

Science at the heart of Willow Park

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2003

Willow Park hosted its first workshop called "Naturalization Gardening." The centre continues to offer a whole host of education and skills-based workshops each year.

2003

The chimney swift bird tower was installed at Willow Park to provide the birds with a breeding habitat. Recently, heat sensors were installed to help researchers monitor the birds and see how often the tower is used.

2004

Willow Park developed an International Migratory Bird Day event that ran for several years afterwards. The event invited residents to learn more about migratory birds in their area.

2008

Willow Park Ecology Centre incorporated and developed a new strategic plan that would take them into 2012. The park secured a three-year grant, which was put toward developing new programming for a broader audience.

2010

Willow Park officially launched its summer camp programs. The programs offer a jam-packed itinerary that immerses children in nature, allowing them to explore local animals and plants. Willow Park's current summer camp program runs Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. for the months of July and August. For more information, visit the summer camp page.

2010

Willow Park officially launched programs for Girl Guides and Scouts Canada. The park offers badge and award programs that provide children and youth with hands-on learning experiences.

2010

Willow Park received its second Award of Merit.

2011

The programming was enhanced through a "complementary seven-program system for success," including the Youth Volunteer Mentorship program. It has since been further developed and defined. Willow Park has approx-

imately 30 to 40 volunteers each year who learn to steward the park through various tasks including caring for the trail system, habitat conservation and planting.

2014

The Hungry Hollow Collaborative, led by Willow Park Ecology Centre, was first proposed in 2014 to remove invasive species from the area and plant new trees and shrubs. Since 2014, Willow Park has successfully removed buckthorn from 20 hectares of land. Throughout this process, 1,500 plants of 15 varieties have been planted and 400 volunteers have been trained.

2014

"Stewardship Wednesdays" began to encourage community members to get involved in hands-on stewardship projects.

2015

In 2015, Willow Park planted its first medicine wheel garden to establish a defined space that honours the Anishinaabe peoples of the area. It will receive a makeover through further research about Indigenous traditions in the coming months.



Veronica Appia/Metroland

"It's not about conserving nature over here and living over there; it's learning to live together," park manager Tunde Otto said of the role of Willow Park Ecology Centre. The park will be celebrating its 20th anniversary on July 14.

The garden has four directional beds to house plants based on native teachings. To date, the garden has been home to a variety of Indigenous traditional plants including the purple coneflower, sweetgrass, bergamot and Joe-Pye weed.

2016

In 2016, Willow Park Ecology Centre received an Award of Merit in honour of its community engagement and leadership in re-

gards to the Hungry Hollow Collaborative.

2017

Willow Park received the Arts Alive Award heritage award in 2017 from the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable.

2017

Phase 2 of the Hungry Hollow Collaborative began in 2017. Throughout that summer, volunteers removed buckthorn from denser areas and planted 450 native trees in the area.

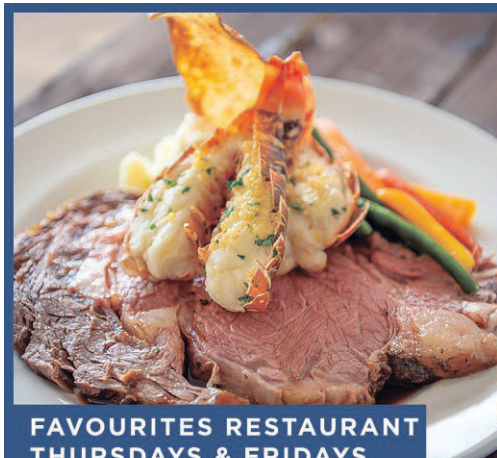
2017

In 2017, Willow Park secured a grant from Cargill Cocoa and Chocolate, allowing the centre to make improvements to its "Get to Know Nature Near You" education programs.

2018

In 2018, Willow Park applied for Phase 3 of the Hungry Hollow Collaborative.

This year, Phase 3 will deliver more ravine ecology enhancement work through a \$99,000 project. This will include \$45,000 in grants from the Ministry of Natural Resources' Land Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Program and others.



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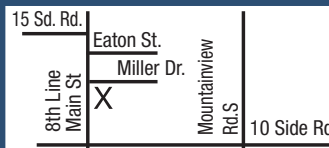


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