

Helpful Hints!

- ✂ Resist the urge to remove fallen branches or other deadwood from forest. "Tidying up" the forest removes essential groundcover, habitat, shelter and food for a variety of wildlife. The decomposition of wood also replenishes essential nutrients in the soil.
- ✂ Store your garbage in animal proof containers to prevent wild animals from helping themselves.
- ✂ Do not approach or handle wild animals.
- ✂ To protect birds and other wildlife, don't allow your pets to roam freely.
- ✂ Provide bird feeders with appropriate seed mixtures to attract the birds you would like to see.
- ✂ Protect yourself from insects by wearing bug spray and appropriate clothing.
- ✂ If the natural area is publicly owned, stick to the trails to avoid trampling sensitive areas and keep your pets on a leash.
- ✂ If the natural area is privately owned, seek permission of the landowner and respect their conditions.

One of the most attractive features of living adjacent to or within a natural area is the unexpected encounters with plants and wildlife.



For more information, please contact:

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Phone: (905) 525-2181 Ext. 181 or 196

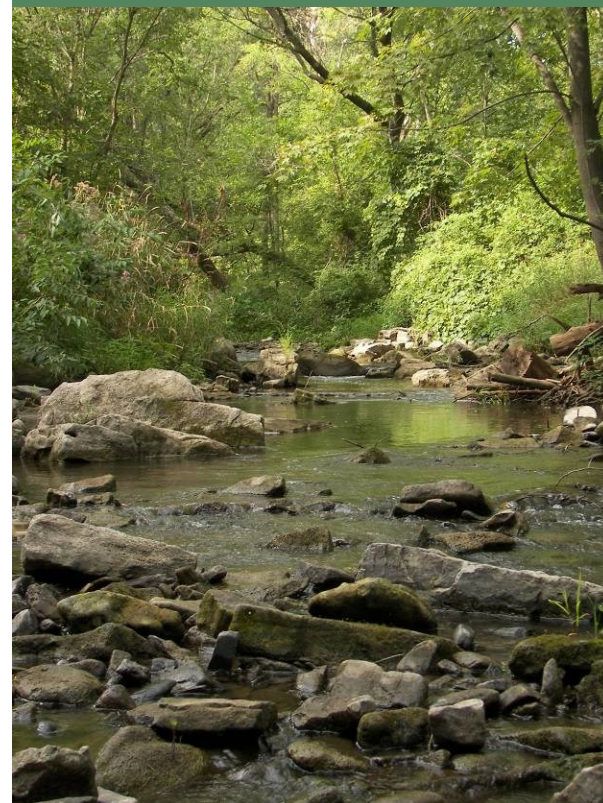
www.hamiltonhaltonstewardship.ca



Information for this brochure was taken from the "Natural Areas as Neighbours-Halton Homeowners Guide"

Photos courtesy of the Hamilton Conservation Authority

NATURAL AREAS AS NEIGHBOURS



**A LEGACY WORTH
PROTECTING
FOR PROPERTIES ADJACENT
TO NATURAL AREAS**

What are Natural Areas?

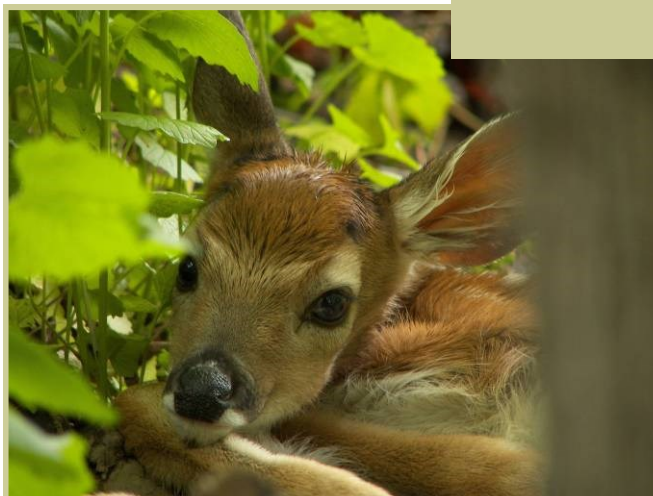
You are living within or adjacent to a unique and diverse natural area. Natural areas are special areas that are inhabited by a wide variety of plants and animals. These species provide important ecological functions that help maintain a healthy and diverse environment. These functions benefit us all and include the:

- ✧ Filtration of pollutants from the air and water;
- ✧ Production of life-sustaining oxygen;
- ✧ Provision of diverse habitat for plants and animals;
- ✧ Provision of large, relatively undisturbed expanses of natural, native plant communities that are unique to your area;
- ✧ Maintenance of summer flows and moderate stream temperatures;
- ✧ Maintenance of groundwater quantity and quality;
- ✧ Reduction of soil erosion and runoff; and,
- ✧ Provision of recreational opportunities.

We all depend on the natural environment to provide the necessities and the luxuries of life. If responsibly managed, natural areas will continue to be a valuable and enjoyable part of our lives. Private landowners have taken on this responsibility by practicing good stewardship activities that provide the best protection for these special areas.



Living adjacent to or within a natural area is a unique opportunity for you and your family. Enjoy the area and care for it, and you will ensure that the ecological features are maintained for your family and your community.



How Can You Help?

Whether the natural area adjacent to or within your property is a woodland, wetland, meadow or stream, what you do on your property has an impact on the neighbouring land. Good stewardship practices on your own property benefit both you and your community. One of the very best ways you can protect a natural area is to avoid encroachment. Other ways to protect the land include:

- ✧ Keep cats indoors to protect songbirds, chipmunks and other wildlife;
- ✧ Use environmentally friendly alternatives to pesticides;
- ✧ Drain your swimming pool away from the natural area to prevent erosion and chemical discharge;
- ✧ Use native, non-invasive plants for landscaping, especially near natural areas;
- ✧ Construct fences, sheds, tree houses, kennels, pools, composters, etc. away from natural areas and creeks;
- ✧ Compost your household vegetable and garden waste away from natural areas and creeks;
- ✧ Dispose of hazardous waste in an established waste depot;
- ✧ Practice water conservation and ensure that wells and septic systems are properly maintained and;
- ✧ Don't dig up or cut down plants in the natural area or along creeks.