



**minto**  
Communities

**PARKSIDE**  
AT ARCADIA

# Conservation Handbook

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## 1. Introduction

Parkside at Arcadia is a quiet residential community located in Kanata West, just west of the Carp River. Residents of this community will be able to explore and experience the natural heritage features associated with the Carp River and its tributaries, while also having the opportunity to contribute to their protection by demonstrating good stewardship.

It is the responsibility of community residents to ensure proper maintenance and conservation of the natural features on and surrounding their properties. Respect and appreciation for the local flora and fauna who share the land will ensure their continued health and value as unique attributes of the surrounding landscape.





## 2. The Carp River Watershed

The Carp River Watershed is one of three watershed areas monitored and regulated by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority. It is located in the northwest portion of the City of Ottawa in the former municipalities of West Carleton, Kanata and Goulbourn.

The Carp River drains an area of approximately 306 km<sup>2</sup> and discharges to the Ottawa River at Fitzroy Harbour. The Carp River has four major tributaries draining into it. These include Corkery Creek, Huntley Creek, Feedmill Creek and Poole Creek.

## 2.1 The Carp River

The Carp River is the only river in Ottawa that flows entirely within the city's boundaries. It is approximately 42 km long and drains an area of approximately 306 km<sup>2</sup>. The headwaters of the Carp River are located in the Glen Cairn area of Kanata, just south of the Canadian Tire Centre. From here, the Carp River flows north into Parkside at Arcadia and then through the villages of Carp, Kinburn, and Fitzroy Harbour in West Carleton where it then flows into the Ottawa River at Fitzroy Provincial Park just below Chats Falls.

The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority and the Friends of the Carp River have been working on a number of significant projects to enhance the Carp River to improve sediment transportation, vegetation cover, and habitat features such as fish pools and wetlands. Protecting this ecosystem is a responsibility of all those who live along and enjoy the river corridor.

## 2.2 The Feedmill Creek

Feedmill Creek is one of eight major tributaries of the Carp River. It is approximately 5.9 km long and drains into an area approximately 11.8 km<sup>2</sup> in size.

Feedmill Creek's headwaters originate in a small wetland located just north of Hazeldean Road and west of Carp Road. From there it flows to the northeast, under Highway 417, and then through the Tanger outlet mall property. Feedmill Creek ends where it reaches the Carp River just east of Huntmar Drive.

As part of the Carp River Watershed and its related projects, the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, the Friends of the Carp River and the City of Ottawa are working on several significant projects to enhance the meandering nature of the Feedmill Creek. Protecting this ecosystem is the responsibility of all those who live along and enjoy the creek corridor.

## 2.3 Flora and Fauna of the Carp River

The Carp River and Feedmill Creek, are diverse aquatic ecosystems that provide habitats for a wide variety of plant and animal species. The trees, shrubs, herbs, and grasses growing along the water's edge help stabilize the aquatic environment and protect it from erosion and sedimentation, while also helping to filter and absorb stormwater flow. This riparian vegetation also provides habitat for a variety of wildlife, including many bird, mammal, and amphibian species that inhabit the water's edge. The vegetation along the edges of both the Carp River and Feedmill Creek also provide a buffer



to protect the river from pollution, noise, and other forms of disturbance. It is very important to maintain the riparian vegetation of the watercourses to preserve the health of the aquatic ecosystems. Vegetation species growing along both the Carp River and Feedmill Creek include White Pine, Red Maple, Trembling Aspen, White Birch, Bur Oak, Willow, Ash, Manitoba Maple, and American Elm.

The Carp River and Feedmill Creek are critical wildlife corridors, connecting suburban habitat to larger rural and natural areas. The Carp River likely takes its name from the abundance of native

sucker fish (White Sucker) found in the river by early European explorers or settlers. The French name for sucker fish is carpe, and the native suckers bear some resemblance to the common European Carp.

White Sucker prefer the shallow, warm, slow moving waters of the Carp River and inhabit the river today, along with introduced European Carp.



Below is a list of additional wildlife species found living within and adjacent to the Carp River.

**Fish:**

- Smallmouth Bass
- Brown Bullhead
- Walleye
- Northern Pike

**Mammals:**

- River Otter
- Beaver
- Muskrat

- Red Fox
- Coyote

**Birds:**

- Great Blue Heron
- Belted Kingfisher
- Turkey Vulture
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Tree Swallow
- Mallard



**Reptiles and amphibians:**

- Eastern Ribbonsnake
- Midland Painted Turtle
- Snapping Turtle
- Blanding's Turtle
- American Bullfrog
- Northern Leopard Frog
- Green Frog

**2.3.1 Species at Risk**

In Ontario, certain species whose populations are declining are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Many of these species can be found in the Ottawa area. Within the Parkside at Arcadia community, the Carp River and surrounding area may provide habitat for Butternut, Eastern Ribbonsnake, Snapping Turtle, and Blanding's Turtle, among others.

**Butternut**

Butternut trees exist along the corridor of the Carp River. Butternuts are an Endangered species in Ontario and are disappearing primarily due to an invasive fungal disease known as the Butternut Canker.

### Eastern Ribbonsnake

Eastern Ribbonsnake is a species of Special Concern in Ontario. It looks similar to an Eastern Gartersnake and is usually found close to water where it hunts for frogs and small fish. Eastern Ribbonsnakes are good swimmers and will dive in shallow water, especially when fleeing from a predator or other disturbance. While most species of snakes lay eggs, Eastern Ribbonsnakes give birth to live young.



### Snapping Turtle and Blanding's Turtle

The Carp River provides habitat for Snapping Turtles (a species of Special Concern in Ontario) and Blanding's Turtle (a Threatened species in Ontario). Both turtle species, along with Midland Painted Turtles, may be seen basking on exposed rocks, logs, or other perches in and near the Carp River in the spring and summer. In May and June, turtles may leave the river to lay eggs in areas of loose soil, sand, or gravel. Residents can help protect turtles by watching for them on roads, especially in May and June.

## 3. Protecting the natural environment

### 3.1 Protecting the Carp River and Feedmill Creek

Homeowners can help preserve the natural water quality by not allowing potentially harmful substances to wash away into sewer drains. Even though the community design includes stormwater management facilities, the sewers and streets ultimately drain into the river.

- Chemicals such as detergents, solvents, oils, and fertilizers should not be allowed to flow into the creek, river or sewer drains. Never pour hazardous materials into sewers or the river.

Pet wastes, yard waste, loose soil, and other debris should be managed so that they do not enter the watercourses or sewers.

- It is best to wash your vehicle at a vehicle washing facility to prevent pollutants and detergents from entering the watercourses or sewers. Similarly, vehicle maintenance should be conducted at a designated garage to avoid spills of oils and other automotive fluids.
- Residents are encouraged to build and maintain native gardens to help recharge groundwater, limit water consumption, and improve river





water quality. Gardens that are planted with native wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs typically require less watering than lawns or gardens with non-native species. Native gardens will also help attract wildlife and beneficial insects.

- Recommended native tree species include Sugar Maple, Red Maple, White Spruce, Black Cherry, White Cedar, Serviceberry, Pin Cherry, Bur Oak, and White Birch.
- Recommended shrubs to consider include: Common Juniper, Nannyberry, Red-osier Dogwood, Meadow Sweet, Red Elderberry, Maple-leaf Viburnum, and Northern Bush-honeysuckle.

- Non-native and invasive species can have negative impacts on the natural environment and have the potential to aggressively spread along Feedmill Creek and the Carp River corridor. Avoid plants such as Amur Maple, European Mountainash, Norway Maple, Bugleweed, Common and Japanese Barberry, Day Lily, Lily of the Valley, English Ivy, Black Locust, European Linden, and Periwinkle.

- Make sure you have any required permits before you cut down a tree.
- Residents should consider installing a rain barrel at the downspout from their roof. Rain barrels collect rainwater which can then be used to water your garden. In addition to conserving water, collecting rainwater helps protect the river by reducing stormwater flows which can cause erosion and carry pollutants to the river.
- Choose permeable surfaces for landscaping such as soil, paving stones, or gravel to allow water to seep into the ground and reduce the amount of stormwater runoff into sewers.
- Practice organic gardening by avoiding the use of pesticides that can disrupt ecosystems and impact human health.
- Respect the riparian corridors of the Carp River and Feedmill Creek as natural features. Only use trails that have been intentionally created for recreational use in the community to limit disturbance to ground cover vegetation and the sensitive river ecosystem.
- Keep your sewer drains, culverts, and gutters clear of debris so that they will drain properly and not convey excess material to the river ecosystem.

### 3.2 Protecting Wildlife

- Pets must be kept under human control at all times to avoid potentially harmful encounters with wildlife.
- Residents are encouraged to keep their cats indoors. Cat predation can have severe impacts on bird populations. Cats are considered the number one direct threat to birds in urban areas.
- Pick up after your pets, as their waste can carry bacteria and viruses that may impact native animals. Pet waste may also pollute the river if not properly disposed of.
- Properly store and secure garbage to prevent animals from using it as a food source.
- Never feed wild animals, including ducks and geese. Food provided to ducks and geese by humans (e.g., bread) is often not good for their health.
- Drive carefully and watch for wildlife. Be aware of turtles that may be found on roadways near the river, especially in May and June.
- Never collect or capture wild animals, even if you only intend to keep them temporarily. Handling wild animals such as frogs, turtles, or snakes can severely injure or kill them.

## 4. Important information

Living in Parkside at Arcadia provides residents with many opportunities to appreciate the beauty of the Carp River and Feedmill Creek. With your help, the natural environment surrounding your new home can be preserved and enjoyed long into the future. If you want to learn more about nature in the Ottawa area and how you can help conserve the environment, additional information can be found online at the following websites.

**City of Ottawa – Avoiding problems with wildlife**

<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/environment-conservation-and-climate/wildlife-and-plants/avoiding-problems-wildlife>

**Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority – Protecting, restoring, and managing the Carp River watershed**

<http://mvc.on.ca/carp-river/>

**Friends of the Carp River – Volunteers dedicated to restoring the Carp River**

<https://friendsofthecarpriver.com/>

**Fletcher Wildlife Garden – Creating wildlife-friendly gardens**

<https://ofnc.ca/programs/fletcher-wildlife-garden>

**Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks – Species at risk**

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/species-risk>

**Environment and Climate Change Canada – Migratory Birds Overview**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/birds-canada/migratory-birds-overview.html>

**Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club – Ottawa's leading naturalist group with opportunities for wildlife information, reporting sightings, and local stewardship activities**

<https://ofnc.ca/>



## 5. Closure

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