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WPEC to host Earth Day park opening events

Did you know that we have a wildlife habitat reserve right here in the Town of Halton Hills, Norval, along Silvercreek within the Credit River Watershed? The reserve is known as Willow Park Ecology Centre (WPEC), and volunteers make it possible!

In 2013, at 32 Special Event Days and 11 large-group Partner Events over 1,000 people engaged to care for WPEC. Volunteers were provided with intergenerational, hands-on learning and physical activities that support watershed sustainability.

This was achieved because Willow Park has developed a well-coordinated 7-Program System for ecological restoration and wild-life conservation, while offering formal and recreational education opportunities. The programs that complement and support each other provide optimal opportunity for community involvement. The Programs are:

- 1. Events: Recreation and Stewardship
- 2. Volunteers Grow Willow Park
- 3. Adopt WPEC Gardens
- 4. Monitoring: Restoration and Wildlife
- 5. Curator: Ecology and Wildlife Habitats,
- 6. Park Safety and Maintenance
- 7. Formal Education: Nearby Nature.

During the annual Earth Day Park Opening Event on Saturday, April 26, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., some of the programs will be running. Consider joining the core stewardship group and other volunteers who will be accompanied by troops from the Hungarian Scouting



WPEC wetland in 2013.

Photo by Simon Harris, age 9

Association of Toronto for their second year at WPEC.

Park Stewardship activities may include "sorting out" the icestorm impacts by gathering up tree branches to allow re-opening of the trails and "preparing" areas that are key habitat features and gardens, for the new growing season.

WPEC will also host its first Drumming Circle of the season at 1 p.m. to celebrate Earth Day. Join into the rhythmic drumbeating, the sound that connects us to Mother Earth. Bring your drums and shakers.

In addition, the "Volunteers Grow Willow Park" programs will run weekly in May and June on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4-6 p.m.

Event registration is at www.willowparke-cology.ca or call 905-877-2579.

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