

Otterlake News

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OLLA Annual General Meeting, 2007
Saturday the 28th of July at 10 AM
At the old South Elmsley Town Hall
Hwy 15

From the President's Desk

Once again, this spring the water levels at Otter Lake became an issue. This has been an ongoing problem for many over the years and, as in the past, residents on the lake made their complaints and concerns known to the various Government Departments and Agencies. As an Association we also received a number of complaints and property owners were informed that we, as an Association, are not involved in the water level issue as per our current water policy approved by a majority of the membership. We suggested that the landowners contact the Township or RVCA. Although we received some complaints, we had not received enough for us as an Association to warrant contacting the authorities as outlined in the policy. Apparently, most of the complaints were being made directly to the Township and RVCA and a decision was made at that level as to what action was deemed necessary. For those of you who may not be familiar with the policy I have included it here along with our mandate as per the By-Laws. The policy states:

“The natural flow of water into and out of Otter Lake should be left to the forces of nature. In the event that water level extremes (high or low) occur, OLLA will use its best efforts to communicate with authorities that can undertake remedial action on water flow, either inflow or outflow, to reduce damage, pollution, and other environmental effects. This policy will be construed and applied in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario and of Canada.”

The mandate is as follows:

- A. To establish and operate an association for the benefit of members who are owners of property abutting Otter Lake in the Township of Rideau Lakes, Ontario, for the purpose of monitoring water quality and conditions affecting the lake environment.
- B. To organize activities that benefit Otter Lake and the immediate environs.
- C. To communicate with Government and private agencies as required.

We will be holding the Annual General Meeting on July 28, 2007 at the old South Elmsley Hall on Hwy 15 at 10 a.m. We will be reviewing progress of the Lake Plan to this point and outlining the next steps to be taken for the coming year. We will also be presenting segments of the FOCA Dockettalk Program which has a wealth of information for cottagers.

Looking forward to seeing many of you there!!!!

Marcia Maxwell, President
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Helpful (hopefully!) Hints for the Cottage

By Lisa Baker

Last year I wrote about environmentally friendly cleaning products. This year my helpful hints are about how to get rid of, or at least reduce the number of pests around the cottage and home as well other tips.

Pest Control!

Insects

Ants

Ants seem to be everywhere. Aphids on outdoor plants attract **ants**. You can get rid of aphids by spraying the plants with soapy water. To prevent ants from getting into trees, wrap strips of cloth smeared with natural resin around the trunk.

To get rid of anthills, pour boiling water, soapy water, salted water, or 350 mL of water mixed with 30 mL of boric acid (borax) onto them. You can also sprinkle red pepper (not Cayenne), eggshells, bone meal, talcum powder, wood ash, sulphur, blood meal, coffee grounds or diatomaceous earth on anthills. As well, tomato leaves or walnut leaves can be placed on top of the nest to repel ants.

To keep ants from moving into your house, plant pansies or herbs (mint, marjoram, lavender, fennel) around the house. Find out where the pests are entering the house, squeeze the juice of a lemon in these spots, and leave pieces of rind there. To kill the ants, you can place a bait of borax and honey in infested areas. Fresh camphor or sage will keep them out of closets.

Also try a mixture of 50-50 borax and icing sugar. Mix well and spread a layer around the perimeter of where to want to prevent ants from entering.

They usually establish colonies in soft or rotting wood, but are also attracted to rotting fruit and vegetables (in or near your garbage).

Carpenter ants can cause the most damage and are the most difficult to eliminate. You can try to lure carpenter ants to a deadly bait of peanut butter and borax. If that doesn't work, you should call a professional.

Earwigs

Earwigs like dark, humid places. They are easy to trap. Place some short lengths of garden hose or **rolled-up newspaper** near your house and fill them with peanut butter, fish oil or vegetable oil. The insects will crawl inside. Earwigs can also be trapped in an **inverted flowerpot** stuffed with newspaper or peat moss and placed in a tree. A small can filled with bacon or hamburger fat will lure them as well. The morning after you set your traps, shake the captured earwigs into some hot water to kill them. If you find the earwigs' "nest", sprinkle diatomaceous earth or soap onto it.

Fruit Flies

Fruit flies are attracted to light. One way to kill them is to pull the shades down on all your windows, leaving a small opening at the bottom of one window to let light in. Alternatively, you can use a lamp as a source of light. The fruit flies will gather in the lighted area, making them an easy target.

Houseflies

Sticky flypaper is still the best way to catch houseflies and it is nontoxic. Electric insect traps are also effective. Attaching white paper towels to the middle of a screen door to resemble a butterfly may frighten flies away. A cold stream of air in the doorway like that created by an air conditioner keeps flies out of the house.

Another way to repel them is to hang fresh hazel or tomato leaves, or marigold near the doorway, or to grow these plants there.

Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes are hard to control. They breed in damp areas where there is stagnant water. To reduce the mosquito population, drain wet areas around the house. Grow savory and castor oil plants near the entrance to keep mosquitoes away. If you add anise oil to your rinse water when washing clothes, you will not need to use any insect repellent for a while. Do not wear perfume or wash your hair with scented shampoo if you are planning to spend the day outdoors and mosquitoes are out in full force.

The smell of citronella and camphor repels these pests, so you could put some on your clothes or skin if you do not mind the smell. Also try putting a few drops of lemon scented dish detergent onto a dish plate with some water in it. Set the plate on your deck or porch. Mosquitoes tend to flock to it, and drop dead shortly after drinking the mixture. BOO HOO.

Slugs and Snails

Slugs and snails like acid soil and plantain. It is important to monitor your soil's pH and to pull weeds out by hand. Lime, wood ash, salt and small strands of hair irritate these pests, causing them to secrete mucus until they die.

For the same reason, they will not crawl over a rope. To repel slugs and snails, plant some delphinium, foxglove, primrose or garlic. Mulches of oak leaves or pine needles will also keep them away. Lettuce and cabbage leaves or inverted grapefruit halves can be used to lure slugs and snails.

Collect these traps at night while the pests are still eating and kill them with salt water or 40 g of alum dissolved in 10 L of boiling water. Another way to destroy these critters is to burn traps filled with them. You can place small containers on the ground, protected from the rain, and fill them with beer or honey. The slugs and snails will crawl inside and drown. Repeat regularly. Cats also keep snails away.

Animal Pests

Cats and dogs, like other animals, become unwelcome pests when they damage property. To keep cute little kittens out of your flower beds, you can plant some Fritillaria, ornamental garlic or even onion bulbs. The odour will repel most animals, especially rodents. Red, black and Cayenne pepper can be used to repel various animals, including squirrels, raccoons, rabbits and dogs. Fences are another good way to keep curious animals out of your yard.

Mice

Mice cause havoc by feeding on plants under the snow, unseen. You can protect young trees by winding spiral protectors around them (they are available in retail stores), or sticking sections of drainpipe into the ground near the trees. You can also wrap strips of cloth smeared with a mixture of natural resin and melted suet (ratio of 1:3) around the trunk. Certain plants repel mice and keep them from nesting at the foot of trees: amaryllis, mint, lavender, daffodils, narcissus, squill, hyacinth, catnip and spurge. A mulch of thuja bark or savoury or oak leaves will keep mice away. Camphor and mothballs repel them as well. When you set out mouse traps be sure to use some anise oil to mask your odour.

Rabbits

To keep rabbits away, sprinkle some Cayenne pepper, dried blood or talcum powder on your plants, or spray them with a solution of 30 mL of Epsom salts per 1 L of water. You can also coat tree trunks with decomposed animal manure to repel rabbits. The smell of mothballs or dog hair scattered near plants will also keep them away.

Moles

Moles are repelled by hyacinths and castor oil plants. To get rid of these pests, place garlic cloves in their nest, or stick an empty bottle in the entrance to the nest, right side up. The sound of the wind whistling in the bottle will prompt them to move elsewhere.

Birds

Birds kill insect pests, but they sometimes eat berries and seedlings. **Netting** draped over plants or trees is the best protection from birds. **Scarecrows**, scattered onion slices, or brightly coloured rags or milk cartons hung from trees are effective as well. Although these tricks work for a while, birds quickly catch on to them.

Deer

Although expensive, a high fence around the garden is the best way to keep deer out. You can try growing castor oil plants or foxglove, or you can scatter dog or human hair near your plants. Coat tree trunks with diluted human urine, or spray foliage with 15 to 30 mL of Tabasco sauce dissolved in 4 L of water. Small bars of Ivory soap hung from trees will repel deer for a while.

Many of the suggested controls are easy to use and inexpensive. These common household substances can be used to eliminate insect and animal pests, and they are not harmful to the

environment. Furthermore, as mentioned above, various plants keep unwanted pests away, while also enhancing the beauty of your garden and home.

Other Hints

- Colgate toothpaste makes a good salve for burns.
- To get rid of the itch of mosquito bites, try applying soap on the bite. Meat tenderizer works on stings.
- For a splinter remover, pour a drop of Elmer's glue over the splinter, let it dry and peel the dried glue off the skin.
- Rainy day cure for dog odour – simply wipe down your wet dog with Bounce or any dryer sheet, and your dog will smell springtime fresh.
- Coca Cola cure for rust – saturate an abrasive sponge with Coca Cola and scrub the rust stain. Can you imagine what it does to your stomach!
- To remove old wax from a glass candle holder, put it in the freezer for a few hours. Then take the candle holder out and turn in upside down and watch the wax fall out.
- Candles will last a lot longer if placed in the freezer for at least 3 hours before burning.
- Spray a bit of perfume on an unlit light bulb. A light lovely scent will be created when the light is turned on.
- When boiling corn on the cob, add a few tablespoons of sugar to help bring out the corn's natural sweetness.
- Use vertical strokes when washing windows outside and horizontal for inside windows. This way you can tell which side has the streaks. Straight vinegar will get the outside windows very clean. Don't wash windows on a sunny day as they will dry too quickly and leave streaks. I am sure you have other more fun things to do a warm sunny day!



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