

Carlington Hampton News

December 2024



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Pictured: As many of the buckthorn volunteers as we could get for group photo day! Photo N. Lee

Buckthorn Controls & Monitoring

The Buckthorn Slayers of Carlington continued to take out this invasive shrub into late October, when we all said “Enough!”

We also had several large mounds of cut buckthorn to deal with, so in November, the National Capital Commission came in and chipped it all up for us. Many thanks! The woodchips were used primarily to suppress the buckthorn growth at the fence line, and in some treatment areas.

Treatment areas are staked out and differentiated by colour. Beginning in the spring of 2025, volunteers will take photos of the staked-out areas to monitor how much regrowth appears depending on the control used, e.g., woodchips, woodchips + seed, etc.



We were thrilled to meet a couple of local scientists earlier this year who have done a lot of this type of invasive work before. Ravi, pictured above with Nora Lee, helped us set up a system to monitor different types of buckthorn control in 2025.



Aerial of treatment areas. Control area where no intervention has been taken is in orange.



The Hampton Trail System

Soil compaction in the south Hampton Park Woods has damaged trees and plants, and is preventing new trees and plants from growing. In the coming years, native species will be added to the Woods to make it more resilient to future population growth and climate impacts. Areas that can be blocked off from park traffic and left undisturbed will also have a greater chance to naturally regenerate.



To prevent further damage, please:

- ♥ Stay on the trail and do not make new ones. Look for the red markers to guide you.
- ♥ Keep dogs on leash, do not let them go off the trail, or dig in the soil.
- ♥ Do not cycle inside the Woods. Use the multi-use and gravel paths that ring the Woods.
- ♥ Leave all branches and other natural debris on the ground for food and habitat for wildlife, and for soil restoration.



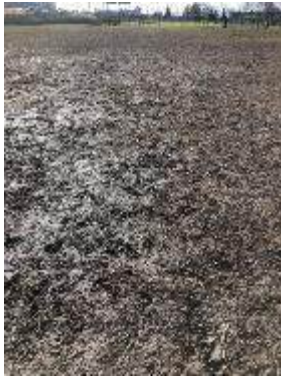
Improving the Hampton Dog Park



When dog owners search for an off-leash dog park in Ottawa they are often drawn to Hampton Dog Park, one of the largest enclosed dog parks in the city. When they get there, however, they often find a dirty and dangerous field of puddles and mud.



Article and photos by
Karen Blain



The dog park surface collects meltwater and rainwater without absorbing it, and the impermeable clay soil is at a lower level than most of the surrounding areas. Water stands for days and, in the spring, for months – and that breeds bacteria and parasites. In the summer the lack of shade creates relentless sun exposure that is also unsafe for dogs.



But there are simple solutions. Dog owners are banding together to request small investments to dramatically increase the dog park's usability. They are appealing to the Kitchissippi Ward Councilor to add a graded layer of topsoil and native groundcover to absorb water, and direct run-off to the drainage ditches. They are also asking for native, shade-giving trees that thrive in clay. ***Their proposal flags the importance of respecting the Hampton Park Woods ecosystem***, and of not driving dog owners into the Woods off-leash.



If you would like this win-win initiative to become a reality, please contact your City Councilor to make known your support for making Hampton Dog Park fully usable.

Project Updates

The **Alan Sunter Memorial** planting went ahead in early October and many of Alan's friends and neighbours came out to celebrate the opening with the family. A dedicated team kept the shrubs and trees well watered throughout the fall. To add to the project, a new fence may be put in above the memorial in 2025 to replace the current orange snow fencing.

The Friends of Hampton Park also removed a small area of buckthorn from near the meadow in early October. Thanks to a generous donation from the **Elmdale School Council**, we purchased shrubs and a red oak to plant in its place, and overseeded the area with native wildflowers and grasses. Additional buckthorn removal will likely be done in 2025, depending on resources.



Nepean High School students gathered native wildflower seeds in the fall, including Joe Pye weed, pictured here. They'll start growing them later this winter for planting in spring. To date, Nepean students have grown about 1,000 plants for us.

News

Long suspected to be in the Hampton Woods, **beech leaf disease** has now been confirmed. Nepean students found the first tangible evidence in the fall of 2024. The disease is caused by an invasive nematode, which feeds on the leaf tissue, ultimately killing the tree. For more information www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-pathogens/beech-leaf-disease/



Hampton Park's first **Leash Awareness Day** was held December 5 and, of course, it just had to be the same day as the first big snowfall of the year! Thanks to our volunteers, our fabulous doggy ambassadors, City of Ottawa Bylaw and the National Capital Commission for working with us to raise awareness of the safety, social, and environmental reasons to keep dogs on leash in all areas except the fenced-in Hampton Dog Park.



A big shout out to the small team who went after DSV – **dog-strangling vine** – this summer and fall in the Carlington west woods. They were dogged in their efforts and bag after bag was seen being hauled out for “solarization” (baking in the sun before disposal). DSV mimics common milkweed so it fools Monarch butterflies into laying its eggs on it; when the caterpillar emerges, it has nothing to eat. The less there is, the better chance our Monarchs have!



Happy New Year!



Top: Inky caps, Hampton **Middle:** Hairy woodpecker feeding its young in the Carlington Woods **Right:** Sunset at the Staircase Garden, Carlington. **Left:** Mosses of the Carlington Woods

Local contacts & resources

CarlingtonHampton@gmail.com

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@friendsofcarlingtonhampton>

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Friends of Hampton Park

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