



Wheatley River Improvement Group

June, 2010

The Wheatley River Improvement Group invites you to attend
the Grand Opening Celebration of
Rackham's Community Pond
Saturday June 26, at 2:00 pm
Please join us along with
our dignitaries.. **Minister Carolyn Bertram**
Minister Richard Brown
Minister Ronald MacKinley
Minister Robert Vessey

..for the the Official Ceremonies and Presentations
to the landowners and families who have contributed to
the pond reclamation project.

WRIG
Wheatley River Improvement Group

The afternoon will feature..

- Traditional Music with Ten Strings and A Goat Skin
- A Community Barbeque
- A Children's Prize Fishing Derby

for more information please call Tracy Gallant at 964-2394

Letter from the Chair

In our last newsletter, I asked for your participation as we celebrate and maintain our watershed, noting that *"many hands make light work"*. It was a simple request; one that was answered with genuine friendliness and generosity by many of the people who live within Wheatley River Watershed. On the 15th of May, the call for help went out from Tracy Gallant to begin building the dock and the accessible fishing platform. I arrived at the pond at 8:30, to find a few people already present. By 9:00, cars and trucks carrying cheerful and willing workers were lining the driveway into the pond site. Everyone just chipped in to help wherever they could. I must mention the contributions made by people such as

Macro Trebeek of Arnolds Bobcat Service in Ebenezer, who brought in his Bobcat to level the areas around the parking lot, the lower lane and Francis (Galas) Gallant, from Rustico who brought his tractor and post-hole digger, and the Cymbria Lions Club. On the following weekend, others came out to help and we completed the task. While I am unable to mention each person by name, I would like to thank in particular Todd Newson, David Gladstone, and especially Grant Rackham for their time, their excellent work. We were very fortunate to have 1,000 year-old trout delivered to their new home in the Wheatley River on May 17th. Along to enjoy the day were Ministers Brown and Bertram. On May 22, fishing in the pond opened, and many of us were there to see the first beautiful trout to be caught and the first of many big smiles to be seen. We still have many things yet to be accomplished; picnic tables and benches to be built, and paths to be cleared. But I cannot complete this letter without asking for something, and that is to please come and enjoy our **Rackham's Community Pond and Conservation Area's Grand Opening Celebrations at 2:00 pm on June 26th**. This is your watershed so please join us for an afternoon of celebration and fun as we proudly unveil the new Rackham's Pond, its bounty and its beauty.

Jim Kemp – WRIG Chair

Brook Trout Enjoy New Home

On May 17 1,000 brook trout were delivered to Rackham's Pond and Conservation Area by the PEI Dept. of Environment, Energy and Forestry. Fresh water biologist Rosie MacFarlane of the Wildlife Division sent them our way, while they were welcomed by Grant and Nancy Rackham, along with Hon. Ministers Carolyn Bertram and Richard Brown and a number of WRIG members.



Taking Care of Your Septic System

From www.livingbywater.ca

Septic systems are particularly common on rural and cottage properties, therefore it is very important for shoreline residents to have a strong knowledge of them. Waterfront properties, which tend to have wetter soils, can pose extra challenges for septic systems. Soil conditions can make your system less efficient in treating wastewater and allow harmful pollutants to get into the water body you live beside. As a waterfront resident, you must pay particular attention to your septic system.

Septic systems are a good way to treat waste - so long as they are functioning properly. If you are not connected to a municipal or private sewage treatment system, you most likely have an on-site septic system to treat the sewage from your household. Although out of sight, please don't put

your septic system out of mind! Faulty septic systems can be extremely hazardous since improperly treated effluent can harm both the homeowner's health and the health of the environment. It is in your best interest to maintain your system. If you don't, you risk contaminating your water and, ultimately, your family's health. However, if you, as the homeowner, take responsibility for your own system by properly maintaining it, you should not be forced to deal with such problems.

Editor's Note: You can also find information about "Getting to Know Your Septic System" on the Government of PEI's website. Here's the link: <http://www.gov.pe.ca/envengfor/index.php3?number=1015728&lang=E>

**pump
it out!**

When was the last time you had your **septic system** pumped? Can't recall? Then it's been too long.

Protect your investment in your water treatment system. Have your septic system pumped and inspected every three years by a licensed septic tank service contractor. Remember, a failed septic system is expensive to replace and it compromises water quality.

Protect your **investment**.
Protect the **river**. It's that **easy**.

www.livingbywater.ca

Meet Our 2010 Summer Field Crew

WRIG is pleased to welcome **Connor Youngerman** to the Wheatley River Watershed for the summer field season. Connor is the Field Supervisor for the 2010 field season. Connor's knowledge of and his enthusiasm for the environment and working in the field was immediately evident and he will, we are sure, provide the rest of the crew great leadership for the summer. Please feel free to contact Connor to have a site assessment take place on your bit of Buffer Zone. It could be that WRIG can provide and plant an assortment of native shrubs and trees to stabilize the banks of streams, diversify a hedgerow or the buffer zone along any stretch of the estuary. This will beautify any property and as an added bonus, provide abundant food for wildlife.

Two graduating Bluefield students, **Brodie MacLeod** (Ebenezer) and **Iddo Van der Geer** (Wheatley River), will be returning to join WRIG and Connor for this year's field season. As well, **Brynley Horsfield** has been employed by both Hunter Clyde Watershed Group and WRIG for a new shared position dedicated to Riparian Health Surveys of both watersheds.

Here's what Connor Youngerman has to say:
"I've had a keen interest in the natural world and environmental stewardship since being in utero and am beyond thrilled to be WRIG's field supervisor this year. I have just finished my third year at UPEI studying biology and hope to use all my field-work experience to the benefit of this summer's work. The watershed needs lots of attention including (but not limited to) tree planting, brush-matting and culvert replacement. I am confident that we can have a productive summer and lay the groundwork to make the Wheatley River watershed a more natural and biodiverse waterway."

Connor and the 2010 crew can be reached through Coordinator, Tracy Gallant, at 963-2394.

Rackham's Pond "Firsts"

The pond opened for PEI's Family Fishing Weekend May 22d. At 10:32 a.m., 13 year old Kennedy Ford from Oyster Bed Bridge made the pond's FIRST CATCH, landing a brook trout weighing just over 1 lb. The event was witnessed by her grandparents and a crowd assembled to complete the new wheelchair platform and canoe launch dock. Next day saw the FIRST FAMILY PICNIC, enjoyed by new Wheatley River residents, the Gallant family with, yes, their FIRSTY BABY.



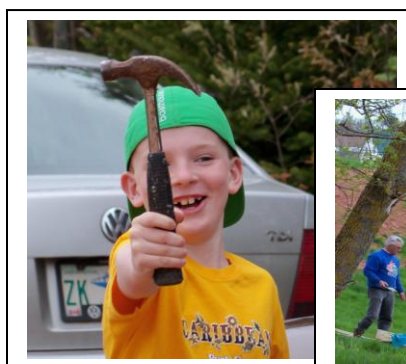
Kennedy Ford with the FIRST CATCH, Rackham's Pond

A SPECIAL THANK-YOU TO OUR "RACKHAM'S POND" VOLUNTEERS:

Pierre-Yves Daoust	Margaret Gladstone
Hervé Poirier	Marco Trebeek
Mark Gallant	Rowen Gallant
Tammy Gallant	Caleb Gallant
Iddo Van der Geer	John Fraser
Jason Ramsey	Alan Mac Isaac
Denis Gallant	Francis Gallant
Todd Newson	Lucy Newson

AND A VERY SPECIAL THANK-YOU to some of the younger first time volunteers:

Sylvain Duguay	Nick Cahill
Jenna Marie Gallant	Devin Gallant



PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund

When anglers purchase a fishing license on PEI, they also pay a \$20.00 fee to the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund. Some question the need for this fee and wonder where the money goes. Where it goes is to help groups like ours improve habitat for fish and many other species of Island Wildlife.

Applications for funding are made by many stream and river management groups annually. In 2009, approximately \$162,000 was awarded to watershed, wildlife and environmental groups across PEI to restore, protect and improve Island waterways.

Your Wheatley River watershed has benefited from these funds over the years with various in-stream projects including a grant in 2009 that went toward the Rackham's Community Pond restoration project.

This year, our application was again approved and with it, another 200 meters of stream above the pond will receive some much needed attention as we continue to remove silt, improve beds for healthy fish habitat in areas throughout our watershed.

Research and education projects are also funded by the WCF. No fewer than 20 groups received WCF funds in 2009 for river and stream related projects from tip to tip on PEI. Money well spent!

WRIG on the Web

The Wheatley River Improvement Group is proud to announce the launch of www.wrig.ca, a website devoted to all things Wheatley River. We've created this website so we can tell people about events and activities around the watershed and keep them up to date on the work WRIG is doing to improve our environment. Our website will also provide links to neighbouring watershed groups and to relevant government information sources.

For example, we could link to a direct feed from the Environment Canada Weather Office, giving up-to-the-minute weather conditions and forecasts, or simply provide a link to Environment Canada's website. We need members' input on this. Please let webmaster David Gladstone know which sort of link you would prefer or if there are other syndicated news sources that you feel would fit our new site.

Our website will eventually have its own interactive blog page to give members a way to ask questions or express opinions about watershed activities. We will create a number of galleries of photographs and a means for members to send in your own photos or drawings. We want to know what you think about the site so please e-mail your suggestions or questions about WRIG activities and how you can help to info@wrig.ca.

And by the way, nobody is suggesting that the website will replace the more traditional methods of communicating; newsletters and word of mouth will always be important ways for us to share information about the things that concern us. *David Gladstone*

Schools Soak up Environment

A regular environmental education program began Friday, June 4th for three Island schools. L'école Saint Augustin, Central Queens Elementary and Gulf Shore Consolidated Schools attended the first annual environmental education event at Rackham's Pond and Conservation Area. 99 students worked at 6 stations set up within the pond basin. They were each given a *Watershed Environmental Fun Day Passport* as a record their visit. Thanks to Ducks Unlimited, Fish & Wildlife Division of the PEI Environment, Energy and Forestry, Central Queens Wildlife Federation, and the Sierra Club.

MEMBERSHIP	
Individual or Family	is \$10.
Corporate or Supporting	is \$50.
Send to:	
<i>The Wheatley River Improvement Group, c/o Pierre-Yves Daoust, RR3, Hunter River, C0A 1N0.</i>	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
Telephone:	_____
e-mail:	_____
Would you like to receive e-mails about upcoming WRIG meetings?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	