Lakeshore Eco-Network

MAKE THE PLANET GREAT AGAIN!

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Kincardine Tree Bylaw
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Invasive Species Resolution



The Spring Native Tree and Plant Sale on May 4 was a big success, with vendors having one of the busiest days ever, and 30 lucky shoppers taking home a free tree! Thanks to everyone who helped make the event wonderful.



Lots of information exchanged at the May Climate Cafe, focused on native plants



wwww.lakeshoreeconetwork.ca

Standing Up For Trees

A citizen group in Kincardine led by intrepid crusader Doug McCallum successfully advocates for a tree protection bylaw

Doug McCallum has a vivid memory of a developer storming into his garage one day while he was repairing his snowblower. The man threw a bundle of papers at him, yelling that he had approvals for everything he did. “The guy was bigger than me, and I’m thinking maybe he’s going to punch me out or something,” remembers McCallum. “He gave me the impression that he wasn’t too fond of me doing what I’d been doing.”

What had McCallum been doing? Everything he could to fight the destruction of trees in his community of Kincardine, Ontario.

In early 2020, a developer clearcut five acres of forest near McCallum’s house on the north side of town. “For years development hadn’t been allowed on the property. For some reason, the Conservation Authority changed its position and started to allow development to happen in places they previously hadn’t.” McCallum went to Council demanding a bylaw to prevent further losses, but nothing happened. He started a Facebook page where he posted photos of clearcut land, logs stacked high, dead foxes and owls, and much more. People began writing letters to Council.

The following year, another forest, this time 10 acres, was destroyed. McCallum posted a video of the workers knocking down trees with a bulldozer, running them over, and then grinding them up. “They didn’t even cut down the trees with any respect,” he says. Soon more people were getting angry and frustrated. More than 400 people followed McCallum’s Facebook page. Council passed a bylaw protecting trees on municipal property, but not for trees on private property. Spring 2022 saw another 10 acres of woodland disappear.

Meanwhile, McCallum and others had launched the Kincardine Naturalization Project, a non-profit group, in fall 2021 to raise grants and plant native trees in town parks and schoolyards. Dozens of people turned up to help with the plantings, including four town councilors. “The fact that we didn’t just complain, but also acted, turned it into something positive.” In the past three years, the group has planted more than 700 large (8 to 12-foot) trees, using species native to the area.

In fall 2022, in the lead-up to the municipal election, McCallum attended town halls and met with individual councilors. On his Facebook page he named the councilors who were in favor of protecting trees, and as it turned out, they were all elected. The new Council created a subcommittee to write a tree protection bylaw for private property, producing a draft that addressed many of the concerns of McCallum and fellow tree lovers.

The new private tree protection bylaw was passed at the May 8 Council meeting and will take effect September 1. Says McCallum, “The bylaws aren’t perfect but we feel good about what has happened here – just sad that I didn’t start 25 years ago.”





How to Reduce your Plastics Use

At our first Climate Cafe there was lots of discussion about how to reduce our use of plastics. After the meeting, Theresa Santandreas-Cull, contributed these great tips. Thanks Theresa!

1. Stop buying products in plastic containers i.e. peanut butter. Buy in glass or go to the Refillery here in Grand Bend or Northville. By buying more items in glass containers we are informing the manufacturers that this is our preference. If an item I need comes in plastic I do not buy it.
2. If you must buy lettuce in a plastic container, remove it upon your arrival home and place in a glass container; will keep longer in the refrigerator and has less plastic exposure. This also applies to lunch meats and anything else that must be bought in plastic.
3. Stop placing plastic bags in every garbage pail around your home. Use only the kitchen garbage lined with plastic and on the day of garbage removal empty all bins into your outside garbage container directly. Or do like our mothers and fathers before us; use paper bags as your liner, not plastic.
4. Compost when possible. Although meat cannot go into the compost use a reusable plastic bag in the freezer to keep scraps until the next garbage day. When composting at home keep your container with a lid on your counter. I use a large soup pot and empty it directly into the compost when full. Stop buying the biodegradable plastic liners for the plastic container.
5. “Attitude” is a great product for refillable items and they use aluminum containers for their shampoos etc. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) has approved this product and it is manufactured here in Canada.
6. “Just the Goods” is another manufacturer in Winnipeg approved by the EWG on their personal products and they come in glass containers.
7. Again the Refillery has shampoo etc. to refill, along with flours, spices and much more.
8. EWG, YUKA, and Bobby Approved are great apps to download to check your package products for unsightly and unsafe products.
9. I use paper bags for wrapping Christmas presents and any other special occasion. In addition, I have wrapped all my books with paper bags, much like how we were taught in grade school.
10. HealthyPlanet.ca and well.ca are all great resources for shopping responsibly. This way you don’t have to pay the price of gas to go out and they offer free shipping over $35.00.
11. Buying local, from Eat Local Huron and other similar services can reduce plastic. Membership is free. Milk comes in glass containers.
12. Buying from Grand Bend’s farmers markets is another good idea.
13. Wholesome Pastures in Credition, who just won an award for Conservationist of the Year Award, have pastured raised chickens, eggs, grass fed beef, grass fed lamb available online and in their store in Crediton. Eagleson’s Farm also has grass fed beef.

Tips courtesy of the May Climate Café

Not sure what that gorgeous native plant is? Use Google Lens on your phone or download the free Plantnet app.

Looking for a native plant to replace an exotic in your garden? Try “Grow Me Instead.” https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Southern-Grow-Me-Instead-1.pdf

Still planting trees 20 feet apart so they won’t “compete”? Turns out trees are nicer than that. Consider planting a micro-forest! https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/the-many-benefits-of-the-minuscule-but-mighty-miyawaki-forests/

Interested in creating a pollinator meadow? Sharon Callan, a Butterflyway Ranger with the David Suzuki Foundation, has seeds available, a mix designed to thrive in southwestern Ontario. She reminds us that wildflowers can take several years to get going, but once established, flourish without any work! Contact Sharon at sharpalgb@gmail.com

Good News from Bluewater

At the April meeting of Bluewater Council, the Environment and Communities in Bloom Committees came together to propose acceptance of a resolution calling on the federal government to take action on invasive species. It passed! Here’s part of what it said.

BE IT RESOLVED that this council urgently calls upon the federal government of Canada to enhance its policies, tools, and regulations to reduce the threats posed by invasive plant species introduced through the ornamental/horticultural trades, by undertaking the following actions: 1. A Comprehensive National Plant Risk Assessment Database: The federal government should develop a national repository for information on invasive plants to support the activities of federal and regional governments, Indigenous communities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). 2. Mandatory Risk Assessments for New Plant Imports: To prevent the introduction of invasive plants, the federal government should mandate rigorous risk assessments for all plant imports new to Canada. 3. Ban on Sale and Movement of High-Risk Invasive Plants: In order to prevent the further spread of invasive plant species, the federal government should institute a comprehensive ban encompassing the sale, trade, and transportation of identified high-risk invasive plants. 4. Point of Sale Labeling and Education Mandate: The federal government should mandate point of sale labeling for invasive plants to inform consumers about potential risks. These labels should include clear instructions on preventing the spread of invasive plants and the importance of using non-invasive alternatives. , ,



Don’t miss the VERY IMPORTANT Oak Wilt Workshop this Saturday, May 18, 9 a.m. at the Port Franks Community Centre. And be sure to stay for the Home and Garden Show, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. LEN will be there!