

Volunteers give fish solid start at hatchery

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Some 5,000 rainbow trout will be evicted from their Ringwood Fish Culture Station home tomorrow.

Not because they couldn't pay the rent.

Rather, it's time for these finned creatures to leave their rearing grounds and grow to maturity within a natural setting of the Rouge River and Lake Ontario.

To be released as yearlings on the Rouge River, the rainbow trout were originally collected as eggs one year ago from the river's Milne Dam fishway in Markham.

From that stage they were reared at the Hwy. 48 hatchery by volunteer members of the Metro East Anglers Association.

The fish stocking is part of a Ministry of Natural Resources plan that enables the association to release the yearlings on selected sites on the Rouge River watershed, said association spokesman Bruce Burt.

The volunteers took over the facility after the province announced it would close the 30-year operation in 2011.

Earlier in the month, the association seeded 10,000 rainbow trout yearlings into one area near Elgin Mills Road and another near Reesor Road and Steeles Avenue.

After Sunday's injection below the Milne Dam, the association still has 5,000 yearlings remaining that will be released at a yet to be determined site on that watershed.

"The ministry gives us 12 different stocking sites on the Rouge River watershed and we get to choose what sites might be best," Burt explained.

In conducting this stocking project, Burt was quick to point out under natural conditions, there might be a successful reproduction rate of less than one per cent for these migratory rainbow trout.

But with rearing assistance from the Ringwood facility, he said the success rate vastly improves to close to 90 per cent.

Saying the yearlings to be released each weigh 43 grams, a Ringwood hatchery record

surpassing the prior mark of 27g, Burt said the reason for their growth could be attributed to several factors.

Foremost, he said, was the late arrival of spring as they were forced to keep the yearlings in captivity a bit longer.

"Traditionally, we release them at the end of March but with the late spring we had to keep them for an extra month," he said.

At the same time though, Burt felt an improved hatchery food source and rearing conditions might contribute to their larger growth.

While the rainbow trout yearlings will vacate the Ringwood premises, Burt said the association has already collected 25,000 rainbow trout eggs from fish en route to making their annual spring spawning run at Markham's Milne Dam fishway site to be reared and released next spring.

There are other tenants in the swim at Ringwood.

Burt said they have 30,000 brown trout and 20,000 sebaigo Atlantic salmon in captivity which were received as ministry brood stock.

Each are expected to be reared as fingerlings and are scheduled to be released in the fall on selected Lake Ontario watersheds.

Citing the Ringwood hatchery is the only proper facility in Ontario that rears coho salmon, Burt said they have 50,000 that hatched in January after being collected as eggs last fall from the Credit River.

These fish, Burt said, are to be released this fall into the Credit River with the hope of creating a coho salmon population on that watershed for starters.

Down the road though, it is hoped they can seed some cohos into other Lake Ontario feeder streams such as the Rouge River.

As for the hatchery operations overall, Burt said things are going as well as possible, considering they remain operational on a year-to-year basis via an agreement with the ministry.

"It would be nice if we could get more of a long-term commitment from the ministry," Burt said. "But for now they tell us we're working one year at a time."



Ettore Dellaquilla of the Metro East Anglers cleans out a tank at the Ringwood Fish Culture Station. On the cover, that's Bruce Burt at work at the Hwy. 48 facility.

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service
update



Whitchurch-Stouffville

EFFECTIVE
APRIL 21,
2013

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LADIES' GOLF CLINICS

LADIES' SPRING GOLF CLINICS

START DATE	END DATE	DAY	TIME	START DATE	END DATE	DAY	TIME
May 7	May 28	Tues	6:15 p.m.	June 4	June 25	Tues	6:30 p.m.
May 7	May 28	Tues	7:15 p.m.	June 4	June 25	Tues	7:30 p.m.
May 8	May 29	Wed	6:15 p.m.	June 5	June 26	Wed	6:30 p.m.
May 8	May 29	Wed	7:15 p.m.	June 5	June 26	Wed	7:30 p.m.

CO-ED CLINICS ALSO AVAILABLE CALL FOR DETAILS & LOCATION

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