



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation

'THE VOICE FOR LAKE HURON'

## What's blossoming on Lake Huron?

**DONATE TODAY!**



**MARCH**

### **'Is the Coast Clear?' May 12-13, 2020**

**What is the fate of the lake in a hotter world?**

**Why is the water so high? And how high will it get?**

**Species invasions: Are we losing?**

Join us at our largest fundraising event:  
the 11th biennial 'Is the Coast Clear?'  
Lake Huron Conference taking place

May 12 - 13, 2020 at the Oakwood Resort, Grand Bend. This year's theme is, "Lake Huron's Climate: What has Changed?".

**Conference Program Available Online Now!**

This year we bring you...shorter Speaker sessions, more Speaker topics to choose from, and more value for fees paid!

Early-bird pricing in effect until April 1st. Conference registration closes May 4th. Tickets are limited.  
\*Registration rate does not include accommodation.

**Partner up!** Join the many local businesses and artists who are helping to protect Lake Huron's coastal ecosystems by **donating** to our [Silent Auction](#). All of the conference proceeds go towards important programs that help ensure a brighter future for our coastal communities. Please contact us today at 226-421-3029 or [coastalcentre@lakehuron.ca](mailto:coastalcentre@lakehuron.ca).

Silent Auction items include:

- Tickets to various Ontario attractions
- One of a kind art pieces and home decor
- Outdoor gear and accessories
- Food and drink
- And more!

Please visit [www.lakehuron.ca/conference](http://www.lakehuron.ca/conference) for more information.

REGISTER  
NOW



THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 PARTNERS!

SILVER



ONTARIO POWER  
GENERATION



BRONZE



## Here Comes the Sun

Often, people call March 21st the equinox, but the date actually

changes depending on the earth's orbit. This year, the vernal (spring) equinox is on March 19th and remarkably, a combination of the orbits and time zones means the equinox will not fall on March 21st until 2103. The word equinox comes from the Latin terms *aequus* (equal) and *nox* (night) and is the term used for the day with nearly equal day and night hours all over the world. There are two equinoxes a year, and they are the only days where the Sun rises exactly due east and sets perfectly in the west. Here in the Northern Hemisphere, the March equinox is also considered the first day of spring.



## How is the Equinox Celebrated?

- The full moon that is closest to the equinox (March 9th 2020) is known as the “full worm moon”. It is the first full moon of warmer temperatures and softer ground. Often this is the time of year where worms start emerging, inviting the robins to start snacking. This year the “full worm moon” is also a super moon!
- The Wabunowin (the "Dawn Society" of the Anishinaabeg peoples) celebrate the equinox as the beginning of a new year and hold a lodge ceremony from dusk to dawn
- Nawruz (Persian New Year) also falls on the spring equinox and has been celebrated for over 3000 years and in at least 21 countries.
- Folklore surrounding the equinox suggests that the gravitational pulls associated with the sun's placement makes it possible to balance an egg or broom on its end for only one day. The reality is, this is possible every day of the year with the right egg, and a little practice.
- Easter and Passover are both connected to the equinox. Passover is celebrated on the first full moon after the equinox and Easter Sunday on the first Sunday after Passover.
- Many people start preparing and planting their gardens this time of year. [Here](#) is an interactive calendar that gives you the best dates to plant crops in your location.
- Spring cleaning is also a popular task once the sun comes out. Taking an environmental approach to this process can set you up for a year of green and clean.



**Coastal Centre**

## WAYS TO MAKE YOUR SPRING CLEAN GREEN

### OPEN WINDOWS TO AIR OUT THE HOUSE

It's hard to open a window in Canada in the winter, but as soon as the weather is warm enough, pop them open and let in all the fresh air.

### CHANGE YOUR CLEANING PRODUCTS

Look into eco-friendly or DIY cleaning products (links below). Another idea is to use fabric instead of paper towels.

### INDOOR PLANTS

House plants are great for eco-friendly decor and air purification. You can also grow a lot of herbs in your house that are perfect to use in cooking.

### INCREASE EFFICIENCY

If you have an older appliance or electronic, it might be using way more energy than newer models. Look into replacing old appliances, if the technology used in the newer version is more eco friendly.

# DE-CLUTTER WITH THE ENVIRONMENT IN MIND



## RECYCLE

Before throwing anything in the garbage, check if it is recyclable.

## REUSE

Either by yourself or someone else. Holding a yard sale and donating to charities both count as reusing items.

## REPURPOSE

If something has done it's original job to the fullest look into what else it can do for you. Old clothes might be good cleaning rags, and most things can be crafted with. Pinterest is a great resource for ideas.

## REPAIR

Instead of replacing broken items, see if they can get fixed. The exception to this is if the current item can be replaced by something greener (See the "increase efficiency" box)

## MAKE MAJOR CHANGES

If you are looking to go the extra mile there are ways to "spring clean" your whole life and make it green going further. As you are going through the past years worth of bills and paper statements, you can contact the provider to ask if you can get those documents online instead. Other things to consider are how you plan on using electricity and water over the next year, and ways to change shopping habits so fewer things accumulate.



Eco friendly cleaning options: [DIY](#) and [Other Tips](#)

## Ontario's Sweet Water Season

The Maple tree represents our national identity with the image of a maple leaf proudly displayed on our flag and, as the name of one of our most beloved hockey teams. As Winter's end nears and temperatures become favourable, the Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) produces a sweet sap water that is used to create what we may be known for best: maple syrup.



In order to collect sap for maple syrup, temperatures need to be above freezing in the day and below freezing at night—a temperature pattern typical in late winter and early spring in southern Ontario.

The sweet sap of the Sugar Maple was known and valued by Indigenous peoples long before



European Settlers arrived in Canada, who tapped trees by cutting into the sapwood of the tree, inserting a wooden spigot, and letting the sap run into a birch bark container. Once the container was full, they'd begin the week-long process of reducing the sweet water to syrup. Maple curing was a food preservation technique practiced by the Anishinaabe that allowed communities to keep food stores for winter months when food was scarce. The Anishinaabe called the "sugaring off" period when sap was collected the "maple moon" or "sugar month". European settlers learned these techniques from Indigenous peoples and began producing maple syrup in their communities between 1700-1800. Maple syrup production has since become a significant industry in Canada.



#### Map of Sugar Maple relative occurrence



Canada produces 76% of the world's maple syrup with it primarily produced in Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario and Nova Scotia, with Quebec representing 92% of the total Canadian production.

Sugar Maple is a common tree in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest in the hardwood forest stretching across southern Ontario. As maple trees grow, they accumulate starch, which converts into sugar during the spring thaw and mixes with the water absorbed through tree roots. Sugar Maple sap has the highest sugar content of Ontario maple species with a single tree producing between 35-50 litres of sap per season.

Maple trees need to be mature before removing sap without harming the tree, with the tree measuring at least 26 cm in diameter at 1.5 metres from the base of the trunk. Once the maple sap is collected, it is reduced by boiling down to remove excess water. It takes 40 litres of sap to produce 1 litre of maple syrup. This is generally less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the tree's sugar as collecting too much sap would rob trees of nourishment. Please find a step-by-step guide [here](#) on how to tap a maple tree and [here](#) for a starter kit.

With sweet water season here, Ontarians will gather to celebrate through to April at maple farms to [visit the sugar shack and various festivals](#) where they will learn how maple syrup is made and taste freshly made maple products. Look out for sweet and sticky maple taffy tastings, like those pictured on the right, to maple syrup poured over pancakes and waffles in grades of 1 (extra light, light, medium), 2

(amber), and 3 (dark). Happy "sugar month"!



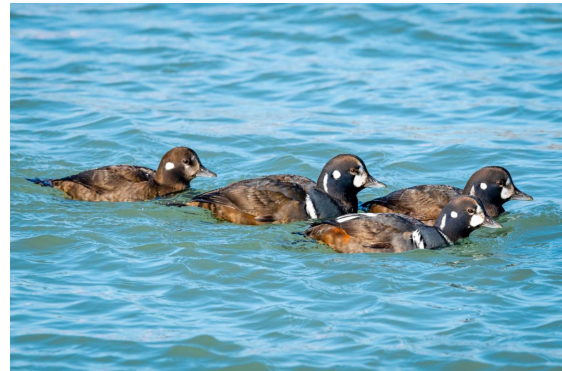
## Hootin' and Hollerin' Around Huron Shores

Lake Huron is home to many different bird species year-round. Birders and outdoor enthusiasts alike are often presented with unique opportunities to capture inspiring photographs of these lovely little animals showcasing their brilliance in appearance, their behaviours and interactions. Scroll down to see some fabulous sightings around our Lake!



Great Grey Owl  
Thessalon, Ontario  
February 10, 2020

*Photo by: Copyright © 2020 Sheri Minardi  
Photography*



Harlequin Ducks  
Point Edward, Ontario  
February 12, 2020

*Photo by: Mark Buchanan*



Common Goldeneye  
Sarnia, Ontario  
February 11, 2020



Eastern Screech Owl (red morph)  
Sarnia, Ontario  
February 9, 2020

*Photo by: Mario Aquilina*





King Eider  
Southampton, Ontario  
February 12, 2020

Photo by: Bruce Edmunds



Snow Buntings  
Bruce County, Ontario  
January 12, 2020

Photo by: Stefan Waldmann



Eastern Towhee  
Pinery Provincial Park, Grand Bend  
February 13, 2020

Photo by: Alexa Coupland



Snowy Owl  
Plympton Wyoming  
January 15, 2020

Photo by: Susan Enders

The arrival of springtime in Ontario brings with it a variety of colourful and musical migrant bird species that spend their breeding season with us. This spectacle is often celebrated by many local groups, like the [Huron Fringe Birding Festival](#), welcoming bird-watchers of all experience levels.

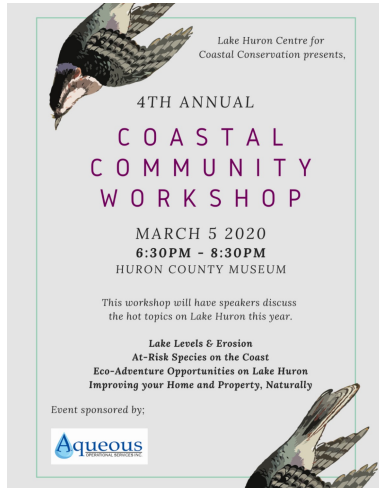


In it's 23rd year, the annual Huron Fringe Birding Festival is based out of MacGregor Point Provincial Park, just south of Port Elgin, ON with the mission of introducing birding and nature appreciation by educating people about the unique ecological environment found at MacGregor Point, the Lake Huron shoreline, and the counties of Bruce and Grey. The Festival takes place May 22-25 and May 28-31, 2020. Registration begins March 1, 2020 at 6:00 am. Please click [here](#) to learn more about this exciting event.

It's important to be mindful as birders that "as the number of birders increases, we must all, no matter what our interest in birds, make every effort to act in a positive and

responsible way. We must also convey a responsible image to non-birders who may be affected by our activities. As more and more pressure is put on our environment it is essential to do whatever we can to protect birds and habitat. Birders should lead by example. We are ambassadors of birding and environmental stewardship." (Ontario Field Ornithologists, 2020). Click [here](#) to review the OFO Code of Ethics ahead of your next adventure. Happy birding!

## Upcoming Workshops/Events



Thurs March 5, 2020  
6:30 - 8:30 PM  
Huron County Museum,  
Goderich



"Join millions of people  
around the world and switch  
off your lights in support of  
nature and our planet."  
[www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org)

Sat March 28, 2020  
8:30 - 9:30 PM  
Wherever you are



Sat April 18, 2020  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Goderich Main Beach/  
Goderich Rotary Cove/  
Maitland River

## Interested in Becoming a Coast Watcher?



Entering its 15th monitoring season, the Coast Watchers Citizen Science Program is looking for volunteers to monitor a section of Lake Huron's coast once per week from May until October.

As a citizen scientist, you will contribute many valuable observations and scientific measurements to our long term data set which allows our coastal biologists to analyse changes over time. Changes include when the first algae bloom is recorded, how many plastic-washups we had across the coast, and when the peak lake temperature occurred in the nearshore waters.

You can make a difference in monitoring Lake Huron's shoreline! No experience necessary, training will occur early April. In-person sessions and remote online sessions are available.

Perks of being a Coast Watcher volunteer include access to our coastal science webinars, discounts to many Coastal Centre events such as the upcoming 'Is the Coast Clear' Conference, and more!

Let us know today if you would like to become a Coast Watcher by emailing [coastwatchers@lakehuron.ca](mailto:coastwatchers@lakehuron.ca). More information about the program including past





*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!

