

# FINAL REPORT FROM HANTS WEST WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION

## Goals & Objectives:

1. First & foremost - to provide a fun, hands on nature related outdoor experience to youth.
2. To encourage growth and mast production on target trees & shrubs.
3. To provide nesting & shelter structures for birds and small mammals.
4. To encourage the participants (youth, teachers, chaperones) to return to the area.

## Outline of work completed:

Part 1: Avonview High School students (Grade 10 Options & Opportunities Class) were brought to the area several times and participated in a start up seminar on goals of the project. They were also provided with safety talks (before each day in the woods) re the work they would be doing, use of hand tools, etc. They cleared brush & competing vegetation from around target trees/shrubs, fertilized/limed some of the target trees/shrubs and performed some pruning.

Part 2 of this project included elementary school student (from Falmouth District, Windsor Elementary, Windsor Forks, Newport, Brooklyn Schools) participating in a brief seminar on tree cavity users, the food chain and the importance of dying/dead trees. Each class was broken up into groups and each group constructed a nesting box. The building of nesting boxes, (from pre-cut lumber) and placing them throughout the area combined with a nature walk/talk was included with each class plus a hot dog lunch was provided.

## Summary/Results:

The high school students learned a little about bio-diversity, nature in general, working together as a group and some specifics on the local wildlife and habitat. Their teacher has committed to returning, with his next year's class, to continue with this program.

The elementary school students experienced a fun, hands on field day with the emphasis on enjoying nature. One class, was especially excited during their nature walk, when they discovered a nest of baby flying squirrels in one of the previous years' nesting boxes located in this area.

The target trees/shrubs are thriving - there were more blossoms/mast setting this year than any years previous. Wildlife sightings and activity are on the increase as many people, including annual birdwatchers, have commented on the increase.

Feedback from teachers, chaperones and parents continues to be very positive and they encourage us to continue with this initiative.

Continued use in this area, by the public and students returning with their families, is quite evident by the cars parked in the driveway and the many positive comments we receive from people in the community.

Hants West Wildlife is dedicated to continue to provide positive nature related outdoor experiences for youth into the future and whole heartedly thanks the NS Wildlife Habitat Fund for approving our participation in the Fund, to assist us in achieving this goal.