

ELBOW LAKE UPDATE: LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

Summer 2015 Newsletter of the ELEEC

Manager's Message

I enter the summer operating season relaxed and refreshed, thanks to retired QUBS Assistant Manager turned volunteer, Floyd Connor, who kindly looked after ELEEC for a week while I took a much-needed break. Floyd is only one of many skilled volunteers that have helped out this spring; others lent their hands with maintenance tasks, shared natural history knowledge and expertise, and delivered educational programs to high school groups and the public. A heartfelt thanks to all of you!



*Cecropia
moth*



Summer Outreach Programs

This summer, we encourage you to visit the ELEEC by offering our public outreach programs for *free!*

Visit our website for details or to register: elbowlakecentre.ca

- ❖ Kicking off the summer on **Sunday, July 5, Reptiles at Risk** presents a family event – featuring live guests! – at 10 am to introduce children to Ontario's reptile diversity, while an Advanced Workshop from 1-3 pm offers hands-on training in reptile conservation and education for adults.
- ❖ Join us on **Tuesday, July 14** for a dynamic evening of entertaining stories by **Dispatches from the Field** on the trials and tribulations of working in and with nature. Families welcome! Dress for the outdoors, as the evening will wrap up with a short night hike.
- ❖ Fingers crossed for clear skies during the Perseid meteor shower on **Wednesday, August 12**, as you **Stay Under the Shooting Stars** to learn the secrets of the night sky. Hear the legends behind the constellations and mind-boggling facts about the universe, then venture outdoors to count meteors and gaze through a telescope at the planets.
- ❖ Private landowners and engaged citizens won't want to miss the **Invasive Species** community seminar on **Saturday, August 29**. Experts from MNRF, OFAH, Queen's University, DU and NCC explain their roles in preventing, detecting and combatting the alien invasive species that are harming our native ecosystems. Emphasizing species local to the Frontenac Arch, the indoor presentations will be followed by an outdoor field tour demonstrating management actions.

Stay overnight as part of your ELEEC visit! Discounted cabin rates are offered to program participants.

Follow us on Twitter @ElbowLakeEEC

Trail Guide App Update

The *Elbow Lake Trail Guide* app was released in late May, receiving much interest and positive feedback. David returns this summer to fine tune the app, adding more stations and activating the trail map. In the field, station signs will soon be mounted and a thorough trail sweep is planned. Download this free app via the ELEEC website, and check it out for yourself!

A Successful Open House

Sunny skies prevailed for the Elbow Lake Open House on May 24, drawing a large crowd to celebrate recent accomplishments from our Educational Trails project.



Visitors gather on the new footbridge at the beaver pond.

Guests toured the facility, registered for Eco-Adventure Camp, learned about limnology, and hiked the trails to test the new *Trail Guide* app.



Daphnia, copepods and algae, oh my!

Next steps for the Educational Trails project include updates to the app, two or three new bridges on the Orange Trail, and a more accessible path to the footbridge, where an educational pond dipping station is also planned.

Friends of Elbow Lake

As you can imagine, a lot of work goes into keeping the ELEEC operating and viable – certainly much more than its sole dedicated staff can manage alone.

Luckily, Elbow Lake has many supporters who are willing to lend a hand; unfortunately, too many offers aren't acted upon – not because we don't need or want your help, but because it takes time to orient, train and support volunteers... something the ELEEC Manager can't reliably offer on her unpredictable schedule.

The number one reason people don't volunteer is because nobody has invited them.

Recognizing this constraint, keen volunteers have proposed an informal Friends group, where experienced ELEEC volunteers coordinate, lead and engage new volunteers in carrying out activities and tasks at Elbow Lake.

This fall, we will assemble a contact list of volunteers, noting your interests in outreach, stewardship (trails and maintenance), and bio-monitoring. Next, leaders will be assigned to act as points of contact for volunteer groups tackling specific projects together as a team.

We invite you to become involved at your ELEEC!

You Asked... We Answer:

Q: Can families and private groups stay overnight at ELEEC for a recreational visit?

A: The ELEEC's mandate focusses on teaching, learning and biodiversity conservation, and thus our preference toward booking groups with an academic or environmental connection. But, we agree that Elbow Lake is a wonderful place to bring family and round up with friends to relax and enjoy nature. For this reason, we open up the facility to participants in our public outreach events, inviting you to rent a cabin, spend the night, and enjoy a leisurely next-day morning at ELEEC.