

Forums to focus on the environment *Living in Carolinian Canada*

Halton Region is a part of Carolinian Canada, an area in Ontario found south of an imaginary line which runs approximately from Grand Bend to Toronto.

And now local residents can learn more about Carolinian Canada in a series of free public forums presented by the Halton Environmental Network (HEN).

Even though Carolinian Canada is quite small when compared with other Canadian vegetation zones, it has a greater number of both flora and fauna species than any other ecosystem in Canada. Carolinian Canada makes up only one per cent of Canada's total land area.

"The most unique feature of the Carolinian life zone is the number of rare species found here. The life zone boasts fully one-third of the rare, threatened and endangered species found in all of Canada," said Stephen Dankowich, HEN co-ordinator.

On Thursday, Sept. 22, 7-9 p.m., participants will learn even more about the flora of Halton Region from Jeff Thompson, owner of Native Plant Source. You will find out that Carolinian Canada is part of the extensive deciduous forest region of eastern North America and is comprised of a distinctive suite of trees, shrubs and other plants. This forum will be held at St. Andrew's United Church.

The third forum will share the wit and

wisdom of local Halton Region farmers.

"With our rapidly disappearing farmland, it becomes critically important that urban sprawlers connect with rural residents," said Dankowich.

Speakers will include Bert Andrews of Andrews' Scenic Acres of Halton Hills. This event will be held in Oakville at the Central Library on Thursday, Sept. 29, 7-9 p.m.

Take a "nature walk" into the forests of Carolinian Canada at Rattlesnake Point on Saturday, October 1 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. with Bill Gaines of Conservation Halton. At 9 a.m., meet at the offices of Conservation Halton, at 2596 Britannia Rd. W. just west of Guelph Line, to carpool to the site.

The remaining two forums will focus on aquatic life on Tuesday, Oct. 18, in Burlington and on wrap-up and overview on Wednesday, Oct. 26, at the Oakville Central Library.

For more information, contact the Halton Environmental Network at 905-849-5501, e-mail at info@the-hen.net or on the website, www.the-hen.net. All of the public forums are free to attend and everyone is welcome.

This series has been made possible thanks to a generous grant received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, which receives annually \$100 million in government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative.

Get your hands dirty at Willow Park Ecology Centre

Hands-On Willow Park runs 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 25.

This is an opportunity for volunteers who are interested in protecting wild animals, plants,

and their habitats, to dig in and make a difference! High school students are welcome to complete volunteer and community involvement requirements. Info: www.willowparkecology.com



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Hours: Mon - Wed. 9:30 - 7:00 p.m., Thurs. & Fri. 9:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 - 5:00 p.m., Sunday 11:00 - 4:00, (Sept. 25th only)

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Child abuse is a far-reaching problem that affects children of all ages, socioeconomic levels and ethnicities. It is every adult's responsibility to help stop child abuse by reporting suspected abuse or neglect. If you believe a child has been harmed, or is in danger of being harmed, call your local department of children and family services or your local police department. If you are a parent, do your best to provide a nurturing, loving home environment for your child. If you need help doing this, there are resources to help you - look online or in the phone book, or ask for assistance through your church or your child's school. If we all do our part to prevent child abuse, we'll get to the heart of the matter.

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