

Beavers are busy at WPEC

By **TARA BONIN**
WPEC volunteer



Beavers are "pruning" the trees and shrubs at WPEC. *Tara Bonin photo*

It happens almost every year, and it's one of those unpredictable, natural events that owners/managers of wetland property have to address— beaver damage.

The first clue is the amazing pruning job on trees and bushes— where you didn't want to do any pruning. Then, on closer inspection, there are the toothprints— large, clean, straight and smooth.

Some of Willow Park Ecology Centre's (WPEC) volunteers recently took stock of this year's beaver damage along the riverbank. The damage isn't extensive this year, but it is enough to warrant the protective caging of at least one more large willow tree and the planting of a few more trees along the property adjacent to the tributary of the West Branch of the Credit River.

Some years, there can be (beaver-induced) flooding and other issues to deal with; more examples of "conflicting land use" and more unpredictable costs for the landowner. But after all, beavers need to live too.

If you have beavers on your property, Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources provides guidance on how to co-exist with them and minimize the damage (http://www.lronline.com/Extension_Notes_English/pdf/bvr.pdf)

Willow Park Ecology Centre, located

beside Norval Park, is a gem of a property in ecological terms— located in an urban setting, but at the intersection a forest ecosystem and a river ecosystem. The park property is owned by the Town of Halton Hills and leased to Credit Valley Conservation, but managed by volunteers. Willow Park Ecology Centre exists to provide a living classroom for children and to encourage individuals of all ages to interact with their environment.

The next public event at Willow Park is a Maple Syrup program on Wednesday, March 16. Register for this free session at www.willowparkecology.com or for further details, teresa@willowparkecology.com or call 905-873-0614.

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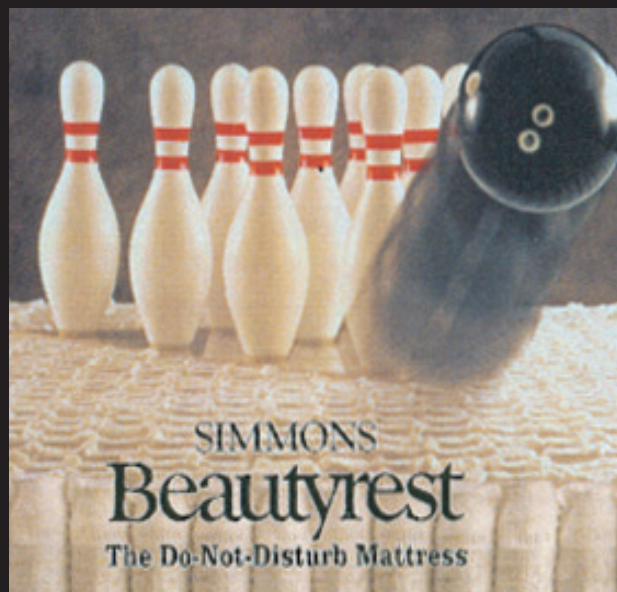
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