained for your enjoyment.

You will also notice the new boathouse as you visit Heart Lake this spring. The new boathouse is much larger than the original and the stone work is designed to match the chimney feature on the Beach Center.



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OF GREATER TORONTO



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Etobicoke Creek and Mimico Creek Watersheds

2009

FREE

Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) and partners invite the community to environmental events. Do your part to protect and enhance the Etobicoke Creek and Mimico Creek Watersheds.

APRIL		
<b>South Mimico Community Earth Day Celebration</b> Participate in interactive displays and workshops to learn about native trees, shrubs, birds and water quality at this annual event.	<b>Saturday, April 18</b> 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<b>West Deane Park</b> Southwest corner of Eglinton Avenue West and Martin Grove Road, Toronto
<b>“Gardening as a Hobby” – Brampton Horticultural Society</b> Join TRCA’s workshop on organic lawn care and learn how to create and maintain a lawn that is easy on the environment and the wallet.	<b>Saturday, April 18</b> 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.	<b>Century Gardens Recreation Centre</b> 340 Vodden Street East, Brampton
<b>Valleywood Community Planting</b> Plant native trees and shrubs with friends and neighbours along the Etobicoke Creek.	<b>Saturday, April 25</b> 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>15 Kirkwood Crescent</b> Valleywood, Caledon (north of Mayfield Road off of Hurontario Street)
<b>Malton Stewardship Day</b> Celebrate Earth Day! Take part in a community tree planting, litter clean-up and fun environmental games along the Malton Greenway Trail.	<b>Saturday, April 25</b> 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<b>3540 Morning Star Drive</b> Mississauga Meet in Malton Community Centre lobby
<b>Partners in Project Green Earth Day Tree Planting and BBQ</b> Join fellow businesses, their employees and families along the Mimico Creek for Partners in Project Green’s first annual Earth Day Tree Planting. Visit <a href="http://www.partnersinprojectgreen.com">www.partnersinprojectgreen.com</a> to register.	<b>Saturday, April 25</b> 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	<b>7795 Torbram Road</b> Brampton Meet at Peel Integrated Waste Management Facility.
MAY		
<b>Tuesdays on the Trail – Monthly Nature Walk Series</b> Learn about birds, aquatic life, plants and other natural wonders.	<b>First and last Tuesday of the month – May to September</b> All events take place from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	<b>Etobicoke Creek Trail, Brampton and Malton Greenway Trail, Mississauga</b>
<b>Brampton Spring Scout and Community Planting</b> Plant trees and create homes for wildlife along Etobicoke Creek.	<b>Saturday, May 2</b> 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	<b>Wexford Park</b> Park at Heart Lake Secondary School at 296 Conestoga Drive, Brampton - meet on the Etobicoke Creek Trail, south of Wexford park.
<b>Peel Village Golf Course Wildflower Planting</b> Plant native wildflowers with your friends and neighbours at Canada’s first municipality operated Audubon certified golf course.	<b>Saturday, May 9</b> 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	<b>Peel Village Golf Course</b> 29A Hartford Trail, Brampton (Steeles Avenue East, west of Kennedy Road South)
<b>Peel Children’s Water Festival</b> Be a part of Family Day with lots of activities, including entertainment, outdoor education opportunities and community planting.	<b>Saturday, May 23</b> 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	<b>Heart Lake Conservation Area</b> 10818 Heart Lake Road, Brampton
JUNE		
<b>Valleywood Healthy Yards Workshop</b> Join TRCA and the Valleywood Gardening Society for a native plants workshop and plant sale.	<b>Saturday, June 6</b> 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.	<b>Margaret Dunn Library</b> 20 Snelcrest Drive, Valleywood, Caledon
SEPTEMBER		
<b>Maple Leaf Day</b> Naturalize parkland, restore riparian habitat and learn about local environmental issues with TRCA, City of Brampton and high schools from across Peel Region.	<b>Wednesday, September, 23</b>	<b>Upper Mimico Creek</b> Goreway Road, Brampton
OCTOBER		
<b>Valleywood Community Planting</b> Plant native trees and shrubs with friends and neighbours along the Etobicoke Creek.	<b>Saturday, October 24</b> 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>15 Kirkwood Crescent,</b> Valleywood, Caledon (north of Mayfield Road off of Hurontario Street)
NOVEMBER		
<b>Brampton Scout Planting</b> Naturalize parkland, restore riparian habitate and install birdboxes with TRCA, Brampton Scouts and the City of Brampton	<b>Saturday, November 7</b>	<b>Valleybrook Park</b> Wexford Road, Brampton

REGISTER AT  
[www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca](http://www.trcastewardshipecvents.ca)



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