



Staff use their first aid skills to save an accident "victim."

## First Aid and CPR Training

This year over 50 UTRCA staff participated in our annual First Aid and CPR training. Staff learned how to prevent injuries and to think, react and improvise in emergency situations from a Red Cross trainer.

First Aid and CPR training is important in the workplace but, unlike a lot of other types of safety training, these skills and knowledge are also applicable to an individual's daily life. The UTRCA encourages staff to participate in First Aid and CPR, empowering them to act on, prevent and manage life's emergencies.

Practical hands-on components are supported by a variety of training materials such as mannequins for practicing CPR, AED trainers, bandages, splinting materials, barrier devices, first aid kits, auto-injector trainers and inhalers.

Contact: Cari Ramsey, Health & Safety Specialist



Staff practice CPR on infant mannequins.

## Keeping Busy at Fanshawe CA

### *The Past: Snow Plowing and Removal*

After an extremely busy winter, we are hoping that the snow is a thing of the past! Staff at Fanshawe CA, at times with the help of Pittock CA staff, moved a lot of snow this past winter. Beginning back in December with "Snowmageddon," wave after wave of snow had staff pushing it, lifting it and blowing it, again and again, and then throwing down the sand to make our walks and roads safe. When was the last time we had a winter at the UTRCA with four snow days? Now the snow plowing and removal equipment can (hopefully!) take a well deserved rest.



CA staff put in long days (and nights) keeping Fanshawe's roads clear.

### *The Present: Kinsmen Sugar Bush*

Longer days and warmer weather mean tapped trees and flowing sap. The Kinsmen Sugar Bush is open to the public every March weekend and all of March Break. There are guided tours, horse drawn wagon rides, demonstrations and displays. Bring your appetite and fill up at the Pancake Pavilion, then visit the sugar shack to purchase local maple syrup products. For more information, go to [www.kinsmenfanshawesugarbush.com](http://www.kinsmenfanshawesugarbush.com).



A drop in the bucket: sap drips from a spile drilled into a sugar maple.

### *The Future: Canoe Rentals*

“Do you rent canoes?” was the question. New for 2011, the answer is “Yes!” Starting this spring, we will have canoes available for patrons to rent for half or full days. Rentals will be available from the campground Registration Office, and include the canoe, paddles, lifejackets and a safety kit. For more information, go to [www.fanshaweconservationarea.ca](http://www.fanshaweconservationarea.ca).

Contact: Steve Musclow, Superintendent, Fanshawe CA

## New Information on Recommended Plants, Trees & Shrubs on Website

In the summer of 2010, we posted a list of recommended native trees, shrubs and vines on our website. The list helps community groups, consultants and landowners choose the most appropriate locally native species to plant in their restoration projects and gardens.

Due to popular demand, staff have expanded this information into a series of lists/factsheets including:

- Recommended native wildflowers and grasses for watershed naturalization projects
- Invasive non-native plants to avoid
- Tallgrass prairie plants native to Middlesex, Oxford and Perth Counties
- Southwestern Ontario nurseries that sell native plants



This aster is one of the many beautiful native species that can enhance a naturalization project or garden.

UTRCA staff (Cathy Quinlan, Karen Pugh and Brenda Gallagher) researched the species and their suitability for planting in the Upper Thames River watershed as well as their availability at native plant nurseries.

The print-ready pdf tables will help spread the word about the importance of choosing the right plants for our environment. To see the information, go to [www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca) and look under “Natural Areas, Plants and Animals.”

Contact: Cathy Quinlan, Terrestrial Biologist



These dead fish were victims of winterkill.

## Fish Survival: Winterkill

The biggest threat to the winter survival of fish is the loss of oxygen from the water. This usually happens in shallow lakes or in areas with little inflow or outflow of water and a lot of dead plant material. Decaying plants use up the oxygen in the water. If there is thick snow on top of the ice covering a body of water, very little light gets through the ice and the living plants in the water won't be able to make more oxygen. When this happens, a large die-off of fish may result, called a winterkill. Usually, the winterkill goes unnoticed until the carcasses appear after the spring thaw.

If you notice a large number of dead or dying fish, contact the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) dedicated toll free phone number to report a fish die-off: 1-866-929-0994, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. There is more information on the MNR website under How to Report a Fish Die-Off.

If you find dead fish and are concerned that they did not die from natural causes, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has a toll free number to report spills and environmental emergencies: 1-800-268-6060, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This number is also listed under Emergency and Important Numbers at the front of your phone book as Environmental Spill Reporting. More information is available on the MOE website under Emergency Management – Spills Action Centre.

If you are uncomfortable with or unable to contact the MNR or MOE directly, you can contact UTRCA at 519-451-2800 extension 510 to notify us of the situation. We can file a anonymous report on your behalf; however, we will need to confirm information prior to doing so.

Contact: John Schwindt, Aquatic Biologist, or Cathy Reeves, Aquatic Biology Technician

### *Reporting a Violation*

Every person in Ontario can help protect natural resources. If you suspect or observe illegal activity, please contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) TIPS line at 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information go to: [www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Enforcement/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02\\_163377.html](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Enforcement/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_163377.html)



Dozens of seasonal staff are hired annually to help operate Fanshawe, Pittock and Wildwood Conservation Areas.

## Hiring and Interviews

Every year, Fanshawe, Wildwood and Pittock Conservation Areas (CAs) employ over 50 seasonal staff. These people fill many important roles at each Conservation Area, such as maintaining facilities, providing great customer service, designing and running visitor programs, and enforcing UTRCA rules and regulations.

Together, these staff help us provide safe, well maintained, beautiful natural areas for our visitors to enjoy. They also create a positive image of the CAs and the UTRCA as a whole.

Recently, the Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents at the three CAs, along with Human Resources staff, have been busy conducting seasonal staff interviews. A total of 61 employees will be hired for the 2011 season.

The seasonal staff that we hire become the faces of the CAs and, to many in the community, of the UTRCA overall. In order to select the best employees for each job, the Superintendents and Human Resources staff sort through more than 500 applicants and conduct approximately 120 interviews over the course of four weeks. Needless to say, this is a challenging and very time consuming process but it is critical to the operations and image of the CAs.

*Contact: Ryan Datema, Superintendent, Pittock CA*

## Ingersoll Forestry Information Workshop

On March 1, the UTRCA partnered with Trees Ontario, the Ontario Forestry Association, Stewardship Oxford and the Ministry of Natural Resources to host a forestry information workshop for landowners.

The evening workshop was held at the CAW - Local 88 Hall in Ingersoll. It was very well attended with 85 landowners participating. This is an annual event that we move around the watershed.

Several topics were presented at the workshop:

- Greg Greer, field advisor for Trees Ontario, outlined funding opportunities for landowners interested in planting two or more hectares through the Trees Ontario 50 Million Trees Program.
- Will Martin from the Ontario Forestry Association explained the land tax incentive for landowners through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.
- Dave Depuydt from Stewardship Oxford spoke on the experimental direct seeding of tree seed to establish forest cover.



Every year, watershed landowners plant thousands of trees through the UTRCA's private lands tree planting program.

- Eric Cleland Forest Health Technician with the Ministry of Natural Resources addressed the major insect and disease problems affecting trees in 2010.
- Brenda Gallagher from UTRCA highlighted programs available to landowners who are interested in planting trees.

The workshop was very well received with many positive comments and discussion after the meeting. In 2012, the UTRCA hopes to host this meeting in Perth County, possibly Mitchell.

*Contact: John Enright, Forester*

## Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), assisted by Conservation Ontario and various Conservation Authorities (CAs), hosted a number of training sessions this past fall and winter along with the first Partnership Workshop since April 2008. These activities are in support of existing fish habitat agreements between DFO and CAs.

Staff who have some responsibility for project review and planning in or around water were invited to the training sessions. The intent of the sessions was to:

- Provide a mechanism for communication between agencies, inform and educate staff and provide internal direction and support for implementation
- Reinforce federal, provincial and municipal legislative roles and responsibilities for fish, fish habitat and associated water quality protection and conservation
- Inform and provide clarity to staff regarding the respective agency roles and responsibilities for fish, fish habitat and associated water quality protection and conservation
- Enhance working arrangements among agencies and identify more efficient and effective approaches at the field level in Ontario
- Enhance delivery and agency working relationships and improve responses and decision making

The UTRCA sent one staff member to a Natural Channel Design/Stream Restoration (NCD) course in December 2010, and two staff to an Instream Flow Needs (IFN) introductory course in January 2011.

The NCD course provided an introduction to the characteristics of natural channels that are important for productive fish habitat, basic geomorphic concepts, approaches for designing fish habitat into channels and methods for creating fish habitat. Upon completion, the participant has sufficient information to assess the suitability of a channel design for creating productive fish habitat.

The IFN Introduction provided instream flow assessment methodologies for fish habitat through hydraulic, hydrological, hydrogeological modelling and fish habitat characteristics. The participants were shown how to assess the suitability of various IFN methods to maintain productive fish habitat for a variety of development proposals.

Two staff members involved in the implementation of fish habitat review attended a two day partnership workshop in February 2011. The workshop was an opportunity for staff to share challenges and successes related to fish habitat and our partnership arrangements in Ontario. The focus was on updating staff on new initiatives of the partner agencies, discussions of case studies, implementation of protocols and other fish habitat topics in order to ensure more productive partnerships through relevant and necessary topics.

The training courses and partnership workshop hosted by DFO provide invaluable opportunities to learn and share experiences with agency and CA staff.

*Contact: Cathy Reeves, Aquatic Biology Technician, Karen Winfield, Land Use Regulations Officer, and Cari Ramsey, Environmental Regulations Technician*

## On the Agenda

The following items will be presented at the UTRCA Board of Directors meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011. Board meeting minutes are posted at [www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca); click on "Downloads."

- Fanshawe Pioneer Village Report
- Flood Control Presentation
- Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Report
- 2011 Capital Projects - Summary and Recommendations
- Building Committee Update
- Board Governance Workshop, June 2, 2011
- Proposal Award, 2011 Fanshawe Dam Road Reconstruction: Design, Tender, and Construction Administration

*Contact: Susan Shivas, Executive Assistant*

## Upcoming Events

- April 6-7: Huron Perth Agriculture and Water Festival, Seaforth
- April 7: Thames Talbot Land Trust Annual Meeting, London
- April 16: Thames River Clean Up and London Clean & Green
- April 17: Earth Day London
- April 22: Fanshawe, Wildwood, and Pittock CAs open for the season
- April: Greening our Community, White Oaks Mall, London
- April 30: Stoney Creek Community Day, London
- April: Upper Avon River Conservation Club Planting Day, Stratford
- April-May: Community Forestry Program

*Contact: Steve Sauder, Marketing Specialist*