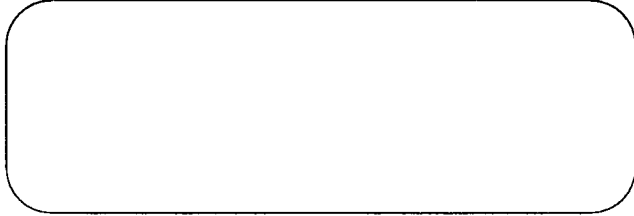


Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 51518
2060 Queen Street East
Toronto, Ontario M4E 3V7

Inside:
SPIT POSTER
- It's available!
- It's gorgeous!
- Get yours free!

Telephone: 699-3143



SPIT WILDLIFE HOTLINE HAPPY 1st BIRTHDAY!

Inaugurated by the MTRCA last year, the Tommy Thompson Park Wildlife Hotline has been a great success.

You can access the Hotline 24 hours a day, by dialing 661-6600 and entering extension 233 on a touchtone phone. The recorded message, updated weekly by 12 noon on Thursdays, provides current information about sightings, natural features and special activities.

You can also record your own wildlife sightings by pressing 5 at any time during the recorded information playback. This is very useful to the MTRCA to learn more about numbers, behaviour and critical habitat usage on the Spit. Be as specific as possible, including the date, time and exact location of your observations as well as your name and phone number in case you need to be contacted for clarification.

NEWSLETTER

August 1996

AS AN EDITORIAL

We are very pleased with the new Spit poster and hope it helps more people discover the Spit. Congratulations to the MTRCA for an excellent initiative

Another reason for rejoicing is that the concept of Public Urban Wilderness, which was originated by Friends of the Spit nearly a decade ago — and which received quite a few negative comments from some quarters, has now been officially recognized.

Bravo!

BUTTERFLY COUNT

The Second Annual Toronto Centre Butterfly Count took place on July 13. One of the routes surveyed included the Spit.

Only 7 species were tallied at the Spit, compared with 20 in 1995 (July 15). The general feeling is that because of the cold, late, and wet Spring and early Summer, the butterflies were "late". It is further theorized that because the Spit is surrounded by the cold waters of Lake Ontario, the air temperatures are below that of the mainland and hence would retard the cycle of the butterflies. This theory may have some credence since the overall count within the 15-mile circle was virtually the same in species (41 vs. 42 in 1995), but triple in number of individuals.

BIRD SIGHTINGS WANTED

The Spit Bird Checklist is being updated.

We need your help to make the upcoming new list as complete as possible. Please mail us your rare sightings. Be specific, and include your name and phone number in case clarification is needed.

NEW SPIT POSTER IT'S A BEAUTY!!!

Truly a cooperative effort, the Spit poster was designed and produced by the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA), with significant input from Friends of the Spit. And it is extremely attractive...

The large poster (22 x 32 inches) features an aerial photo of the Spit as the centerpiece, surrounded by photos of some of the wildlife species that live on the Spit, including a rare picture of a Spit coyote.

The reverse carries an interesting description of the Spit habitats and of its contribution to the greenspace of the Lake Ontario Watershed. The back of each photo has a description of the species, contributed by experts in each field. These photos can be cut out to make a pocket guide (even the outline of punch holes are included — clever, eh!), leaving the aerial photograph and title to be displayed. Also featured are notes about Friends of the Spit and our mandate and achievements.

A great educational tool in addition to its aesthetic beauty, the new poster will enhance your home, office, classroom, scout/guide den, community centre, church hall... also makes a nice gift to introduce your friends to the Spit.

Tommy Thompson Park
Public Urban Wilderness • Toronto, Ontario

This is the bold title of the new poster. We regret that our present reproduction capabilities do not permit us to show the spectacular aerial photo of the Spit and the wildlife pictures that make the poster unique.

Kudos to the MTRCA for a great job... and for recognizing the Public Urban Wilderness concept!

HOW TO GET POSTERS

Posters are now available at the Spit from the MTRCA van, and when van service stops, at the trailer at the first gate. This is the best way to obtain posters, as they can be rolled it up to avoid creases (bring elastic bands).

They are also available from the MTRCA office, at 5 Shoreham Drive, Downsview (across the street from Black Creek Pioneer Village).

If you are unable to get to the Spit, due to disability or to living outside of Metro, send us your name and address clearly printed on a sheet of paper (this will be your label) and a loose stamp. We will mail you a **folded poster** (ironing with a slightly warm iron will make the creases less noticeable).

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 1996

Memberships for 1996 are now due and still remain at :

\$5.00 — Individual

\$8.00 — Household/group

Please fill this form and mail it with your cheque to:

Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 51518, 2060 Queen St. East

Toronto, ON M4E 3V7

IMPORTANT NOTE: Friends of the Spit does not sell or trade its mailing lists.

Yes, I want to renew my membership in Friends of the Spit

Name _____ Phone _____

Check your label...

John and Jane Eider
123 Teal Street
Toronto, ON M4M 4M4

REN/96

You will see "REN/96" when your membership is up-to-date for 1996. Please inform us when you change your address.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS. Please indicate address/name corrections on the label on the reverse.



FOLLOW-UP ON THE MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Here are the answers to some questions asked at the April 23 meeting that we feel would be of interest to many of our members.

Q. Will there be clearer signage regarding no car entry, dogs, etc.?

A. The MTRCA informed us that the signs at the Spit were put up in 1995 and the barricade system at the base was new this year. They plan no additional signage at present, waiting to see how the system operates. The MTRCA noted that there are always people who disobey the "No Dogs" signs. This is a problem at all conservation areas where pets are prohibited.

Q. Has the quality of the fill dumped at the Spit improved?

A. Scott Jarvie of the MTRCA noted that all fill except brick and clean rubble is governed by the Improved Lakefill Quality Control Program (1989). All fill is tested at source. Samples are sent to the lab where the material must meet the Ministry of Environment guidelines for "open water disposal", which are the most stringent. Approval must be given by the lab before the material is brought to the Spit. Trucks are governed by a ticket system at the barricade. Random inspections are made. So far, cooperation from truckers has been nearly 100%. According to Mr. Jarvie, truckers caught bringing unapproved fill are banned from the Spit. "The economics police it, as it is very expensive to dump elsewhere," he said.

Q. How many truckloads a day are dumped?

A. Less than 100 per day at present (vs the "heydays" when they exceeded 1,200!). The Greenwood site (to become a housing development) might be siphoning off fill, speculated Mr. Jarvie. In 1993, the THC negotiated a ten-year lease renewal for dumping (to 2003).

Q. What is the quality of the dredgeate at Cell 1 (the first pond on the lake side)?

A. Better than expected, according to Mr. Jarvie. For the most part, the dredgeate meets or exceeds the "decommissioning guidelines for parkland residential". Extensive monitoring has been performed, to ensure that contaminants do not mix into the open water through the cut at the bridge. Mr. Jarvie reports that so far no mixing has been detected. No monitoring for leaching out through the embayments (city side) has been performed as yet.

Q. When will the Spit be open to the public during the week?

A. This is something we would all like to see, and as soon as possible! However, don't plan your vacations around it yet. The THC is evidently loath to give up even one day of dumping as they are strapped for cash and dumping brings in a tidy sum. On the other hand, the MTRCA and the THC are negotiating an agreement that would allow bringing students on weekdays to areas of the Spit where dumping is not occurring, to do plantings, etc.

...by the way, the beige raincoat found at the membership meeting and his beaming owner were reunited shortly after the item appeared in our previous newsletter.

Toronto Island Airport Expansion CITY COUNCIL SLEEPS WHILE THC OPENS DOOR FOR JETS

The Tripartite Agreement between the Toronto Harbour Commission (THC), Transport Canada and the City of Toronto prohibits commercial jets at the Island airport. The THC has initiated construction of a 600 foot extension to the main runway.

Airport officials claim the runway is not being extended, they are merely paving the existing 300-foot grass and gravel "stopways" at both ends of the runway. However, according to the airport's own environmental assessment of the extension (which was completed in April but never publicly released), these stopways will enable a plane to start its take-off run 300 feet farther than at present.

According to Mary Hay, of the Toronto Waterfront Coalition (of which Friends of the Spit is a founding member), jet manufacturers and Air Ontario have stated previously that the existing runways are not long enough to accommodate jets under all conditions. The paved stopways increase the runway length by 15 percent, said Hay, which provides the airlines the margin of comfort needed to commence jet operations.

Neither Mayor Barbara Hall nor any other member of City Council have challenged the legality of the construction. As you know, Mayor Hall cast the deciding vote in favour of a fixed link to the airport, a move Friends of the Spit deeply deplore.

The Toronto Waterfront Coalition needs help in the fight for our quality of life on the waterfront. They can be reached at 203-0894.

Integrated Shoreline Management Plan

WHO'S TRYING TO REINVENT THE SPIT?

Some "ideas" about the Spit spawned by this shoreline planning exercise are quite disturbing.

We agree with integrated shoreline management — we called for it before bureaucrats even thought of it. Our

misgivings started when at a bizarre seminar people were asked to "dream" the Spit (and other areas). The resulting strategies included rewording the Master Plan (which is already being implemented!) and floated the strange idea of a water taxi between the Islands and the lighthouse! We wrote our comments to the MTRCA. "The Spit Master Plan involved much thought, time and energy. It should not be preempted by the ISMP. Rather, it is for the ISMP to incorporate the Master Plan into the overall implementation.", we said.