

It feels like Spring has finally decided to visit the woods.



**FLW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING April 20<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm Guest Speaker: Dr. Janet Gilbert, Founder & Executive Director, Invasive Phragmites Control Centre.** Individuals interested in attending the AGM **must be paid-in-full members** of the Friends of Laurier Woods prior to April 13th to receive an access link. Membership purchase is available for \$20.00/year/individual or \$30.00/year/family by going to [www.laurierwoods.com/beome-a-member](http://www.laurierwoods.com/beome-a-member). **DON'T MISS OUT**

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[www.laurierwoods.com](http://www.laurierwoods.com)

Friends of Laurier Woods on [Facebook](#) – over 1000 members & growing

[www.nbmca.on.ca](http://www.nbmca.on.ca) (our partner)

#### INVASIVE PLANTS

You no doubt have heard of the term “invasive species” and may have wondered what it refers to. When a plant or micro-organism is introduced to an environment outside its natural area it competes with the local flora for light and nutrients and can overrun them to become the dominant species in that area. These invasive plants can be spread or introduced in many ways, such as infested packaging material, seed dispersal, by the environment and human sources such as escaping from gardens. In 2015 the Ontario government introduced the Invasive Species Act in an effort to support the prevention, encourage early detection and response, and aid in the eradication of these species. This is a critical fight against a genuine threat to natural and sensitive areas, like Laurier Woods. The act gives the province the power to prohibit or restrict the purchase, sale, possession, and transportation of invasive species. This legislation helps to promote preventative action and compliance through inspection and enforcement measures. *Purple Loosestrife* and *Japanese Knotweed* are only two of the more than 20 Invasive plant species in Ontario. Join us to hear more on this topic at our AGM (see banner above).

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## The Importance of Wildlife Habitat

A **Wildlife habitat** is a place where a plant or animal makes its home. The concept of wildlife habitat varies according to the needs of each species. Elevations, vegetation & water sources across a landscape tend to increase its value as habitat for a variety of species.

The availability of **food** is critical in allowing a species to live, grow, reproduce, & survive. Low-quality food supplies or a lack of food can inhibit reproduction processes and weaken their ability to ward off disease, which can then make them vulnerable to a variety of other threats.

**Water** is an essential component of habitat. All wildlife species require some level of water consumption in order to survive and reproduce. In addition, bodies of water can be the specific places where birds, mammals, or other species locate the food that they need to consume. Water is also critical for regulating body temperature, metabolism, and digestion, and for facilitating the removal of metabolic wastes. Another key requirement of wildlife habitat is the existence of the necessary materials to create **shelter**. Cover is used by different species of wildlife for many purposes such as nesting, breeding, roosting, rearing young, escaping predators & stalking potential prey. Cover may also be used as thermal protection during extremely hot or cold periods. Similarly, plants can only survive under specific temperature, light, precipitation, wind & soil conditions.

Lastly, **space** is defined by the dimensions of height, depth & width within which a species can survive. The dimensions are predicated on the individual species' need to obtain life's necessities. As a rule, larger species require more space than smaller species.

***Laurier Woods is a valued habitat for a variety of plant and animal species. Respect their surroundings by keeping to the trails and keeping your dogs leashed.***

## Consider Giving Back to the Woods

The Friends of Laurier Woods has launched **Walk with Friends**, a \$30,000 fund raising campaign, to replace the two boardwalks that surround the main pond. These 20-year-old boardwalks have seen increased usage requiring additional safety considerations for the wildlife that depend on the protection of the area as habitat & visitors. The reconstruction will include new footings, wider decking with raised safety bumpers. Construction is planned to take place in the winter of 2023. To connect potential donors with the wildlife of Laurier Woods donations will be directed to one of six categories: Tamarack representing donations from \$1- \$99, Blanding's Turtle \$100 – 400; Pileated Woodpecker \$500 – 999; Pink Lady's Slipper \$1000 – 2999; White-Tailed Deer \$3000 – 4999; and North American Beaver \$5000 – or more. Those considering a donation can read more about the project and the donor species by following the link on the Friends of Laurier Woods website [www.laurierwoods.com](http://www.laurierwoods.com).

