

Leflay Trail Renewal

The Leflay Trail has delighted local people and visitors to Saltcoats and District Regional Park for thirteen years. Recognition of this fact prompted a local committee, urged to action by the Yellowhead Flyway Birding Trail Association, to make plans for the renewal of the trail. Most of the trail is on property owned by the Klause family who have generously allowed public access to this piece of land. Future plans include the development of an additional trail segment within the bounds of the Regional Park.

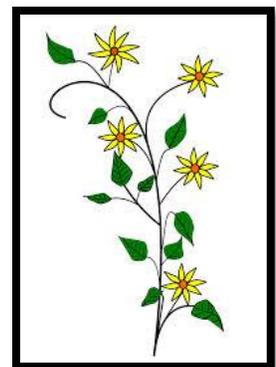
New signs are being ordered, including directional signs to assist walkers to navigate the three loops that comprise the present trail. Other signs provide information about the natural world with some suggestions for deepening one's appreciation of that amazing world.

Since the inauguration of the Leflay Trail in 2000 as part of the Town of Saltcoats' Millennium Project, an informal network of volunteer have maintained the trail as part of a partnership involving the Town of Saltcoats, Saltcoats and District Regional Park Board, the Yellowhead Flyway Birding Trail Association (YFBTA), the Klause family, and Saltcoats School. The contributions of all partners are deeply appreciated.

In 2007 YFBTA, working with the Yellowhead Regional Development Authority, received a generous grant from the Painted Hand Community Development Corporation and part of this provided for the production and installation of some signage for the Leflay Trail.

In 2009, YFBTA and the Saltcoats and District Regional Park collaborated to create, mark and dedicate a section of the Regional Park as the Dr. Jim and Shirley Jowsey Wildflower Heritage and Conservation Area. This now makes an interesting stop near the beginning of the Leflay Trail.

This year the Leflay Trail Management Committee was established. Currently, members of the committee include Marcel Pelletier, George Murray, George Maben, Martin Phillips, Rob Wilson, and Walter Farquharson. The Trail Management Committee has launched an appeal for funds to pay for the new signs and to establish a fund for trail maintenance. Donors will be honoured on an Appreciation Roll sign near the trailhead. The Town of Saltcoats (through the Town Office) has agreed to receive and receipt donations valid for taxation purposes as "Donations to a Canadian Municipality". Donors will be honoured as The Eagle Group providing donations of \$500.00 and over, The Redtail Hawk Group



providing donations of \$250.00 to \$499.00, The Ruffed Grouse Group providing donations of \$100.00 to \$249.00, The Oriole Group providing gifts of \$50.00 to \$99.00, and lastly The Chickadee Group providing gifts under \$50.00. Group providing gifts of \$50.00 to \$99.00, and lastly The Chickadee Group providing gifts under \$50.00. While all donors' names will be recorded in an attractive supporters' book lodged in the Office of the Town of Saltcoats, it will be donors of \$50.00 or more whose names will appear on the trailhead sign.



A great variety of waterfowl are seen from time to time on Anderson Lake and the vantage point on the Leflay Trail allows a good spot to observe many of them with minimal alarm to the birds. A variety of ducks, geese, several species of grebe, coots, and visiting loons, pelicans, and cormorants are frequently sighted. In the aspen groves redtail hawks and horned owls nest in most years. Orioles and other song birds delight watchers with their distinctive songs and brilliant colours. A variety of flycatchers, less dramatic in song and plumage, can be identified. Along the trail, blue jays and pileated woodpeckers, nuthatches, thrush, ruffed grouse, may surprise walkers and spotters.

A surprising variety of shrubs can be identified and the discerning eyes can find wildflowers of considerable variety in the different seasons of bloom and seed production.

For those who just like to walk or run the trail it is a beautifully varied pathway and provides for healthy exercise. Many visitors have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to find sanctuary for heart, mind and soul.

The Committee urges you to visit the trail soon if you haven't done so. Support its renewal if you are able. Join us for a celebration of the trail and the new signage and renewal program, Sunday August 18 beginning at 3:30 p.m. The gathering place will be the Pavilion at the Regional Park. Barb Ford will have the concession open and will be offering, among other things, a fried chicken supper. Watch for further information about this in this newspaper and on Town of Saltcoats and YFBTA websites.

Every offer of support is important and gratefully acknowledged, whether the gift be money, time, or skill. To offer your help, please contact the Town of Saltcoats or any member of the Leflay Trail Management Committee.