

Peninsula Green Teams teach environmental awareness

Green Teams on the Great Northern Peninsula are spending eight weeks of summer learning about the environment, and teaching people how to lessen the harmful effects they have on the world around them.

"The focus of the teams is public education and research," says Carmella Rose, who supervises the three Green Teams in Main Brook, Raleigh and Port au Choix.

Ms. Rose is part of the Conservation Corp. of Newfoundland and Labrador, which has set up 24 teams province wide, each with four members and a team leader.

"Hopefully by the end of the summer, they will have enhanced their communication skills, and learned about their areas and about conservation."

The teams are holding five Environmental Awareness Days (EADs) throughout the eight weeks, which Jacenta Smith, leader of the Raleigh team, calls 'crucial' in fostering public awareness about climate change.

"It is time we realize that we are the reason droughts are threatening farms, why glaciers are melting and why animals are losing their habitat," she says.

"It is not the factory down the street pumping all that smoke into the air that is doing most of the damage — we are."

Ms. Smith says she hopes the EADs will make people aware of ways to be more environmentally friendly, such as turning off the lights, recycling, and driving less.

The Green Teams in Raleigh and Port au Choix are also working with the Limestone Barrens Habitat Stewardship Program.

"We're learning about the plants and the barrens and why they're important, then informing the public," says Jennifer Frost, who leads the Port au Choix team, which is sponsored by Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro.

She says her team is working with a group of researchers from Memorial University, trying to learn more about the rare braya flowers that grow on the barrens. The team is also giving interpretive walks on trails through the area.

Ms. Frost says since joining the Green Team, she has discovered that even in her own backyard, there are many rare plants that she didn't realize before.



The Green Team in Port au Choix is working with researchers to discover more, and teach the public about the rare plants on the limestone barrens.

Team members are: (l-r) — Stephanie Hinks, Sheri O'Keefe, Jennifer Frost and Mitzzi Gaslard.

"We got a lot more of an appreciation for them now," she says.

At Main Brook, team leader Amy Pilgrim says her group will concentrate on educating the public about the wildlife in the region.

"We'll be doing some research on what types of wildlife exist in this area and we'll also be gathering information from residents to find out what they know about wildlife and endangered species of animals," Ms. Pilgrim explains.

The long-term plan is to organize the information the team gathers and present it on a reading board for the purpose of informing tourists. The team is joined by Ngaio Richards, a biologist from the Quebec-Labrador Foundation (QLF), who will be working on several research initiatives and conservation projects in the Main Brook area this summer.

"Really, this summer is about increasing public awareness about the environment and wildlife in the local public as well as the travelling public," states Ms. Pilgrim.



The Main Brook Green Team held an environmental day on Wednesday and more than 20 children showed up for presentations, games and a barbecue. The team includes: Seated in front (l-r)—Nikita Small, Desmond Whiteway, Ngaio Richards, Melissa Richards and team leader Amy Pilgrim.



Children from the Raleigh area learned about things they can do to reduce greenhouse gas emission at a Green Team Environmental Awareness Day (EAD) earlier this month. Raleigh Green Team Members are front (l-r) — Crystal Randell, Michael Taylor, Robyn Greene and Jacenta Smith; children at the EAD were: back (l-r) — Stacey Kean, Sacha Curlew, Miles Blake, Michelle Bessey, Kelly Rae Taylor, Tiffany Taylor, Victoria Pynn, Haley Taylor, Nikita Elliot, Jessica Taylor and Aaron Taylor.

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