

Wildlife to Get Better Protection at Grenadier Pond

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Ducks, swans, turtles and other wildlife will be safer thanks to new protective measures at High Park's Grenadier Pond.

The pond's wildlife and their habitat have had protected status under municipal, provincial and federal legislation for many years. But the reality tells quite a different story. Due to human carelessness and inappropriate behaviours, wildlife have faced many hazards. Abandoned fishing line, hooks and sinkers have entrapped, maimed or been swallowed by waterfowl and turtles, while off-leash dogs have been harassing them or romping through their nesting sites. Some injured wildlife have been rescued and taken to the Toronto Wildlife Centre or Toronto Animal Services for treatment, but others have simply suffered and died.

Concerned about increased hazards and wildlife injuries at Grenadier Pond, the High Park Natural Environment Committee (NEC) contacted park authorities and Councillor Doucette, and together they developed a graphic "Fishing Line Can Kill" sign in 2012. More recently, disposal tubes for fishing gear were installed at key locations. However, volunteers continued to find tangles of fishing line and other discarded items. So committee members pushed for more actions to make wildlife safer. After much discussion and review, new measures are finally in place.

This month the City completed the installation of signs that clearly show the limited area where fishing is permitted. The rest of the pond and marsh is posted as a "Wildlife Protection Area" and an "Environmentally Sensitive Area", with graphic symbols to indicate the park rules (e.g., no fishing, no feeding of birds, etc.) Boating is not allowed anywhere on the pond. Dogs are not allowed in any park ponds or creeks and must be on leash at all times when outside off-leash areas.

"We know that signs alone will not solve the problem," said Karen Yukich, the committee's co-chair, "but we believe the combination of signage, education and enforcement will go a long way toward protecting vulnerable wildlife. These include wood ducks - a rare sight in the Toronto Region - and snapping turtles, a provincial species of concern. We hope that all these efforts combined will help give the wildlife of Grenadier Pond the respect and protection they deserve."

To report any concerns about fishing in "no fishing" areas, call 311. To report other wildlife protection issues, call 311 or the Ministry of Natural Resources TIPS number at 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667).

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, and promotes awareness and respectful enjoyment of the park's natural heritage. Learn more about the park and volunteer opportunities at www.highparknature.org

Photos of hazardous material and injured wildlife can be viewed [here](#).

Fishing Area Map and other new signs can be viewed [here](#).