



# The Pitch Pine Post

ST. LAWRENCE ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK OF CANADA

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MALLORYTOWN LANDING, ONTARIO

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## No longer the smallest!

### More hiking trails as park doubles in size

What was once Canada's smallest national park has doubled in size. In November 2005, St. Lawrence Islands National Park expanded to include 10 square kilometers of ecologically significant land that will now be protected and provide new visitor opportunities for generations to come.

The new land consists of three mainland sections located at Landon Bay, LaRue Mills Creek, and Jones Creek (see map, page 12).

Plans for the new land include ecosystem monitoring projects, species at risk studies, rehabilitation of damaged areas, and construction of a network of hiking trails. In the future, an extensive trail sys-



New land acquisitions mean St. Lawrence Island National Park is no longer just about islands. This lookout point at Landon Bay will eventually join a network of national park trails.

Photo: Landon Bay Centre

tem with interpretive trail guides will link park properties throughout the area.

Most importantly, the new lands will help protect the

diverse habitats, rare species, and exceptional landforms of the region. Both Landon Bay and Jones Creek are known for their high levels of biodiversity, and all three properties protect rare species' habitat.

The environmentally valuable properties were acquired through a transfer from the St. Lawrence Parks Commission and through land donations from the Nature Conservancy

See New properties on page 2



Visit Mallorytown Landing as it becomes a community environmental awareness and education centre.

Photo: Brian Morin

## A new beginning

### Mallorytown Landing changes for its residents and visitors

Where can you learn more about alternative energy, native plants, and the wildlife of the 1000 Islands? At Mallorytown Landing!

No longer only a place of summer recreation, the facilities and services at Mallorytown Landing are in a transition stage, moving toward becoming a community envi-

ronmental awareness and education centre.

Read on to see how you can participate and watch as your national park mainland base gets a new lease on life. See pages 8 and 9 for more information about the facilities and services at Mallorytown Landing.

## It isn't easy being blue

That frog looks blue! Is it a trick? Find out on page 9.



Photo: Parks Canada

## The Superintendent Says...

By Gord Giffin, St. Lawrence Islands National Park Superintendent

This first edition of the Pitch Pine Post is an experiment in reaching out to our friends, neighbours and clients. St. Lawrence Islands National Park is one of a family of national parks regarded as one of the best park systems in the world. The Post is intended to inform you about the work we do but also about the many ways you can experience and enjoy your national park.

Future editions of the Post will be different. Feedback from you will be an important tool in improving this newspaper. Please provide your suggestions on ways to improve the Post and also on subjects you might like to read about in future editions.



Grade 6 students, Philip Almond and Derrick Hastings from Toniata Public School identify trees and look for signs of animal life during a fall hike to Canada's largest stand of pitch pine, located on St. Lawrence Islands National Park's Hill Island property.

Photo: Brian Morin

## Students explore Canada's largest stand of rare pine

Last fall, Brockville students were given a rare treat—a chance to stand in a forest of pitch pine, one of Canada's rarest tree species.

During a field trip to St. Lawrence Islands National Park, grade 4, 5, and 6 students from Toniata Public School in Brockville took a special trip onto Hill Island. There, the students hiked up to Canada's largest stand of the rare pitch pine.

The pitch pine is at the northern limit of its range in Canada, and is a vulnerable species. Well-suited to dry soils, the pitch pine grows surprisingly well in rocky areas with little soil.

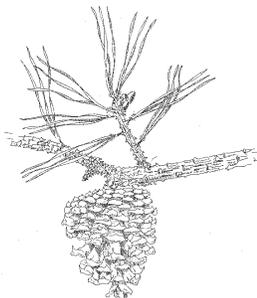
The students visiting Pitch Pine Ridge learned how to identify the rare tree and about factors affecting its survival.

For all students visiting the park, the relationships between plants, animals, and humans are a major theme of their field trip. For those classes with the chance to visit Hill Island, students get a first-hand look at the importance of maintaining

a diverse and balanced ecosystem.

Special study areas on Pitch Pine Ridge, fenced to keep deer out, clearly show the effects of deer overpopulation when a natural predator (the wolf) is removed. Student proposals to protect more land, plant trees, and encourage wildlife to return show that tomorrow's leaders are well on their way to protecting the unique 1000 Islands ecosystem.

For more information about school and community group programs, call 613-923-5261.



The pitch pine, a rare species in Canada, is the only pine in eastern North America whose needles grow in groups of three.

Illustration: Parks Canada

## New properties enlarge SLINP

Continued from page 1

of Canada (NCC) and private landowners.

These donations show how local residents value the unique 1000 Islands ecosystem and its wildlife. Located in the Fron-

tenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, all of the new lands are an important part of a major north/south wildlife corridor that joins Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park and New York's Adirondack State Park.

## Mapping it out

### Partnership highlights biodiversity of our young forests

Research crews measured more than 9000 trees and identified hundreds of other plants in the 1000 Islands region as part of the Species at Risk Habitat Availability Project last summer.

Preliminary results of the study show that our forests are young and that they are very diverse. In the 220 plots surveyed, 272 distinct plant species were identified—and that's just looking at the most dominant plants in each plot.

For the many organizations involved in the study, including the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks Canada, and the Biosphere Network, the preliminary results are evidence that the 1000 Islands are indeed a place of high biodiversity.

In addition, the relatively small tree diameters show that forest management and allowing abandoned agricultural fields to revert to forest over the past several decades has resulted in many relatively young forests in this area.

The main purpose of the three-year study is to create fine-scale vegetation maps that will be used to identify habitats that are critical for the survival of species at risk in the 1000 Islands.

With the mapping of vegetation communities, local organizations can focus their efforts to protect the biodiversity of the region. For community members and landowners, the study will also provide valuable information for a wide range of development and conservation projects—everything from site rehabilitation to land use planning.

"This study will give a broad view of the landscape, narrowed down to where trees should be planted on a site,"

said Gary Nielsen, Leeds County Stewardship Council Coordinator.

The fine-scale maps, which should be available in June 2007, will actually identify "vegetation communities" through a process called Ecological Land Classification (ELC). ELC takes into account not only vegetation, but also soil type and moisture and the slope and aspect of the land. The end result is the classification of a vegetation community.

Last summer, research crews surveyed only public lands, including parts of St. Lawrence Islands National Park, Landons Bay, Jones Creek, and Charleston Lake



Technician Janice Ball (left) demonstrates the use of a soil auger for visitors on Mermaid Island. Soil samples are used to help classify the diverse vegetation communities in the 1000 Islands ecosystem.

Photo: Parks Canada

Provincial Park. Because of the huge variety of vegetation in this area, surveys also need to be done with the cooperation of private landowners. Surveys have a very low impact on vegetation and can be completed in less than a day.

To learn more about participating or for more information about the Species at Risk Habitat Availability Project, call 613-923-5261.

# Turtle population in crisis

## Study shows alarming trend

Turtles are in trouble. Their populations are plummeting and without help from us—residents, visitors, and park staff—some species may disappear from this area.

That's part of the troubling picture Marie-André Carrière has recently uncovered while working on the St. Lawrence River. Carrière, a Masters student at the University of Ottawa, is working in collaboration with St. Lawrence Islands National Park to study the common map turtle and the stinkpot turtle. Both are species at risk in Canada and little is known about their populations or habits.

Carrière and her team's dedicated efforts, which included boating, snorkeling, and swimming in all weather to catch turtles, began last summer and will continue this year as the first in-depth study of these shy reptiles.

The turtles' mortality rates are the most disturbing results so far. Because turtles are long-



Carine Verly, a University of Ottawa field assistant, holds up one of 210 map turtles caught and measured last summer. The data collected will help plan a recovery program for this species at risk.

Photo: Parks Canada



Researcher Marie-André Carrière holds a receiver over the water to locate signals from one of the 22 map turtles carrying transmitters in the St. Lawrence River. Each transmitter has a unique frequency so individual turtles can be tracked and located.

Photo: Parks Canada

lived and slow-growing, even a small increase in mortality rates could send a population over the edge to extirpation.

Last summer, in just one bay, Carrière recorded more than 15 map turtles drowned in fishing traps set below water. That's a huge loss to a small population.

"Like humans, turtles have lungs and must breathe air," Carrière explained. "When they can't get to the surface, they drown." Her work will hopefully lead to local fishermen raising their traps next summer so that a trapped turtle is able to come up to breathe.

A surprising number of turtles also carry physical marks that show the effects humans are having on their populations. Propeller scars cross the shells of many of the turtles,

the result of injuries occurring as they swim across busy channels on summer days.

Propellers are not the biggest threat to our turtle populations though, Carrière warns. "Road kill is the lead-

*Help a turtle cross the road. Protect some wetland. If we don't help, the turtles are doomed.*

ing cause of decline in all turtle populations. In the spring, when females move onto land to lay their eggs, many are killed crossing the road while looking for a place to nest. It takes map turtles 10 years to reach sexual maturity, so it's a huge loss when an adult female is killed on the road. We lose the eggs she was going to lay as well as a reproducing individual in the population."

What can you do? Slow down in the spring! Watch for signs posted near prime turtle nesting habitat, and avoid the turtles on the road. If it's safe,



Photo: Parks Canada

### Help a turtle cross the road

Watch for traffic! Make sure it is safe for you to pull over and help the turtle.

Move the turtle in the direction it's going. If you don't, it will probably turn around and try again.

Don't lift a turtle by its tail. Turtles are heavy and you could dislocate vertebrae and kill the turtle. Lift turtles by the shell, at the back end (to avoid being bitten).

Be careful with snapping turtles - they have very long necks and sharp beaks!

If using a shovel to move a turtle, keep it very low to the ground in case the turtle moves.



A female map turtle with a transmitter about to be fitted to her shell will soon be ready to be released back into the St. Lawrence River. Transmitters will be attached to the turtles for a two-year study.

Photo: Parks Canada

stop your car and help a turtle to cross.

For more information about the turtle studies at St. Lawrence Islands National Park, contact Marie-André Carrière at mcarr052@uottawa.ca or call 613-923-5261.

## Who's Who Turtle Clues

 <p><b>Snapping Turtle</b> <i>Chelydra serpentina</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size: 20-40 cm</li> <li>• Shell dark brown to black—usually covered in algae</li> <li>• Rear edge of shell is serrated</li> <li>• Large head and long neck</li> <li>• Long tail with a row of large scales on the upper surface</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Common Map Turtle</b> <i>Graptemys geographica</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size: 10-27 cm</li> <li>• Shell brown with many light-coloured lines in map-like pattern</li> <li>• Yellow spot behind the eye</li> <li>• Rear edge of shell is serrated</li> <li>• Legs, neck, and head are lined with parallel yellow stripes</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Blanding's Turtle</b> <i>Emydoidea blandingii</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size: 15-25 cm</li> <li>• High-domed shell is brown to black and covered with yellow flecks</li> <li>• Large head is dark on top, but throat and chin are bright yellow</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Painted Turtle</b> <i>Chrysemis picta</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size: 10-25 cm</li> <li>• Shell olive green to black with red lines around the outer edge</li> <li>• Shell is smooth and shiny</li> <li>• Head, neck, and tail are striped yellow and/or red</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Stinkpot Turtle</b> <i>Sternotherus odoratus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size: 8-13 cm</li> <li>• High-domed, narrow shell is brown and flecked or streaked with black</li> <li>• When frightened, produces a musky odour</li> </ul>
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Illustrations: Charles Douglas, reproduced courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Canada.

# Mighty but small

The bald eagle soars again over the St. Lawrence, but populations are still low

They're powerful birds and impressive to see, but bald eagles are still a rare sight along the upper St. Lawrence River.

Since 1999, only one pair of eagles has maintained a nest in the 1000 islands. However, considering the bald eagle was completely absent from the area for more than 60 years, a healthy nest is a good sign.

Unfortunately, the bald eagle's overall recovery from the era of DDT has been slow. The St. Lawrence River bald eagle nest is part of a study to determine the reason why.

The normal lifespan of a bald eagle in the wild is 25 to 30 years but there is evidence that Ontario's eagles aren't surviving much past 15. It's been suggested that the eagles are dying young from lead and mercury poisoning.

Studies have shown that the eagle chicks hatched on the St. Lawrence River don't have high levels of heavy metal contamination at birth. The health risk, therefore, develops as they grow and must be acquired from their environment through the food they eat.

For a bird that has the entire continent to roam, it's difficult to know where the food contamination is coming from. That's what the bald eagle tracking project, led by Bird

Studies Canada, is attempting to determine. Young eaglets are fitted with satellite transmitters, which are purchased through donations from local organizations and community members, and followed for up to five years.

So far, the project has



*Regal, one of three eagles hatched on the St. Lawrence River last summer, wore a backpack transmitter to track her movements. Researchers hope to learn more about eagle migration and feeding grounds as part of an international effort to better protect this majestic species.*

*Photo: Pete Nye*

shown, as predicted, that most young bald eagles like to wander across eastern North America. Regal, the St. Lawrence eagle fitted with a transmitter last June, was an exception to that rule. Until her transmitter failed in January (for unknown reasons), Regal stuck fairly close to home. That may be because her nest on the St. Lawrence is in a great spot for

wintering eagles, who gather at open water for access to fish.

Those fish and the lead some of them carry could be one of the biggest eagle killers in Ontario. Lead contamination can come from any river or lake where people go fishing. One lead fishing sinker, swal-

laminated comes out of the atmosphere, put there by industry.

The data gathered from following the St. Lawrence eaglets will contribute to the protection of the eagles and their habitat – the main goal of the international St. Lawrence Bald Eagle Working Group, which is made up of government and non-government organizations in Ontario and New York. Soon, it is hoped, there will be many more nests of this mighty eagle along the St. Lawrence River.

For more information on SLINP's contributions to the Eagle Monitoring Project, call 613-923-5261.

As long as their transmitters continue to function properly, the St. Lawrence eagles can be followed year-round through the "Eagle Tracker" on the Bird Studies Canada website at [www.bsc-eoc.org](http://www.bsc-eoc.org). One or two new eaglets from the St. Lawrence nest will be fitted with transmitters early this summer.

Mercury poisoning, on the other hand, is more difficult to control. Most mercury con-



*Bald Eagles reach sexual maturity at four to five years, the same time as they acquire a full white head. It's at this time that they look for mates and nesting territory. Only one pair has successfully nested on the St. Lawrence since 1999 – the first eagles to nest here in more than 60 years.*

*Photo: Parks Canada*

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## Frogs tell tale of ecosystem health

Swarming insects, slimy frogs, odorous swamps, and dark nights aren't things that



*Two marked bullfrogs are released back into the swamp by a resource conservation student. Frog populations can be used as an indicator of wetland health.*

*Photo: Parks Canada*

would attract most people. But at St. Lawrence Islands National Park, bullfrogging is a project with no shortage of volunteers.

For the adventuresome, it can be quite exciting to don bug jackets, insect repellent, headlamps, and lifejackets to venture into a swamp in the dead of the night.

Or the not-so-dead of night. As headlamps are switched on, the bullfroggers are reminded that the swamp is very much alive. Like a porch light, the headlamps disorient and attract swarms of moths, beetles, and mosquitoes that swarm around the researchers' heads. Peering through the clouds of insects, the goal is to

paddle through the swamp in search of the glow of a frog's eyes.

Once spotted, bullfrogs and green frogs are caught by hand (tricky business with a wet and slimy amphibian), weighed, measured, marked, and released. Data can be used to monitor frog populations as an indicator of wetland health.

Frog populations around the world are declining as a result of habitat loss, global warming, pollution, and invasive species. Bullfrog and green frog studies have been conducted on Hill and Grenadier Islands since 1997. These studies, along with new wetland monitoring protocol being introduced this spring,

will show us the status of frog populations and ecosystem health in St. Lawrence Islands National Park.

To volunteer with monitoring projects in your area, call 923-5261.



*Frogs are spotted by the reflection of flashlights off their eyes in the dark of a swamp. Temporarily blinded by the light, they usually stay still until a canoe floats near enough for volunteers to lean over and catch the amphibian by hand.*

*Photo: Parks Canada*

# YOU ASKED US

## What does poison ivy look like?

Poison ivy is a three-leaved plant that can grow on the ground as a vine or shrub and can also climb trees.

Leaves may be glossy or dull and can vary in colour from red to green to yellow to brown. Leaf edges may be smooth or notched (but never serrated).

Poison ivy can cause a rash in all seasons, even when it is dead. Animals like your pet dog are not affected by poison ivy, but can carry the plant's oils on their fur and pass it on to people. The best advice? Leaves of three, let it be! In areas with poison ivy, keep your dog on a leash.

### How can I get rid of it?

Poison ivy growing on your property is very difficult to remove. Hand removal, mow-



*Poison ivy's middle leaf is usually slightly separated from the two base leaves.*

*Illustration: Parks Canada*

ing, and burning can be risky because of the potential contact with oils (even in smoke). Chemical herbicides are often successful in safely removing the plant.

For more information check the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs fact sheet at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/99-015.htm>

## Why are island services changing?

Island services have been changing to meet the needs of visitors and because of budget restrictions.

Our goal is to establish two different service levels on park islands, providing different opportunities for visitors.

Three locations (Central Grenadier, Beau Rivage, and



*Beau Rivage Island will be one of the three locations with garbage pick up.*

*Photo: Parks Canada*

## Are ATVs allowed on park trails?

No. Motorized use of park trails is prohibited. People on foot and vehicles do not mix. Our objective is to offer a national park experience accessible to the majority of visitors in a manner that minimizes the impact on fragile ecosystems.

We intend to increase the park trail network to offer more opportunities to our

McDonald) will have a garbage pick up. The remaining islands will have the backcountry services typical in National Parks across Canada. In most cases, these services will be limited to composting toilets (see page 10) and hiking trails.

Island services may also change to protect an island's natural resources such as endangered plant species. We have an obligation to all Canadians to protect the ecological integrity of the park.

St. Lawrence Islands National Park has the highest visitor use density of all the national parks in Canada. We encourage all visitors to plan low-impact visits (pack-in, pack-out) to help protect the fragile St. Lawrence ecosystem.

mainland visitors in the years to come, particularly on newly acquired properties in the Jones Creek and Landon Bay areas.

The first step is to heal the damage caused by motorized traffic in backcountry areas. This work will be featured in the next edition of the Pitch Pine Post.

## Can we pick berries or mushrooms?

No. This is an illegal activity under the National Parks Act, a law that was written to protect Canada's natural resources for all Canadians and future generations.

Park wardens monitor park property to ensure no plants or animals are being removed or harmed. This is especially important in the case of endangered species such as American ginseng.

## Can I get involved at the park?

Yes! Volunteers are needed for programs such as bird counts and bull frog monitoring. This can be an excellent opportunity to learn more about your local environment from experts in the field. Call the park to learn more about

current citizen science opportunities.

Other local organizations, such as the Kingston Field Naturalists (see below), also coordinate monitoring programs in which you can be involved in.



*Volunteers can participate in citizen science projects such as the Christmas Day and Grenadier Island bird counts. You can also contribute to projects by monitoring forests and wetlands on your own property.*

*Photo: Parks Canada*

## Where can I get more information?

Visit or call us at 613-923-5261 for information about park facilities and programs. For information about other local environmental and conservation groups, check Who's Doing What? at [www.whosdoingwhat.ca](http://www.whosdoingwhat.ca).

### Some Local Organizations:

Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve	613-659-4824
<a href="http://www.biospherenetwork.com">www.biospherenetwork.com</a>	
1000 Islands/Gananoque Chamber of Commerce	
<a href="http://www.1000islandsgananoque.com">www.1000islandsgananoque.com</a>	1-800-561-1595
Algonquin to Adirondack Conservation Initiative (A2A)	
<a href="http://www.atoa.org">www.atoa.org</a>	613-382-2782
Brockville Chamber of Commerce	1-888-251-7676
<a href="http://www.brockvillechamber.com">www.brockvillechamber.com</a>	613-342-6553
Cataraque Region Conservation Authority	
<a href="http://www.cataraqueregion.on.ca">www.cataraqueregion.on.ca</a>	613-546-4228
Charleston Lake Provincial Park	613-659-2065
<a href="http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/char.html">www.ontarioparks.com/english/char.html</a>	
Eastern Ontario Model Forest	
<a href="http://www.eomf.on.ca">www.eomf.on.ca</a>	613-258-8241
Grenville Land Stewardship Council	613-342-8528
<a href="http://www.ontariostewardship.org/grenville">www.ontariostewardship.org/grenville</a>	
Kingston Field Naturalists	613-549-8023
<a href="http://www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org">www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org</a>	
Landon Bay Centre	
<a href="http://www.landonbay.org">www.landonbay.org</a>	
Leeds County Stewardship Council	613-342-8526
<a href="http://www.ontariostewardship.org/leeds">www.ontariostewardship.org/leeds</a>	
Parks of the St. Lawrence	1-800-437-2233
<a href="http://www.parks.on.ca">www.parks.on.ca</a>	

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## EVENTS

For more information visit the Mallorytown Visitor Centre or call 613-923-5261.

**April 29** – Algonquin to Adirondack (A2A) Annual General Meeting – Guest speakers, guided hikes at Mallorytown Landing. A chance for landowners to learn about the biodiversity of this area and its important role linking the Algonquin and Adirondack wilderness areas.

**May 18** - Grenadier Island Bird Census: Join park interpreters and expert birders from the Brockville Field Naturalists for an outing to count the spring migrants. 8 am.

**May 19** - Visitor Centre open weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Interpretive programs are offered regularly.

**May 27** – Wildflower Workshop – Learn about native wildflowers and help with plantings to add colour to Mallorytown Landing.

**June 16** – Visitor Centre open daily until September 4. Inter-

pretive programs are offered regularly.

**July 1** – Canada Day - Activities and programs celebrating Canada from coast to coast. Join us for a piece of birthday cake! Free vehicle admission for this event, which runs from 11am to 3pm.

**July 8** – Revealing the Reptiles – See, touch, and learn about snakes and turtles with special guests, presentations, and activities at Mallorytown Landing.

**July 15** – Parks Day - Wildlife demonstrations, conservation displays, music, and family activities at Mallorytown Landing. 10 am to 4 pm.

**August 14 – 18** – McDonald Island Shore Breakfast – Catch a shuttle boat from Gananogue for a traditional breakfast on McDonald Island. Part of Gananogue's Festival of the Islands.

**September 5** – Visitor Centre open weekends only (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) until October 9.

## SUMMER PROGRAMS (July and August)

**Heritage Theatre** – The Smuggler's River: Storytelling at its best! Sit back and enjoy legends of the mighty St. Lawrence River. Presentations will take place throughout the park and at local festivals and fairs.

**Interpretive Programs** – Special interpretive programs are offered at various times at Mallorytown Landing and on the islands. Learn about solar and wind power, species at risk, the St. Lawrence River, and much more. Locations and times are posted at the Visitor Centre and on the islands.

**Exhibit** - High Diversity: An interactive display that features plants and animals from across Canada to highlight the country's biodiversity. Take part in an exhibit scavenger hunt and win a prize!

**Guided Interpretive Walks** – Explore the rich natural and human history at Mallorytown Landing with a park interpreter.

**Kids Programs** – Learn about St. Lawrence Islands National Park through interactive games and activities. For children ages 5-12, accompanied by an adult.

**Campground Presentations** – Wednesday evening programs at Ivy Lea campground.

For more information visit the Mallorytown Visitor Centre or call 613-923-5261.

## Hours of Operation

### Park Administration Office

8 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, year round

### Islands

Services and facilities are maintained from Victoria Day to Thanksgiving (May 19 to October 9)

Fees are payable for docking, camping, beaching, and mooring buoys. Self-registration payment areas and a list of fees are located on all islands. See page 11 for island fees.

### Mallorytown Landing Visitor Centre

May 19 to June 11 and

September 8 to October 9

- 10 am to 4 pm Friday to Sunday, Victoria Day (May 22) and Thanksgiving (October 9)

June 16 to September 4

- 10 am to 4 pm Sunday to Thursday
- 10 am to 6 pm Friday and Saturday

Vehicle parking fees applicable June 19 to September 1.

Launching and boat trailer parking fees applicable April 1 to November 30.

See page 9 for Mallorytown Landing fees.

## Nature day camp a FABulous success

Organized by the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve and sponsored by St. Lawrence Islands National Park, the Town of Gananogue, the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, The Barbara Heck Foundation, and the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

The goal was to be fun and to be educational. Organizers seem to have hit the mark, judging by parents' evaluations of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere (FAB) Nature Camp's first year.

"Children love it!" and "excellent balance between recreational activities and environmental instruction" were among the comments received at the end of 2005's summer camps. Parents also praised the staff and the beautiful setting at Landon Bay.

This year, organizers are increasing the camp's enrolment in an effort to shorten the waiting list. Eight weekly programs, each with a different theme, are offered during July



and August. Children ages 6 to 11 can participate, and will be divided into senior and junior divisions.

From bugs to birds and soil to trees, the camp lets children experience all parts of nature in a safe, natural setting. The campers use the trails, fields, wooded areas, creeks, marshes,

craft house, meeting hall, and swimming pool during the active and educational program.

An emphasis is placed on cooperative activities, life skills, nurturing an environmental ethic, developing and expressing creative skills, and learning and playing in a safe, stimulating environment.

The FAB Nature Camp is held at the Landon Bay Centre, located 6 km east of Gananogue on the Thousand Islands Parkway and is operated by The Barbara Heck Foundation.

More information is available at [www.landonbay.org](http://www.landonbay.org) or by calling 613-659-4824.



Just for kids!

# Nature Navigators



## Robin's new glasses

*Adapted from a story collected by Allan Foster*

Karly ran back to the cottage soaking wet but laughing. She bounced up the steps, set her bucket of worms on the porch and waited for her grandfather. He came up the steps a little more slowly, carrying the fish they'd caught for dinner and also smiling about the warm rain shower they'd just received.

It was as she was changing into dry clothes that Karly heard a loud "THUMP" on the window. Looking outside, she saw a robin lying on the porch. Karly ran outside.

"What's going on?" she asked. "Didn't you see the cottage?"

Robin shook his head to clear the stars. "I couldn't see in the rain," he moaned, "Everything's blurry."

"That sounds dangerous," Karly said. She thought for a minute, then had a great idea. "Follow me!" she said.

Inside, Karly dug around in a kitchen drawer and found Grandfather's old, broken spectacles. Using a twist tie and the broken glass, she made a pair of mini glasses that she proudly handed to Robin.

"Wow," said Robin when he put them on, "I can see now!" and away he flew, right out the front door. On the way, he paused and gobbled up the worms from Karly's fishing bucket on the porch.

Karly ran out the door after him. "Now listen here, Mr. Robin!" she yelled as he flew towards the forest. "I made you glasses and you didn't even say thank you, and now you've taken my worms too!"

From the edge of the woods, Robin called back, "Oh, cheer up, cheer up, cheer up!"

*Have you ever heard a robin say that? Open your ears and listen carefully!*

## Word Search

S	G	E	N	I	P	F	O	X	C
D	A	O	T	I	G	O	R	F	A
E	R	L	C	O	B	E	E	L	M
E	B	R	A	C	C	O	O	N	P
R	A	L	O	M	B	I	R	D	I
O	G	I	S	L	A	N	D	B	N
L	E	A	G	L	E	N	O	T	G
P	K	R	O	C	K	A	D	R	G
X	I	T	W	A	T	E	R	E	Y
E	H	N	U	S	U	M	M	E	R

- Bee
- Bird
- Boats
- Camping
- Eagle
- Explore
- Fox
- Frog
- Garbage
- Hike
- Island
- Pine
- Raccoon
- Robin
- Rock
- Salamander
- Summer
- Sun
- Toad
- Trail
- Tree
- Water

Puzzle solution: \_\_\_\_\_  
(answer at bottom of page)

What does that mean? It's the study of ecosystems: plants and animals living together in their environment. Look at the picture below—that's ecology in action!

### The Circle of Life

Try This! Take a 50 cm piece of string and make a circle on the ground somewhere outdoors. Look carefully. What can you find living in your circle?

## Colouring Contest

Contest is open to children ages 12 and under. Fill out this form and bring it with the completed picture below to St. Lawrence Islands National Park. You can also mail your entry to the park (address on page 1). Contest closes September 4, 2006. Winners will be chosen by random draw from all entries. Three prizes of nature games will be awarded.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street R.R./Apt.

City Province Postal Code

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



# MALLORYTOWN LANDING

## Wind turbine and solar panels producing clean energy



The new wind turbine, combined with the solar panels on the gunboat exhibit, produces enough energy for the two public buildings on the south side of the highway to be self-sufficient.

Photo: Parks Canada

Parks Canada wants to be a leader in sustainable living. St. Lawrence Islands National Park is rising to that challenge with a new wind turbine that is making clean energy with the breeze off the St. Lawrence.

Based on Canada's Kyoto commitments, National Parks and Historic Sites across Canada are working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5% from 1998 levels by 2010. For Eastern Ontario's parks and sites, that means an annual reduction of nearly 80 tonnes.

The wind turbine and solar panels at St. Lawrence Islands National Park will reduce the park's emissions by more than 20 tonnes per year, a significant contribution to Parks Canada's overall reductions.



Operations Manager Robbie VanRumpft checks the photo voltaic cells on one of SLINP's administration buildings. Solar and wind energy at the park reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 20 tonnes per year, saving both the environment and money.

Photo: Parks Canada

The amount of energy produced by the turbine and photo voltaic (solar) cells depends on the weather but enough clean energy is produced to make the two public buildings on the south side of the highway self-sufficient. Extra energy generated on sunny and windy days is stored in batteries.

And alternative energy isn't the only project to make the park more sustainable. Park vehicles and boats use environmentally-friendly fuel (ethanol-blended), new boat motors are energy efficient, and all buildings use low amperage fluorescent lighting.

Informal awareness pro-

grams also encourage park employees to do their part in energy conservation both in the park and as members of the community.

*Doing your part to conserve energy isn't difficult. Just turn off lights. Recycle. Carpool.*

Doing your part to conserve energy and fight global warming doesn't need to involve solar panels and wind turbines. Just turn off the lights. Recycle. Carpool. Walk or ride your bike. Use your air conditioner a little less. Every small action helps the environment and saves you money.

For more information and advice about reducing your own energy consumption, check [www.climatechange.gc.ca](http://www.climatechange.gc.ca).

## Hands on!

### New stuff for kids of all ages

From scat to feathers to bones, you can touch it all at the Mallorytown Visitor Centre this summer.

The centre features a new kids activity table, a nature book nook, a discovery touch table, and a travelling exhibit about Canada's biodiversity. The focus this summer is "hands on!"

Throughout July and August, an interpreter will be working in the building to answer questions, lend nets and magnifying glasses, and lead interactive programs.

High Diversity, a special



Eww! What's that you almost stepped in? Learn to identify common scat—you can even touch these realistic plastic samples!

Photo: Acorn Naturalists



Have you ever wondered what a frog looks like under its skin? What about a hawk or a snake? Find out with x-rays and skeletons at the Mallorytown Visitor Centre this summer!

Photo: Roylco Limited

exhibit from McGill University, will be on display for this summer only (June 20—September 4). The display features plants and animals from across Canada to highlight the country's biodiversity. Take part in an exhibit scavenger hunt and win a prize!

A schedule of interpretive programs will be posted weekly at the Visitor Centre. See page 6 for Visitor Centre hours.



### Underwater exploration

Have you ever wondered what lives in the St. Lawrence River? Visit the Mallorytown Visitor Centre for a look at the hidden underwater world. Native fish species, like this rock bass, sport bright colours and intricate designs that can only be seen up close. More than 50 different fish species live in the St. Lawrence River.

Photo: Parks Canada

# MALLORYTOWN LANDING

## A new wildlife haven

### Shoreline restoration update

Gone are the sandy beaches of yesteryear. Here are the natural "weeds" and brambles that have some local residents shaking their heads. But is it really an eyesore? Many people don't think so.

In fact, the native plants now lining the shore at Mallorytown Landing are a wildlife paradise. The young trees and grasses are home to countless insects, reptiles and birds that five years ago, you wouldn't have found along this section of shoreline. The meeting of land and water creates one of the richest habitats for plant and animal life.

Besides providing food and shelter for living things, a natural shore plays a huge role in maintaining water quality. Native trees, bushes, and grasses along the shore catch pollutants and sediments from runoff. The cleaner, healthier water off shore is important habitat for spawning fish.

As an added bonus, the plants along the shore will also discourage Canada geese from wandering across and leaving feces in the picnic area.

The park has a multi-year plan to slowly remove the

hard, unnatural shoreline at Mallorytown Landing and replace it with natural vegetation.

Members of the local community play a key role in the spring tree and wildflower plantings, which will continue this year. To volunteer with a planting day, call (613) 923-5261.

For information about restoring your own shoreline to create wildlife habitat and improve water quality, contact the Leeds County Stewardship Council at (613) 342-8526 or the Grenville Land Stewardship Council at (613) 342-8528.



Students from Toniata Public School in Brockville enjoy lunch next to the new naturalized shoreline at Mallorytown Landing.

Photo: Parks Canada

## Where's Waldo?

### Find the blue frog in the pond

The green frog (*Rana calmi-*  
*tans*) population at Mallory-  
town Landing has some  
unusual genes—some of the  
frogs are actually BLUE in  
colour!

Take a walk on the Mallory-  
town Landing trails and keep  
your eyes peeled for a blue frog  
near the pond.

Green frog skin normally  
contains two pigments, yellow  
and black. The normal green  
colour of the green frog is  
caused by a combination of the  
yellow pigment and structural  
blue (the structure of certain  
cells selectively reflects blue  
light).

If all structural blue and  
pigment cells were missing, the  
frog would be albino. In the  
case of our blue frogs, however,  
it's just xanthin, the yellow  
pigment, that's missing (offi-  
cially, that means the frogs are

axanthic). Take away the yel-  
low pigment, and you're left  
with blue!

We've spotted completely  
blue and partially blue frogs in  
the pond (they really stand out  
against the green and brown of  
the surrounding environment).  
Stay on the trails and see how  
many BLUE green frogs you  
can spot!



In black and white they all look the same, but this green frog actually has a blue head. Blue colouration is an unusual phenomenon in green frog populations.

Photo: Parks Canada



Local residents and community groups planted hundreds of trees and native plants at Mallorytown Landing last spring. Plantings will continue this year.

Photo: Parks Canada

### 2006 Fees at Mallorytown Landing

**Parking**

Vehicle	\$ 6.00
Boat launch and leave	8.50
Vehicle & trailer parking with launching	18.00
Bus	20.00

Seasonal permits are also available.

### St. Lawrence Islands - BY ROAD

The mainland head-quarters of St. Lawrence Islands National Park of Canada is located on the St. Lawrence River between Brockville and Gananoque, Ontario at Mallorytown Landing.

Travellers on Hwy 401 take exit 675 south. U.S. visitors travel north on Interstate 81 to 1000 Islands Parkway, then turn east.

Facilities include a play-ground, picnic area, visitor centre with theatre, historic gunboat exhibit, telephone, parking for vehicles and trailers, boat launch, overnight docking, group camping and a 1.7 km walking trail, 800 m of which is barrier-free.

Interpretive programs and special events are offered (see page 6).



# ON THE ISLANDS



New composting toilets continue to be installed on park islands. By the end of 2009, the park intends to replace all of the old pit privies with these environmentally-friendly toilets.

Photo: Parks Canada

## No stink about composting toilets

No one's making a stink about the new composting toilets—and they're not making a stink either!

The new toilets are also environmentally friendly and cost much less to maintain than the old privies.

The biggest savings are in maintenance time. The old privies had to be emptied of their smelly waste sludge at the end of each summer—a time-consuming process that also had environmental risks in the transportation of large quantities of raw sewage across the river. The modern composting toilets have a much better solution.

Human waste is broken down by living organisms (worms and other invertebrates) just like food is decomposed in a home composter. Park staff periodically add

wood chips to the toilets to keep the waste from becoming compacted.

The end product, collected every month or so, is clean soil that is spread through the forest like fertilizer. It's a win-win situation! No stink, less cost, and good for the environment.

### To help the toilets work most efficiently, please:

- Close the lid. This allows the ventilation system to provide the air required to decompose the waste to humus and also eliminates odour
- Do not put the following into the toilets:
  - x cigarettes or matches
  - x bottles, cans, or plastic
  - x disposable diapers
  - x garbage
  - x chemical toilet disposal

## Is Gordon Island dead?

### Regeneration begins after bug decimates island

It's amazing what a bug can do. In just a few short years, the short-horned oakworm, with help from an ice storm and summer drought, managed to kill off almost every mature oak tree on Gordon Island. What's left looks, from the water, a bit like a wasteland.

But is the island really dead? You don't have to get too close to shore to discover that the island is indeed still alive.

Birds are usually the most visible sign of life—woodpeckers, warblers, nuthatches, chickadees, and creepers feasting on the insects and larvae that take over dead trees.

Dead trees, called snags, are actually a haven for many species of wildlife. Snags provide nesting, shelter, and feeding sites for mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds. In fact, more than 30 species of birds in this area will use tree cavities for nesting.

The majority of mature trees on Gordon Island have died in the past 5 years as a result of weather (drought, the ice storm, and wind storms) and an onslaught of insects (the native short-horned oakworm and the introduced gypsy moth), leaving a forest of snags.

Now, because of their important ecological role, park

officials are leaving the dead trees standing and letting the island recover on its own. Unless they pose a risk to visitors or structures, the snags will be a wildlife haven for years to come.

In addition, the opening (in this case, removal) of the canopy layer of trees lets sunlight down to young trees in the understorey. In a couple of decades, a new forest of trees will shade Gordon Island as the natural process of regeneration slowly takes place.

In the meantime, take a walk on Gordon Island and enjoy the sunshine and the birds—for now, it's a woodpecker's paradise.



Gordon Island's dead trees are already being marked by holes like these, left by a pileated woodpecker in search of dinner. Different sizes and shapes of holes are evidence of different bird species.

Photo: Parks Canada

## Experience the 1000 Islands without your own boat

Nearly half of the national park land is on islands. How do you experience those islands if you don't have a boat of your own? There are plenty of ways—read on!

### Take in the scenic view

1. Drive the 1000 Islands Parkway. Stop along the way to look and learn at the interpretive signs.
2. Visit the Mallorytown Landing Visitor Centre to learn about the geology

and natural history of the islands. Look out over the river from a historic picnic pavilion.

3. Hike to the rocky lookout at Landon Bay Campground for a great view of the islands.
4. Bike along the parkway bike trail for a more leisurely look at the river.
5. Ride the elevator to the top of the Hill Island SkyDeck for a bird's eye view of the islands.

6. Take a dip at one of the swimming areas along the river; sit back and enjoy the cool breeze.

### Climb aboard a boat

7. Board a tour boat for a guided trip among the islands.
8. Paddle between islands in a rented kayak or canoe (for safety, avoid the busy main channel).
9. Navigate the river yourself in a rental boat. Check various marinas for house-

boats, pontoon boats, and more.

### International Experience

10. Cross the 1000 Islands International bridge and camp at Wellesley Island State Park.

### For more information:

- Gananogue Chamber of Commerce 1-800-561-1595  
www.1000islands-gananogue.com
- 1000 Islands International Tourism Council  
1-800-847-5263  
www.1000islands.com

# ON THE ISLANDS

## St. Lawrence Islands - BY WATER

There are over 20 national park island properties in the St. Lawrence River between Kingston and Brockville.

Unless otherwise stated, park islands have docks, privies, primitive campsites and delineated walking trails; most have shelters.

Interpretive programs on a variety of natural and cultural heritage topics are offered throughout the sum-

mer at various island locations.

The park does not provide transportation to the islands. Water is only available at Central Grenadier and at Mallorytown Landing.

**NOTE:** Fees are payable by self-registration immediately upon arrival. Please plan ahead to minimize the solid waste you leave behind in the park.

## EAST to WEST

**STOVIN:** Eastern gateway to the 1000 Islands and the national park. A busy island adjacent to Brockville; 194 m of dock space; two campsites.

**ADELAIDE:** Tiny island adjacent to Grenadier and close to Mallorytown Landing. Significant native archaeological site and waterfowl habitat. 91 m of dock space; four mooring buoys. No garbage facilities or camping. Generators are not permitted.

**MALLORYTOWN LANDING:** 93 m of dock space. A full range of facilities - see page 9.

**GRENADIER - EAST:** Sheltered, shallow docking is an ideal landing spot for small craft; 75 m of dock space. Trail through park property connects township road, which traverses the 8 km island and joins private and park properties. Three campsites. No garbage facilities. Generators are not permitted. No picnic shelter.

**GRENADIER - CENTRAL:** United Empire Loyalist settlers found the deep soil and moderate climate well suited to farming. For the past three decades, shrub and forest communities have regenerated in abandoned farm fields. Largest facility in the park; 273 m of dockage; 17 campsites; group campground; hot & cold running



Mooring buoys on Adelaide Island, near Mallorytown Landing.

Photo: Parks Canada

water in washroom; signed trail adjoining township road, which runs the length of the island.

**GRENADIER - NORTH:** Former site of the Angler's Inn (c. 1871), favourite stop for fishermen; shallow water dock—71 m; two campsites; signed trail connects to the township road and park's southern area. No garbage facilities or picnic shelter. Generators are not permitted.

**GRENADIER - WEST:** Navigational light on the southwest corner replaced lighthouse once operated by the Root family. Historic stone picnic pavilion, constructed when the park was established in 1904. 133 m of deep

dockage. No garbage facilities or camping.

**GEORGINA:** Ivy Lea Bridge to the U.S. has footings on this island. Forest cover is a visible indicator of diverse habitats found on islands. 263 m of docking on north and south sides of the island; two campsites.

**CONSTANCE:** Swift, shallow water swirls past the smaller island adjacent to Georgina as it plunges over a sill below the 1000 Islands Bridge, where the depth drops to over 65 m. 133 m of docking. No camping.

knob). 86 m of deep-draught docking. No camping, garbage facilities or shelter. Generators are not permitted.

**AUBREY:** The island marks the western edge of the Frontenac Arch. A popular destination for boaters, with 214 m of docking in three locations and eight campsites.

**THWARTWAY:** Became part of the park in 1972. It has remained a reserve, with no facilities. Five mooring buoys in the south bay. No camping, garbage facilities or shelter. Generators are not permitted.

**MCDONALD:** Once used for farming, then as a youth camp by the Rotary Club and Sea Cadets. Now regenerating fields and forests provide prime wildlife habitat. 275 m of docking; 11 campsites.

**BEAU RIVAGE:** A favourite spot for picnicking and camping since the park's inception in 1904. 290 m of docking in several locations; eight campsites.

**MILTON:** Located at the entrance to the Bateau Channel. 110 m of docking and three campsites.

**CEDAR:** On the eastern edge of Lake Ontario. Cathcart Tower is part of Kingston's historic fortifications and a national historic site. 102 m of docking at two locations; four campsites. No garbage facilities.



Endymion Island

Photo: Parks Canada



Young campers packing up on Central Grenadier Island.

Photo: Parks Canada

**HILL:** Batterman's Point. Limited docking - 44 m. No camping.

**GORDON:** Sandstone-based island where soils are deep and vegetation is lush. Archaeologically significant sites where native peoples spent summers, taking advantage of cool northwest breezes and abundant fruits, fish and wildlife as they prepared for winter. 160 m of docking; five campsites.

**MULCASTER:** "Nature's Arboretum" - 29 species of trees highlight the diversity of the 1000 Islands flora. 123 m of docking; two campsites. No picnic shelter.

**CAMELOT:** Rocky, steep cliffs and heavily forested interior are typical features of the Thousand Islands. A popular island destination with 173 m of docking, six mooring buoys and six campsites.

**ENDYMION:** This island is a fragile example of Thousand Islands ecology. Limited docking. West end closed. Seven mooring buoys in south bay. Generators are not permitted. No camping or garbage facilities.

**MERMAID:** The tiny island is a geological feature known as a roche moutonnée (occurred when the retreating glacier deposited debris on the lee side of the rock

## 2006 Island Fees

Camping	\$ 14.00
Group camping - by reservation only (per person)	4.00
Docking (per foot of vessel length)	
- Overnight	1.00/ft
- Day (until 7pm)	0.50/ft
Beaching/ramps	6.00
Mooring buoys	20.00
Firewood	7.00
Seasonal permits are available.	