



## CONFLUENCE AND CONSERVATION

Newsletter of the Alton Grange Association/AGA

**Summer 2009**

### President's Message

#### Greetings!

It has been awhile since our annual meeting but we hope you were able to join us for the very enlightening presentation by Kim Wheatley from the Toronto Zoo's Turtle Island Conservation Initiative. Kim gave us insights not only into turtles – including how to help a snapping turtle cross the road! - but also into the related First Nations beliefs.

Your Grange board for 2009-2010 is comprised of Deb Wilson (President), Paul Newall (Vice President), Debby Storr (Secretary), John Cartwright (Treasurer), and the Directors Karen Henderson, Linda Lockyer, Richard Paterak, Joanne Whyte and Tony Williams. Over the past few months, the board has been working with two groups on some new joint initiatives.

The first one is a pilot project with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) on invasive species monitoring. Several members had an opportunity in the spring to stomp through the underbrush and practise with the CVC's GPS units as we began plotting where invasive plant species are. A map of this project will be posted in the Alton library for all to see. This project will be underway for at least the next 12 months so please email us if you would like to take part.

The second project is one led by the Upper Credit Field Naturalists. They are developing a Beginners Birding Course, to be held in the Grange in October. We will be emailing our members as more details are available.

We are also attending stakeholder meetings with regard to the Alton Mill Millpond Rehabilitation project.

We encourage you to join us as we celebrate the approach of autumn, with our second annual "Fall into the Grange" event. Food, fun and fitness.....what more could you ask for?! Check out the Upcoming Events page for details on this and other events.

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter and please pass a copy on to your family and friends.

#### **Black fly, black fly, everywhere**

The black fly number of humpbacked there are about Canada. They



describes any small flies, of which 100 species in are typically

about 2.5 to 3 mm long with broad transparent wings. The female black fly is the one that tortures human and animal victims, the male feeds on flower nectar. She requires a blood meal in order to lay her eggs. The eggs are laid in rocky swift flowing streams where the larvae attach themselves to rocks and filter food from the fast flowing current. No other biting insect inspires such apprehension as do black flies. In some forested areas, black flies can be so numerous and can attack so persistently that outdoor activity during the day without some protection becomes almost impossible. Black flies often land and take off repeatedly without biting. Their numbers and tendency to bite increases as sunset approaches. Even when not biting, their buzzing and crawling can be just as irritating. Mercifully, relief comes after dark, for unlike mosquitoes, black flies do not attack

at night. Also, black flies do not attack indoors, or even in a vehicle. They direct all their attention to escape. In northern US and southern Canada, black flies are a problem from early May until mid June. Farther north, in the boreal forest, they may be present throughout June and July, whereas in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, where rivers are usually ice cold until mid summer, they do not appear until late July or early August, after mosquitoes have nearly disappeared.

Repelling black flies can be a difficult chore. The wearing of long sleeved shirts and pants in light colours with tight cuffs and pant bottoms tucked in may help unless it's hot out, in which case you will probably roast. But, perhaps lighter colours are good no matter what you wear. Black fly season may be a good time to let your hygiene lapse a little. Apparently, the cleaner and better smelling you are – the more they will like you. Some sources claim that products with DEET actually attract black flies. Many sources say that Avon Skin-so-Soft works on black flies but not on mosquitoes. They also do not like navigating on windy days. There is also lore that claims that banana eaters attract more black flies and heavy garlic eaters repel them. If all else fails you could try the remedy written about by Wade Hemsworth in the “Black Fly Song” and slather yourself with bacon grease and balsam gum.

Now, just when you thought that there were no redeeming qualities for this beast; the black fly larvae is a major food for fish – especially trout, and, the black fly is the number one pollinator of the wild blueberry.



## **JOHNSON CONTROLS GENEROUSLY DONATES \$1,000.00 US TO GRANGE**



In 2004 Johnson Controls launched Blue Sky, a global public affairs and communications program focused on sustainability. One aspect of the program encourages employees to give back to their respective communities through good works.

In 2006 Johnson Controls developed the next incarnation, Blue Sky Involve, which formalizes the volunteer experience in two primary directions: leadership development among employees and environmental protection.

As part of this, each Johnson Controls location is eligible for one Blue Sky Involve grant of \$1,000.00 per year for worthy projects that protect the environment. To ensure that employees give back to the community, a condition of the grant-making process requires employees to volunteer during the project.

I submitted an application on behalf of the Grange Association of Alton for Blue Sky Involve. I formed a team of my co-workers to visit the Grange property and do a clean-up. Being a life long resident of Alton I felt the Grange Association would benefit greatly from this grant.

Anita Bolan

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, September 12** – “Fall into the Grange”  
10 am to 1 pm  
Hot dogs, refreshments, nature walks & more  
Cardwell/Station Street parking lot

**Saturday, September 19** – Credit Valley  
Conservation, Land Securement Celebration  
Upper Credit Conservation Area  
For further details check [www.creditvalleycons.com](http://www.creditvalleycons.com)

**Saturday, September 29**  
Invasive Species Monitoring Project  
9 am until Noon – Meet at Station Street Entrance

Since there are a limited number of GPS units, and usage will be staggered over the morning, please email us to confirm you will be coming.

**Saturday, October 17**  
Beginners Birding Course – led by Upper Credit  
Naturalists  
Details to follow

### ***REMEMBER!***

If you have any topics you would like to see covered in an upcoming newsletter, or would like to submit an article – please let us know!

### CONTACT US

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### **Our Mission**

- To protect, restore and enhance the natural, scenic, educational and cultural value of the Grange Property.
- To promote public responsibility, understanding, and stewardship through the wise management of the natural resources of the Grange Property.
- To compile and manage natural resources information on the Grange Property.
- To promote partnerships to assist in accomplishing these goals.
- To manage and maintain the Grange Property in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Alton Integrated Resource Management Plan.