

Wonderful Watershed Moments!

MAY 2018

Tommy Thompson Park (TTP), Turtle Monitoring with University Students



LOCATION:
Tommy Thompson Park, Lake Ontario Waterfront

DATE:
Thursday May 17, 2018

REGION/MUNICIPALITY:
City of Toronto

PARTNERS:
Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA), York University,
Students from Multiple Universities

TRCA conducts flora and fauna studies throughout the nine watersheds within its jurisdiction. One of these studies is determining turtle populations, distribution and demographics. Of the eight turtles commonly found in Canada, all eight are listed 'at risk' Federally on the Committee on Status of Species at Risk in Ontario, (COSSARO) and seven are listed provincially in Ontario.

TRCA staff in partnership with York University and students taking Dr. McKinnon's Ontario University Field Course program, hosted students at Tommy Thompson Park (TTP) from; University of Toronto, University of Guelph, Brock University, University of Windsor and Carleton University. The group gathered at TTP to gain field experience in trapping and monitoring turtles.

This study led by Dr. Marc Dupuis-Desormeaux from York University, is looking at turtle populations and wetland connectivity throughout the GTA and this is the third year at TTP. Data collection includes; determining population numbers, age estimates, sex ratios, and growth of individuals. Participants assisted staff with checking turtle traps at two sites and removing the turtles for data collection. Students were guided in protocols of measuring carapace, plastron, depth, claw length and notching each one with a unique number to track and gain data in subsequent years.

The group captured 18 turtles (17 midland painted and 1 snapping turtle), conducted measurements and observations, recorded the data and released them back to the same location they were caught.

The students who participated in this event gained valuable field skills that will help them with their careers in the environmental field.



Positive Environmental Impacts

# of Traps	# of Turtles Captured & Species	# of Participants	Participant Hrs Contributed
30	17 Midland Painted 1 Snapping Incidental catch of 1 otter	24	96

