

Walking over

WINTER

Snowshoeing grows in popularity

Story by Michael Burton

Photos courtesy Credit Valley Conservation

With all the great sports and winter activities available in Halton Hills, one Canadian pastime is making a comeback.

Snowshoeing is a good way to stay fit and experience nature this winter.

"Snowshoeing is a really easy activity," said Kari Sattler, the education co-ordinator with Credit Valley Conservation.

Sattler has been snowshoeing for years and encourages everyone to lace up their snowshoes and start crunching all over our snow-covered backyards.

"It's easy to pick up, it's straightforward and the only equipment required is your two snowshoes," she said. "You can access so many different places that you usually wouldn't be able to in the wintertime. And as for the learning curve, it's pretty straightforward. After your first venture out you'll be feeling pretty confident."

Credit Valley Conservation is offering snowshoeing programs at the Terra Cotta Conservation Area starting in January. They are offering two programs, one for beginners and one for those who are more comfortable with the sport. Both programs cost \$8 for adults, and \$5 for children and seniors. Costs for the program include gate fees, snowshoes and a cup of hot chocolate.

"There are a couple different areas that we go snowshoeing around," she said. "One of the areas is a frozen wetland, but we go through a number of different fields and semi-forested areas. It's spectacular throughout all the seasons. It's a beautiful place to go and explore and is very scenic in the wintertime."

"There is so much to see while snowshoeing" Sattler said.

"It's kind of like a storybook that's out there. You can see where bears and rabbits have been and follow their tracks. You don't even need snowshoes to take part in our program. We supply traditional snowshoes with a wooden frame and leather binding.

"People far and wide have thoroughly enjoyed the program," she said. "It often is a very new experience, and I think people step away having learned a lot and enjoyed their day and experience."

Sattler recommends those who are snowshoeing for the first time to bring along some enthusiasm, curiosity and energy. As for those who fall in love with the sport, it might be a good idea to invest in their own personal pair of snowshoes.

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