



Come and visit North Bay's Winter Wonderland /

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### STUDENTS PLANT 4000 TREES AND SHRUBS IN LAURIER WOODS

A partnership between the Near North District School Board, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority and the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund provided a meaningful environmental education and stewardship opportunity for 75 students from Widdifield, West Ferris and Chippewa Secondary Schools. Twenty-five trees and 375 shrubs were planted along 47 metres of shoreline on the north shore of this provincially significant wetland. Species included red and silver maple, red and bur oak, ninebark, red twig dogwood, with dwarf birch, swamp rose and tamarack being planted close to the water's edge. The fall planting near the Brule Street entrance encompasses approximately 400 square meters. **Thanks for an outstanding contribution.**

## What is Happening in Laurier Woods?

We have had a busy summer in Laurier Woods, enjoying the varied bird species, animals and visitors to this amazing wetland park. There is a new picnic table in the parking lot, great for putting on shoes, stopping for a picnic or coffee or just taking a break surrounded by nature. The Marsh family has donated another picnic in memory of their mother Maureen. You will find this table underneath a stately pine directly across from the Haist platform on the other side of the beaver pond. We are grateful for these donations and for their installation and maintenance by the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority.

You might notice a couple of large signs reminding visitors to keep their dogs leashed at all times in the woods. We are aware of the problems for walkers, photographers and creature inhabitants of the woods presented by loose dogs. Although we are all dog lovers we appreciate that this is a conservation area and, therefore, represents a unique challenge regarding domestic animals.

The beaver have been busy interfering with the beaver baffle which is intended to control water levels in their domicile. Round one goes to the beaver and the baffle has been removed and will be remodeled and installed next spring.

After a successful spring and summer of themed walks our experts will be taking the winter off. These walks will resume in May as usual. However, this doesn't mean visitors need stay away from this wonderful natural park. Last year we saw snowshoe enthusiasts marking trail and there was often a well packed foot path for winter hikers, unless there had been a recent snowfall which did represent a challenge for a day or two. Many birds winter over, you will certainly see many animal tracks in the snow and the trees and foliage provide a great photo op when encrusted with ice.

The board of directors are regular attendees to collect garbage and make sure the trails are not blocked with fallen trees.

We have a home page and a Facebook page which are well maintained by Bill Hagborg and many photographers who generously share their pictures of Laurier Woods, in all its glory. So, if you are like to stay close to home in the colder months ahead, you can still stroll through the woods via this wonderful photography.

Thank you for your ongoing support and care of Laurier Woods and we hope to see you along the trails this winter.



### How do Beaver spend the long winter months?

Beaver spend the entire winter inside their lodges. You might have seen them gathering fresh branches during the fall before the freeze harvesting aspen, willow, alder and dogwood. They often poke these into the muddy pond bottom near their home for winter nutrition. In preparation for the cold Beaver put on body fat for sustenance and warmth. Their renowned tail is particularly designed to accumulate fat over the winter and decreases in size during the warm months. To keep in the heat, beaver pack mud over the lodge exterior, leaving only the peak uncoated to allow for ventilation. Their central chamber is made cozy with wood shaving and grass carpeting. Temperatures in beaver houses have been recorded around 32 degrees while outside temperatures range from 19 to minus 6. Lone beaver are at a lower risk of survival during harsh winters because they lack the warm body temperatures shared by a large family group. Interestingly, beaver have been known to share their abode with muskrat during cold winter months. They tolerate these freeloaders in exchange for the warmth of their body temperatures. If you are out in Laurier Woods on skis or snowshoes this winter stop and take a look at the main beaver lodge and think about the inhabitants luxuriating inside.