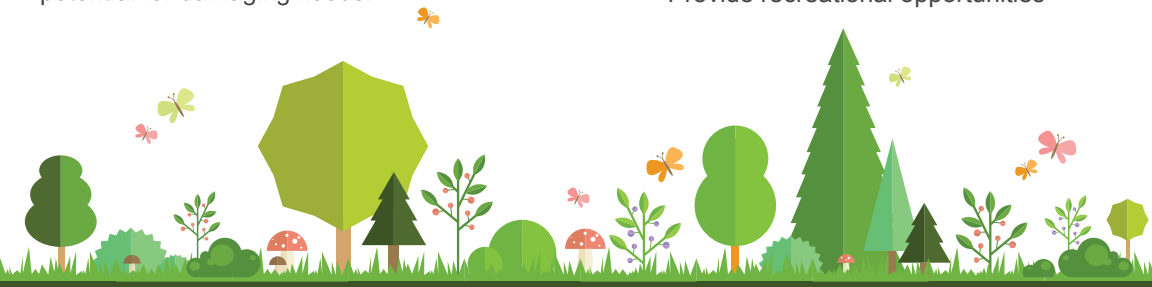


“Healthy woodlands are valuable assets for your community. This guide provides information about how you can help ensure they are enjoyed for generations to come.”

## SIGNIFICANCE OF WOODLANDS

- Provide habitat for plants and animals
- Filter pollutants from air and water, produce oxygen and sequester carbon.
- Reduce soil erosion and runoff
- Maintain groundwater quality and quantity
- Stormwater management: They absorb rain and snowmelt and release it slowly into the creeks to keep them flowing year-round. They reduce the potential for damaging floods.
- They shade watercourses, moderating summer water temperatures for fish and other aquatic life
- Natural areas have been shown to promote psychological well-being
- Treed neighbourhoods are less stressful environments, with lower crime rates and an enhanced sense of community.”
- Provide recreational opportunities




## WHAT CAN YOU DO YOUR BACKYARD

- Prevent encroachment. This is any use of City owned land by individuals for their own purposes.
- Use environmentally friendly alternatives to pesticides and herbicides for your lawn and garden
- Plant native, non-invasive species in your backyard. Native plants that provide seeds and fruit for birds are very beneficial. Non-native species can be invasive, spread into woodlots, and out-compete native plants.
- If you must water your lawn, water in the morning and use an efficient sprinkler to minimize run-off and evaporation.

• The natural area behind my backyard looks messy.

Some immature natural areas can look messy until they have grown to become a mature woodland. Resist the urge to “tidy up” in wooded areas, as you may disrupt the ecological succession.

- Leave groundcover, logs and understorey vegetation as these provide food and shelter for wildlife.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO TRAILS

- Please stay on marked trails
- Refrain from walking on creek beds and banks or through wetland areas to avoid the disturbance of aquatic habitat, release of sediments in the watercourse, damage to vegetation and compaction of the soil.
- Leave wildflowers and everything else, for everyone to enjoy
- Take only pictures, leave only footprint
- ATVs should not be used in protected areas



### WHAT CAN YOU DO WASTE

- Excavated fill from your yard should be taken to the landfill site or to a location where fill is needed, not dumped in the woodland area
- Dispose of hazardous household waste at a waste depot, because anything you dump on your property will eventually make its way to the groundwater supply.
- Drain your swimming pool water away from the natural areas
- Place your compost bin in an appropriate location on your property, rather than dumping in natural areas. Grass clippings and other yard and household waste takes a long time to decompose, smothering plants and destroying important habitat. The compost bin should be animal-proof, otherwise raccoons, mice and other wildlife will help themselves.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO ANIMALS

- While many animals are beneficial you may not want them in your yard.
- What can I do about animals that are attracted to my property? Animals are attracted to garbage and compost, and seeds from bird feeders. If these items are contained/stored properly this will help.
- It is best to not approach, handle, or feed wild animals. Refer to the Ministry of Natural Resources “Living with Wildlife” website for more information.
- Dogs should be on a leash and cleaned up after. Do not allow your cat to roam as they may hunt wildlife.