

For immediate release

New Website Celebrates Biodiversity of High Park

Toronto, ON, September 21, 2010 – High Park is well-loved by many Torontonians, but its rich biodiversity is often overlooked. To make it easier for people to learn more about the natural wonders of High Park, the High Park Natural Environment Committee, in partnership with the High Park Volunteer Stewardship Program, has created a new website, www.highparknature.org.

“This website is our way of celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity,” said Karen Yukich, Co-Chair of the High Park Natural Environment Committee. “The United Nations General Assembly declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity all over the world. What better place to start than close to home, in an amazingly rich and internationally renowned area like High Park?”

The website is loaded with information about the park’s wildlife and plant species, the rare Black Oak Savannah, Grenadier Pond and many other park features. It also includes the area’s geological origins, its more recent history, and ongoing restoration efforts. There are photo galleries, species checklists, resource documents and links to other useful sites. The home page, which is updated frequently, features upcoming volunteer events and walking tours, along with seasonal highlights.

“We’re delighted to have a way to share all this information, not only with local residents, but also with people from all over the world who appreciate the nature of High Park,” said Yukich. “For example, someone from England recently emailed the site to get help identifying some plants and animals he had photographed in High Park. We were able to answer most of his questions, and now he is one of the site’s photo contributors.”

The website is a valuable resource for students doing research about the park, local biodiversity, restoration and other related topics. Students who do research in the park are invited to submit a summary of their findings to share with others.

Website hosting is provided free by Park Commons, which also hosts a number of other Toronto parks and community gardens. Many articles and photos have been contributed by volunteers. In some cases the site information comes from City documents that are otherwise not easily accessible. More material is being added all the time. Anyone interested in contributing to the site is invited to contact the webmaster at mail@highparknature.org.

About the High Park Natural Environment Committee

The High Park Natural Environment Committee is a volunteer group that advises the City of Toronto on the protection and restoration of the natural environment of High Park.

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