



Keeping Our Green Space Clean

The trails at the Ferguson Forest Centre get a lot of traffic throughout the year and while some garbage blows in off the roads or falls out of pockets, much of it is carelessly dumped by people who do not understand the value of the forest centre.

Dumping garbage at the forest centre is a serious environmental problem because the land is not set up to manage waste. Many household materials will leach toxins into the ground over time; there is no mechanism in the forest for preventing those toxins from contaminating the water or the plant life that the local wildlife depends on. The Ferguson Forest Centre is a valuable natural resource as it provides vital services to our community.

As most people know, the plant life in the forest cleans the air and filters our water to help keep the river clean. This means that if you fish or swim in the river, or you hunt in the area, you have a vested interest in maintaining the health of the forest. If you are a snowmobiler, you most likely enjoy the natural beauty and tranquility offered by the forest glimpse of a rabbit, a deer, or a fox.

Every spring and fall, the Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre organize a community forest clean up to allow people who enjoy the forest to give back to the forest and the community and to meet fellow forest users. It is a great opportunity to meet new people and to get involved in community activities. If you are interested in becoming a Friend of the Ferguson Forest Centre or you would like to learn more about what goes on at the forest, please visit our website at: <http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca/>

Unfortunately, because vandalism and garbage dumping has become a serious concern at the Ferguson Forest Centre, several trails have been closed to major vehicle traffic. This includes cars, horse drawn carriages, and wagons.

Management at the Centre regrets the need to take this action, but irresponsible individuals have left no other option. The trails are all still open to foot traffic, individual horses and bikes (where permitted).

Before you plan any event at the FFC, it is suggested that you visit the trail you plan to use and make sure that it still meets your needs. As well, in each case, you should notify Ed Patchell at 613-258-0110 of your intention to use the forest for you event. This will prevent any disappointments or conflicts of interest.

The Butterfly Garden

Every child knows the bright orange and black butterfly. It may even be the most well known butterfly of the world. The monarch is famous for its incredible migration to their overwintering habitat in central Mexico. But why create a butterfly garden?

Although the monarch is not in danger of extinction, its migration is considered an endangered phenomenon due to the loss of proper habitats during its annual cycle of breeding. Natural meadows have almost disappeared from our cities and suburbs. Gone too are the butterflies, birds and other wildlife that depend on this natural habitat. Luckily, butterflies are easily enticed back to the city. Simply plant a garden that provides caterpillars with plants to feed on and butterflies with flowers from which they can sip nectar. If you live in the country, leave some areas wild, or restore a field to its natural state.

Milkweed and wildflowers are the staff of life for monarchs. Although milkweed is poisonous to most creatures, monarch caterpillars happily eat it up.

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Upcoming Events

The worst of the biting flies have left and the Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre are gearing up for another great season in the woods. Fall is an exciting time of year in the forest as little critters scurry around, making preparations for winter. Every day in the forest is unique as the summer flowers fade and the green leaves morph into fiery fall colours.

The Friends have some great events planned for this fall and we would like to invite everyone to join us.

Forest Fair Saturday, September 26th 2009 Ferguson Forest Centre 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

As in previous years, the Friends will sell coffee and cookies to fair-goers, and will have an information booth talking about poisonous plants and activities of the Friends. This year the Friends will also be sponsoring a Quilt and Fibre Arts Display as part of their activities. We will need volunteers and baked goods. If you are interested in doing either, please contact Sally Hamilton at 613-258-4411.

Fall Trail Clean-Up Saturday, October 3, 2009 9:00 am to 12:30 pm

Clean up will start at 9:00 am and volunteers will meet at the FFC office to receive their work assignments.

Workers should come dressed for the weather (warm clothing, boots and work gloves) and students will be given credits for community service hours. Free hot dogs and hot drinks will be served after clean up. Bring shears, Robertson screwdrivers, and clippers if you have them. For more information visit our website.

Winter comes to the Forest "Walk in the Woods" Saturday, November 7, 2009 10 am to 12:30 pm

This fun and educational walk will focus on life in the forest as we approach winter.

The event is open to all and walkers should come very warmly dressed, as this can be a cold month. Participation is free for members and their families, and there will be a nominal fee charged to non-members who attend, to cover the cost of food. Walkers should meet at the FFC office at 10:00 am.

In fact, it's all they eat in Canada. And while caterpillars munch on milkweed, adult monarchs sip on nectar. Monarchs depend on wildflowers to fuel breeding activities and migration, and to build up reserves of fat for the winter.

You can help the monarch and most of the butterflies of Canada by planting a "butterfly garden" with species native to your area. It is not complicated. You can start with only a few plants and add more with time.

First you have to understand the life cycle of a butterfly: egg, larva and caterpillar, pupa, chrysalis and adult. The female butterfly will lay eggs on a host plant, in the case of the monarch, on milkweed plants. Each species of butterflies have their particular host plants. The more variety of host plants you have in your garden, the more species of butterfly will be attracted. After a few days, a small larva or caterpillar will emerge and in a few weeks will increase its weight by 2000 percent. Fully grown, the caterpillar will search for a quiet place, where the caterpillar will transform to a pupa or chrysalis. Again after a few weeks, an adult butterfly will emerge from the chrysalis.

During the spring and summer months, monarchs depend on an abundance of milkweed and wildflowers to fuel their breeding and migrating activities. You can help ensure that monarchs will have a place to feed and lay their eggs.

If the lost of habitat continues, the monarch's magnificent migration will disappear. The species will likely survive elsewhere in the world, but hundreds of millions of monarchs will vanish from the meadows and gardens of North America. Gone too will be one of nature's greatest unsolved mysteries the secret of monarch migration.

You won't be disappointed. Backyard conservationists are rewarded with hours of butterfly watching without leaving home.

Visit the Canadian Museum of Nature Web site, Native Plants Crossroads for details information on butterfly gardening. In the list of resources, you will find Web sites and publications with detailed information to help you start exploring activities related to native plant gardening and conservation.

http://nature.ca/plnt/res/res_act_e.cfm

Others interesting monarch butterfly Web sites

WWW.CEC.ORG/MONARCH: North American Monarch Conservation Plan

WWW.MONARCHWATCH.ORG: Monarch Watch is an educational outreach program based at the University of Kansas that engages citizen scientists in large-scale research projects since 1992.

Trip to Mexico to discover the monarch

Here's your opportunity to live a unique experience. Encounter the Monarch and wonder in its overwintering grounds in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve in Michoacán and Mexico States.

The group, led by Jean Lauriault, Canadian Monarch expert and by Yenitza Chavez a biologist from Expediciones Madre Tierra of Mexico, will also visit various sites to discover the Mexican history, art, food and music.

For more information contact: Jean Lauriault, Canadian Museum of Nature, 819-827-1159 or e-mail at Jean.lauriault@gmail.com



Upcoming Events continued

Annual General Meeting
Thursday, November 26th, 2009
Ferguson Forest Centre
7:30 pm.

The meeting will include guest speaker Linda Touzin, from the Ministry of Natural Resources, who will be outlining the ministry's new management plan for the crown land managed by the Ferguson Forest Centre.

Winter Wood Lot Conference
February 2010

The Friends participate in this conference to raise awareness amongst the wood lot community about the Friends and its goals and objectives.

Poison Parsnip Alert!

Poison Parsnip is an invasive plant species, and the sap from this plant causes an itchy rash similar to poison ivy. Exposure to sunlight intensifies the reaction and may result in severe blistering and skin discoloration that may persist for months.

It spreads aggressively by seeding along roadsides and in fields and has become very widespread in the North Grenville area. The plant is most visible in late spring and early summer where it can be seen in large patches along the roadways and in area fields.

The Friends will have a large display on Poison Parsnip at Forest Fair, along with detailed colour handouts on how to identify this potentially dangerous plant and how to deal with it. We look forward to seeing you at Forest Fair!



The Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre would like to thank our corporate members for their support.

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