

In 2016, Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) received funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Sustain Our Great Lakes) to enhance the provincially significant wetland beside the Lower Spencer Creek trail. In early spring of 2016, HCA created 3 turtle nesting beds along Lower Spencer Creek trail to increase the available and suitable turtle nesting habitat.

The turtle species that live in the Cootes Paradise wetland prefer sandy/gravelly soil in open sunny areas for nesting. As this habitat is not always available, turtles in the area often nest along banks with compact soil and dense vegetation. The new nesting beds provide more suitable habitat and are located near to known turtle nesting sites to encourage turtles to access the new beds.

Monitoring during nesting season showed turtles had used the beds for nesting. Ongoing monitoring will continue to document the success of nesting beds and local turtle populations.

Benefits of Nesting Beds

When nesting sites are not available near the wetland, turtles may travel farther to find suitable areas or nest in less ideal locations like roadsides. Turtles travelling over land sometimes cross Cootes Drive or Olympic Drive which divide the wetland. Road mortality is one of the greatest threats to local turtle populations. With suitable nesting sites, road mortality of female turtles and hatchlings can be lowered and this will help the turtle populations of the Cootes Paradise wetlands to succeed.

For more information on turtle nesting beds visit:

<http://www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/turtlenests.asp?opx=3>

You can help protect the turtles of Lower Spencer by not disturbing nesting sites and watching for turtles when driving on Olympic and Cootes Drive.



Artificial Turtle Nesting Habitat



*Sign that will be posted
beside nesting beds*

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