



**The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation**

*Keeping a Great Lake great since 1998!*

---



## Cozy up to Autumn's Changes

November is often a time for reflection and time to be thankful. In this edition of our Coastal E-Newsletter, we would like to show a few things we are thankful for! We have a few new and noteworthy events you need to check out, along with some awesome new editions to our website. Enjoy all these new changes - we are thankful for you too!

---



## The perfect time to restore your shore

November is a great time for beach restoration and dune building

## Fall-ing into Dune Restoration Together!

*By: Samantha Ventura, Coastal Restoration Technician*

Have you noticed wooden slat fencing dotting the shoreline from Point Clark beach? Sand fencing, sometimes referred to as snow fencing, is a simple tool used in foredune restoration that is installed in the fall and left over the winter until the spring, when it can be removed again.

This year's dune restoration is underway in Huron-Kinloss as part of the Green Ribbon Champion (GRC) program. This October, with the help of over 20 dedicated volunteers, we restored 17 shoreline properties (that's ~470m of shoreline!), with 9 more shoreline properties planned for November. Our new Champions were equipped with the necessary resources and tools used to maintain a healthy dune system such as sand fencing, t-posts, native dune vegetation, and help from like-minded citizens.

Sand fencing can assist in building a higher sand base where dune vegetation can begin to grow. The fencing slows onshore wind causing the sand to fall on the downwind side of the fence. Sand fencing composed of natural wooden slats works best and can be found at your local Home Hardware or Rona stores. Wooden slat fencing can be bought in rolls of 50ft (\$67 roll) or 100ft (\$125 roll). 7ft T-posts (\$9.49 each) are used to anchor the fence. We prefer working with 50ft rolls since they are lighter and easier to maneuver with. Orange plastic snow fencing is not recommended! Although less expensive, plastic will tear, possibly get swept away by the wind, and is not recyclable.



Proper placement of sand fencing is critical for collecting sand in the correct location. Sand fencing should be



installed parallel to shore and facing perpendicular towards prevailing winds. Fencing can be lined up with existing dunes on your beach and installed in front of the base of the dune. The posts should be pounded  $\frac{3}{4}$ m (2.5ft) into the sand at a maximum of 3m (10ft) apart. Sand fencing should be secured to the windward side of posts so the pressure of the wind pushes the fence up against the posts. 14-16-gauge galvanized steel wire can be used to secure fencing to posts.

Like sand fencing, vegetation plays an important role in slowing onshore winds and trapping sand, allowing it to gather and build up. Used together, sand fencing and dune vegetation is an extremely effective way to restore dunes. Healthy vegetated dunes make the beach more resilient to the effects of storms and high lake levels. Vegetation stems and leaves help protect the sand surface from wind erosion and roots bind dunes together to stabilize them.

Marram grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) is perhaps the most successfully used species in dune restoration along Lake Huron's shoreline. Planting must occur when plants go dormant in late fall after the first couple of frosts. The cool and moist fall weather reduces stress on new plantings. Marram grass is easily harvested and transplanted. It should be harvested locally and as close to your property as possible. This is to ensure grasses have similar plant genetics and to prevent the transfers of pests and diseases. Once harvested, separate your grass into single stems and plant 30cm (1ft) apart in an irregular pattern and 15-20cm into the sand. To obtain Marram grass in southern Huron County and northern Lambton County areas, contact: The Friends of Pinery Park, 519-243-1521, or contact your local municipality to obtain permission to harvest from a public beach with a healthy Marram grass population.



Dune restoration is a wonderful community building event. GRC participants, their neighbours, and like-minded citizens came together for an active day at the beach to put restoration tasks into action. It's a great opportunity to learn about beach-dune dynamics, ecosystem management, plants (both good and bad), strengthen relationships and make new friends. Together we planted ~3,000 Marram grass stems this October. This is the magic of community!



It's not too late to try your hand at these simple methods. November is possibly the best time to harvest and transplant Marram grass. So gather your family and neighbours for a fun-filled day of environmental tender loving care and memory making. We promise the dunes and their wild inhabitants will thank you!



## **VOLUNTEERS WANTED !!!**

### **Week of November 11th**

We are looking for hard-working and dedicated volunteers to assist in a **beach restoration** project with the Coastal Centre's Restoration Technician, Samantha.

The Coastal Centre is happy to announce a pilot program, Green Ribbon Champion, in the Township of Huron-Kinloss shoreline started this Summer!

**Green Ribbon Champions** are coastal stewards committed to the protection of the Great lakes and are recognized for their efforts to understand coastal ecosystems, and for their actions to preserve, protect and restore them. Participants receive a free beach assessment of their shoreline property and a beach care toolkit. Assessments were started in August, with over 20 property owners signing up for the program. **Thank-You to all of our willing Green Ribbon Champions!**

If you are interested in learning more please visit [www.lakehuron.ca/grc](http://www.lakehuron.ca/grc).

The Green Ribbon Champion program is generously supported by:





We are looking for the next

**GREEN RIBBON  
CHAMPION**

---

## BIG Invader: Asian Carp



### What are Asian Carp?

Asian Carp are a **threatening invasive species** that were introduced to US waterways in the 1970's and have been migrating north towards the Great Lakes. Grass Carp, considered the most invasive of the four types, have been found in Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and Lake Michigan.

### Why are they a danger to our lakes?

Asian Carp grow rapidly and some species can consume 40% of their body weight each day, leaving little food for native fish. These successful invaders also reproduce quickly and have the ability to reach weights between **40kg** and **70kg** accompanied by a body length of 1.5 meters or more. If these large fish cause a decline in the food supply chain for our native fish species this can threaten the natural biodiversity of the lakes and their associated commercial industries.

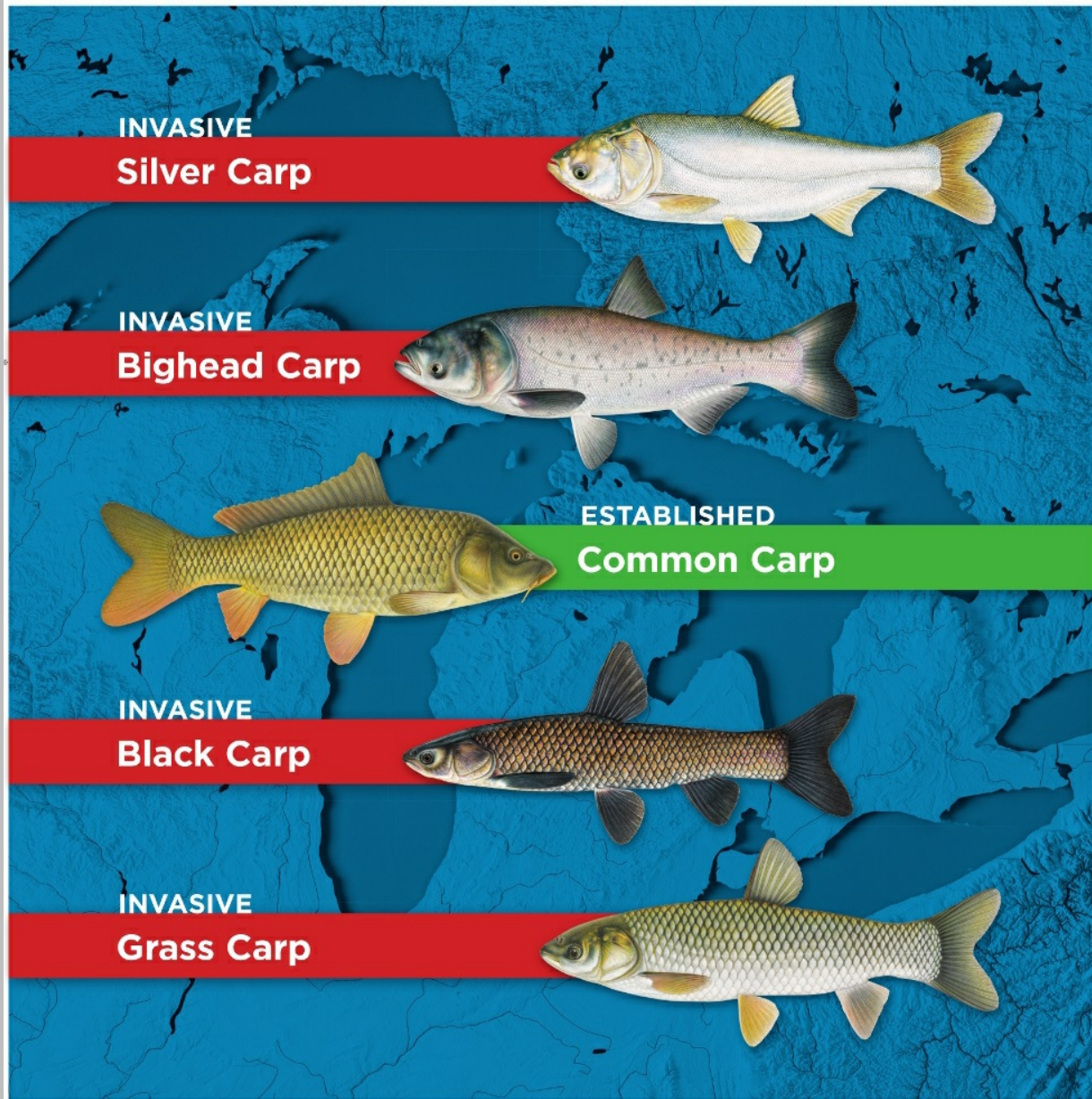
### What does this mean for me?

While barriers have been set up at the river mouths that feed the lakes to help stop entry



there are several ways you can assist to prevent the introduction of these species.

- **Never buy or keep live Asian carp**, it is **illegal** to keep them as pets, use as bait or have in your possession.
- **Do NOT release** live fish into lakes or rivers.
- Familiarize yourself with Asian Carp identification (see photo & link below).
- If you **catch** an invasive carp, you must **destroy** it. Do not release it.
- If you've **seen** an Asian carp or other invasive species in the wild, please contact the toll free Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711, or visit **EDDMapS Ontario** to report a sighting.
- If you have any information about the illegal importing, distribution or sale of live Asian carp, report it immediately to the MNR TIPS line at 1-877-847-7667.



[Click here to visit the FOCA website for more info on Asian Carp](#)



Above: Blanding's Turtle

## Hibernation Station

**DID YOU KNOW** that there are **THREE** types of hibernation!

**1) True Hibernation:** This type of hibernation is what most people are familiar with. Animals who experience True Hibernation will not awaken if they are touched, moved, or if a loud noise occurs. Their heart rate along with their breathing slows, their body temperature drops and they experience a lower metabolic rate. This all happens in order for them to conserve energy during the winter when food is limited

**Examples of True Hibernators are: Hedgehogs, Bats and Groundhogs.**

**2) Brumation:** This type of hibernation is found among our cold blooded friends (reptiles and amphibians). This is triggered when the temperature drops and the days become shorter. Brumation can last for months, although animals may shift or wake up to drink water.

**Examples of Brumation Hibernators are: Snakes, Turtles and Frogs**

**3) Torpor:** This type of hibernation is on the lighter side. Animals that are Torpor Hibernators will wake up on warmer winter days. Although they slow down their breathing and heart rate, all functions return to normal if they wake up to find food.

**Examples of Torpor Hibernators are: Bears, Eastern Chipmunks and Striped Skunks.**

---

## Hibernation on Lake Huron

**Here are some interesting facts about  
some species that hibernate on our  
coast!**

- Eastern Hog-nosed Snakes tend to hibernate in sandy areas (Beaches) by burrowing underground. Sometimes they will Hibernates together to keep warm!

- Turtles, like the Blanding's Turtle, hibernate in ponds, lakes, or deep under



the mud. These hibernating sites are much richer in oxygen than the water near the surface. They are able to breathe through special tissue in their throat and tail!

- Frogs, like the Green Frog, stay in the water during the winter! Water stays a liquid until frozen, meaning that if it's still liquid, it's above freezing! Frogs, like the green frog, breathe through their skin!

- Other Frogs, like the Grey Treefrog actually freeze with the weather! They tend to hibernate in areas with no protection from the temperature. Once the temperature reaches -5, 40% of the water in the frogs' body freezes....and in the spring they thaw out and hop away!

- Toads, like the American Toad, are found hibernating on land. They dig burrows in fields and forests to escape the freeze!

**[For more information check out Nature Canada's article:](#)**

How Canadian Wildlife  
Survives Winter



*Above: Eastern Hog-nosed Snake*



*Above: Green Frog*



*Above: American Toad*

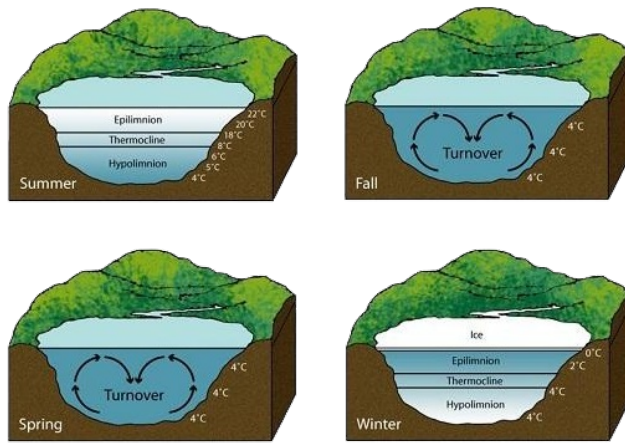
---

## Time for a Turnover?

As temperatures drop and aquatic life begins to slow, a vitally important process begins under the surface of a lake. During the summer, lake water is layered by warmer, lower density water on top and colder, high density water



sinking to the bottom. As the lake reaches a consistent 4°C throughout, the layers \*flip\* and during this turnover period oxygen is distributed through the entire water column.



**Fun Fact:** water is an unusual substance that is less dense in a solid state than liquid, that's why your ice cubes float! If it wasn't bodies of water would freeze from the bottom up making the bottom of a lake an uninhabitable place to survive.

For more on the lake turnover check out the Ausable River article:

A Look Under The Ice: Winter Lake Ecology

## TRASH TO TREASURE

One local company is taking our recycling and bringing new life into traditional furniture.



*By. Hannah Cann, Coastal Stewardship Coordinator*

Canadian owned and operated, C.R. Plastics in Stratford Ontario is carving a path for Canadian-made, recycled plastic furniture.

We toured their facility in October and were impressed with the amazing 100% recycled plastic products they design and create, in their closed loop facility. This company is a great example of how we can use recycled material to create beautiful, long lasting, and durable products.

"In 1994, Jamie Bailey, co-owner and co-founder of C.R. Plastic Products Inc. started manufacturing recycled plastic furniture to divert used plastic away from landfills and oceans. His goal was to make a product that would provide the look and warmth of wood, without the shortcomings associated with maintaining wood furniture".

Today C.R. Plastic Products diverts millions of pounds of plastic that would be destined for landfill or ocean by buying post-consumer No. 2 plastic, commonly found in bottle caps, milk jugs, and juice



containers, to create up to 100% recycled plastic indoor/outdoor furniture that has a guaranteed lifespan of over 25 years.

In their 300,000 square foot facility, grinders and extruders melt a mixture of recycled plastic and pigment into durable plastic lumber and molded pieces, creating a product that can withstand Canada's highest and lowest temperatures. Over 80 products are now created in the Stratford facility, and are shipped all over North America, and over seas.

**Well known for their red Adirondack chairs (think Parks Canada's Red Chairs), CRP uses 60 POUNDS of recycled plastic for each chair. This equates to 37,000 bottle caps, or 759 milk jugs.**



The coolest part of this company, is any waste, from off-cuts down to small drill shavings, are swept up and added back into the product, making this an almost zero waste process!

Although there are other similar products on the market, C.R. Plastics is the only company which builds these products out of 100% recycled plastic. At the Coastal Centre, we believe that 'voting with your dollar' is the best way to be a thoughtful and responsible consumer.

We learned through our visit to C.R. Plastics how this local company is seriously changing the game when it comes to furnishing your coastal residence. As a closed-loop company which prides itself on its ability to use recycled products, we think this is a local, Canadian company we can get behind!

C.R. Plastic furniture is available locally through many Home Hardware locations (Grand Bend, Exeter, Kincardine, etc.). Go take a look at their products and tell us what you think!

Would you buy 100% recycled furniture?

We can definitely picture ourselves enjoying time on Lake Huron lounging in some of these chairs!

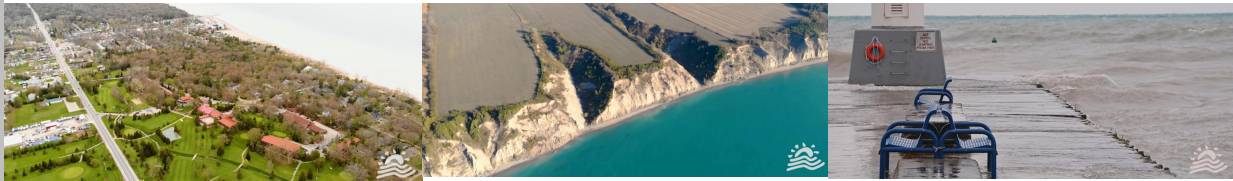




---

## **\* Lake Huron's Coastal Ecosystems \*** **Video Series**

Watch them now on our YouTube!



An 8-episode series showcasing Lake Huron's AMAZING coastal ecosystems has been created to help raise awareness about the diversity of coastal habitats on Lake Huron.

This series describes the threats these ecosystems face, and what we can do to preserve these rare ecosystems and reduce the impacts of stressors.

Check out these videos on:

[Visit our Website](#)

[Visit our Youtube](#)

---

### **Go Green!**

Through generous funding provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we are working to create a healthy coastline with vibrant communities on Lake Huron. In order to learn and share our learning with coastal communities, the Foundation has requested that the Coastal Centre survey residents to ask what they value most about the environment.

The survey questions and parameters were prepared by Forum Research for the Ontario Trillium Foundation and therefore were not prepared by the Coastal Centre. If you wish to remain anonymous, do not fill in the final page of the survey, the survey results are not matched with participants in any way. Please note the Pre- and Post-option is not applicable for this survey and a Participant ID is not required. Thank you! To complete the "Green People" Survey, please click the link below:

[Green People Survey](#)



*The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation supports environmental efforts along the Canadian coastline of Lake Huron. We foster communication and partnerships between environmental agencies and organizations, working towards a sustainable and resilient coast. We provide education, resources, and information on lake-wide issues and our programs reflect the inter-connectivity between land and water.*

**DONATE TODAY!**

Follow our social media for updates about our upcoming events and some interesting quick facts about Lake Huron and its coastal ecosystems!

