

Frog in your throat? Then help count spring peepers

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Soon they'll be awake and on the move.

Then karaoke nights will start at marshes as male frogs begin to peep loudly, quack like ducks or sound like wet hands rubbing a balloon.

And GTA Wetland Watch wants you to be in the audience.

The group is hosting meetings to find volunteer frogwatchers, ordinary folks armed with tapes or CDs

of frog calls out to record their presence.

There's more than appreciation involved. Frogs or salamanders are sensitive to pollution, so where they are found in York Region indicates what's happening to the local environment.

Starting this year, frogwatchers will also be asked to note vegetation and bird calls, since West Nile virus may affect bird populations.

But while people should wear repellent and cover up as much as possible, frogwatchers should not

feel threatened by the virus, which some mosquitoes carry, said Mark Carroll, Wetland Watch's co-ordinator.

'NOT HIGH RISK'

Mosquitoes need perfectly still water for their eggs. They may find it in old tires or parts of the sewer system, but not in marshes or other wetlands, he said. "They're not the high-risk areas."

The group, which can be reached at 416-284-0257, holds 7 p.m. recruitment sessions Tuesday

at Oak Ridges Community Centre on Old Colony Road in Richmond Hill, April 7, at Lemonville Community Centre on McCowan Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville and April 8 at Rouge River Community Centre, Rouge Bank Road in Markham.

Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (call Glenn Barrett at 905-336-4952 or glenn.barrett@ec.gc.ca) also seeks volunteers to listen for frogs in their back yards, at creeks and ponds and along rural roads.

If warm weather continues, frog migrations could start next week, Mr. Carroll said.

"The wood frogs should be out very shortly and then we'll get spring peepers by the middle of April."

About one third of frogs moving to summer homes are squashed on roads, so Mr. Carroll suggests if you find yourself driving between a woodlot and a wet place, you try to avoid amphibian friends.

Toads, in particular, like to sit on roads at night, he said.

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Strippers fight at nightclub

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

Stitches were needed to close a gash after a stripper at the Friction nightclub in Markham was assaulted by another dancer, police said.

The 33-year-old victim was transported to hospital from the Anderson Avenue club after the incident early Thursday.

"All witnesses were unco-operative," said Sgt. Heidi Schellhorn.

The woman was struck on the left side of the head with a heavy drinking glass after an argument and collapsed.

Box used to haul away goods

Police are seeking a lone suspect who carried his own blue box to haul away the spoils after a smash-and-grab at the Esso station on Kennedy Road Wednesday.

More than \$4,900 worth of cigarettes were taken about 1:45 a.m.

The suspect is described as male, five-foot, ten-inches with an average build. He was wearing white running shoes, loose tear-away pants, light-coloured gloves and a jacket with the numbers 05 on the back.

Anyone with information is asked to call 905-881-1221, ext. 7541 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

Premier visiting Whitchurch-Stouffville

Ontario Premier Ernie Eves will be in Whitchurch-Stouffville Monday morning to attend the grand opening of the Bloomington Cove long-term care centre. Located on the Ninth Line just south of Bloomington, the 112-bed facility replaces Green Gables Nursing Home.

Mr. Eves is expected to arrive at 10:30 a.m., just in time for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Bloomington Cove, owned by Specialty Care Inc., is York Region's first all-dementia-care facility.

"Construction went well. We're on target," said company spokesperson Nan Rosenberger.

—Joan Ransberry

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