

blocks and areas where over-utilization by park visitors has resulted in vegetation damage.

You will see these locations in High Bluff campground, Day Use, and along Paxton Blvd (west of the Jobes' Woods Trail parking lot).

BRUSHPILES

Mature forest environments are more than just trees - structural elements include fallen logs and brushpiles (collectively known as 'coarse woody debris').

It is in coarse woody debris that creatures such as salamanders, snakes, rabbits, chipmunks etc. make their homes. Many tree species also require logs and stumps to serve as seedbeds for their seedlings.



In restoration areas Park Staff have been laying woody debris collected from trees fallen on roadways etc. to 'jump-start' this process. To the untrained eye these coarse woody debris areas may look like dump-sites but our vegetation thrives in diversity, and certain 'messiness'.

Pristine mowed fields and orderly plantations do not offer a chance for tree youngsters to grow to provide habitat for wildlife.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Through a long partnership with the Shell Environmental Fund we have provided a great deal of nature interpretation Presqu'ile Park: bird sighting stations, winter bird feeders, waterfowl



programs, marsh interpretation, and now the Forest Regeneration Program.

Look for the interpretive signs and flagging tape on our trees throughout the Park.

We are always happy to have more volunteer effort in this year-round project: collecting, growing and planting.

Please contact the Biodiversity Specialist in the Park Office for further information.

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Presqu'ile



Presqu'ile Park's Forest Regeneration Project

Let's renew!

LET'S RENEW ...

Whether one walks the Fingers, Jobses' Woods Trail or the Newcastle Trail, enjoys the Campgrounds or looks for deer near the Calf Pasture, Presqu'ile Park has a *lot* of trees – in fact, 45 species at last count (and this does not include shrubby trees like the mountain maple). We can boast Ontario's largest striped maple.

Trees shade us, retain soil and moisture, nurse young plants, shelter deer, provide homes to birds and mammals alike, and soak up poisonous carbon dioxide.

Trees and other plants begin our food chain: they convert sunlight into edible leaves and bark, and return sugars to sap buckets and the soil with its waiting symbiotic mushrooms. Tree seeds, fruits, and nuts feed families of mammals, insects, and birds.

Additionally trees condition and cool soil, and provide human-scaled resources.

As with much of southern Ontario, Presqu'ile Park supported a much more dense forest two centuries ago than it does now. Clearing for farming, cutting for building, firewood or furniture, and natural reductions through wind, heat, and insect infestations, all of these have reduced our green giants.

With a few exceptions all the wood you see in the Park is second growth. Most of the oldest trees now lie on the forest floor, returning their nutrients to the soil as they decompose. While trees should succeed each other, sometimes we clear the land too fast and prevent the growth of new young trees to replace the trees that die.

No wonder there have been periodic efforts at reforestation, as one can see with the 1920s Scots and Norway pine plantations.

We have now initiated a forest regeneration project throughout the Park. You are invited to visit the different stages of our project.

PRESQU'ILE'S FOREST REGENERATION PROJECT

Our Forest Restoration Project is designed to enhance the natural environment of Presqu'ile Provincial Park. Like much of the southern Ontario



landscape many areas of Presqu'ile Provincial Park are former farmland. These areas are slowly reverting into the forested habitat that would have originally been found on these areas. Heavy deer browsing in past years has reduced the natural growth of seedlings.

The Presqu'ile Habitat Restoration Project is designed to accelerate this process so that the benefits of a forested landscape will be achieved in the earliest possible timeframe.

Our project, begun in 1998, has five different stages: **seed collection, greenhouse program, nursery beds, field planting of stock, and brushpiles.**

SEED COLLECTION

Since 1998, volunteers have annually collected seeds from trees growing within the Park to ensure appropriate genetic material. Each fall, some more than others, bags of seeds are gathered and shipped to the Ontario Seed Bank for storage and later use.



GREENHOUSE PROGRAM

Some of the seeds we collect are stratified and germinated at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Lindsay during the late winter. In the spring, the seedlings are transferred to the small scale in-Park nursery for a period of greenhouse growth before planting into outdoor beds.

Here in the Park's greenhouse (built and maintained by volunteers, student and youth groups) we use hydro beds and plastic cover to ensure appropriate moisture, temperature, and light conditions.

NURSERY BEDS

Scouts and students assist in planting these seedlings in outdoor hardening beds. These beds can be seen at the entrance to High Bluff campground. After several years of growth, saplings are ready for planting in the Park.

This tree nursery allows greenhouse seedlings to be grown into saplings before being planted out into areas of the Park where aged trees have blown down or deer browsing has reduced the density of young vegetation.

Some of the species you see are white and yellow birch, American elm, white pine, red oak, white cedar, eastern hemlock, and white spruce. All these trees are native to Presqu'ile Park.

FIELD PLANTING OF STOCK

Starting in 2005, we had our first year of substantial tree-planting at Presqu'ile. Areas ear-marked for planting include locations where neighbouring blocks of woodland can be connected to create large forest

