



Photo by Kaye Edmonds

# LAURIER WOODS CONSERVATION AREA Newsletter

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## ***Note from the President...***

Such excitement! Laurier Woods has expanded by 100 acres – as of Jan. 8.

What many may look upon as some of the ripest and most interesting portions of our “preserve for future generations” has just been purchased by The Friends of Laurier Woods. This is a wide, central section running due south, contiguous with the already obtained area, and more or less parallel with the bypass.

Most would not have known that this had not already been controlled by the Friends, along with the Conservation Authority. It just fit in so perfectly with the other 140 acres previously acquired. And, some may have already walked through it (not knowing that they were actually “trespassing”).

But just this Fall it was put up for sale at a very good price, and the Board of Directors concluded very quickly that it must be obtained. “It was a no-brainer”.

Now we just must – pay for it! A campaign to do just that is being currently mounted. Led by that amazing councillor Chris Mayne, the campaign target is a

modest \$100,000.

And all those assisting with \$100 or more will receive a “stewardship” over a specific, identifiable “Laurier-acre”. For \$1,000.00 one can be recognized for 1 full acre (1/100 of the whole purchased area). You will receive certificates identifying a specific portion along with our appreciation.

If we can help obtain acres of Amazonian Rain Forest, as is often promoted, we surely can do likewise with lands in our own backyard – is the feeling.

And so we hope all readers of this timely newsletter will want to participate as fulsomely as possible. Your great grandchildren can even be able to identify your area of charitable gift, and be proud of their family’s involvement in retaining this jewel of land right in our city’s back-yard.

Contact any of the directors, or Chris himself – or check out the web page: [www.laurierwoods.com](http://www.laurierwoods.com).

You can continue to enjoy even more of this lovely treasure of Laurier Woods, so accessible and easy to visit. Such great news, eh!

## **WINTER 2011**

## ***Birding in Laurier Woods***

It was another great year for spring, summer and fall birding in Laurier Woods. As reported in the fall newsletter, 93 species were reported from April through October. Winter is naturally a quieter time with fewer migrants passing through than in the spring and fall. Each year the Ontario Field Ornithologists put out a winter finch forecast based on food availability in the boreal forests and our own transition zone between boreal and southern mixed forest areas. The forecast was low for finches in this area with the possible exception of some minor irruptions of Common Redpolls. So far, the forecasts have been pretty accurate, but you never know for certain. While in Laurier during these winter months, we should always be hopeful for sightings of Redpolls, Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, Evening and Pine Grosbeaks and maybe even a Barred Owl! Of course, we



Photo and story courtesy of Craig Hurst

should always enjoy encounters with our normal winter residents, the Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jays, Ruffed Grouse, Red and White-breasted Nuthatches and the ever gregarious Black-capped Chickadees! Enjoy!

## White versus Red Pine

Large quantities of natural Red Pine and White Pine were harvested in the early 1900's to meet Britain's growing demand for square timber. The Red Pine was harvested for poles, pilings and railroad ties. The wood had a more preferred appearance which made it a more valuable tree than the more extensively exported White Pine. When growing under natural conditions, the Red Pine reaches a height of 90 to 100 feet and gets its name from its reddish bark, which divides into plates as it matures. These trees can have a life span of about 350 years. The needles are 4 to 6 inches long and in bundles of two. The dark green needles are soft and flexible but is the only conifer whose needles will break evenly when bent sharply. The cone is egg shaped; 2 to 2 ¼ inches in length with smooth scales and without spines. The White Pine can reach a height of 80 to 110 feet making it the tallest eastern conifer. White Pines will commonly reach 200 years and may exceed 450 years. The bark of the White Pine darkens and thickens as the tree ages. The needles are 2" to 4" in length, soft, flexible, blue-green in color and found in bundles of five. The cones are long and slender reaching lengths of 3 to 10 inches with each scale bearing 2 winged seeds.



Photo by Kaye Edmonds

## Did you know?



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Ontario is home to approximately 24% of Canada's wetlands and 6% of the world's wetlands. Estimates of wetland extent in Ontario range from 24 million to 29 million hectares, or 22-27% of the area of the province. Most of these wetlands are found in northern Ontario. It is estimated that prior to European settlement, there were about two million hectares of wetlands in southern Ontario. By the early 1980s, about 68% of these southern wetlands had been destroyed. In parts of southwestern Ontario, over 90% of the area's original wetlands are gone. These rates of loss are among the highest recorded anywhere on Earth.

## “Laurier Woods is Growing!”

\$100,000 helps add 100 acres of conservation parkland in the heart of North Bay!

“If you share our appreciation for what has become North Bay's most enjoyed wetland area, please consider supporting our fundraising campaign and be part of conserving more of the Laurier Woods area to be protected and enjoyed by future generations.”- *Chris Mayne, Campaign Chair*



Redpoll - Photo by Craig Hurst

For information visit: [www.laurierwoods.com](http://www.laurierwoods.com)



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