

## Exemplary Environmental Leadership/Sustainability Program or Initiative

School Board Durham District School Board

Contact Person and Email Address Susan Bolt-Stephenson [bolt-stephenson\\_susan@durham.edu.on.ca](mailto:bolt-stephenson_susan@durham.edu.on.ca)

Carolyn Porter [porter\\_carolyn@durham.edu.on.ca](mailto:porter_carolyn@durham.edu.on.ca)

Name of Program/Initiative Point Pelee National Park Multi-High School Birding, and More, Field Trip

Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative

These two are general information on the park, and its potential for the students learning:

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/on/pelee/index.aspx>

<http://friendsofpointpelee.com/festivalofbirds>

There are documents created for this year's trip which were sent to All Principals, Vice Principals and Heads of Science and Geography. This is the text from the first document:

**January 2015**

**To: Science/Geography Department Heads**

**Durham District School Board**

Soon it will be time to dust off those binoculars and hiking boots! The annual Outdoor and Environmental Education multi high school field trip to Point Pelee National Park is celebrating its 27th consecutive year. We are offering this unique and exciting spring excursion for two students from your school. This inspiring experience will take place from Tuesday May 5 to Friday May 8. We are requesting your help in the selection of students to participate (consider students from both semesters).

In this package you will find a poster to display in an area where interested students will see it.

This field trip provides a wonderful opportunity for students who have shown a particular interest in the fields of biology, environmental studies, or natural history. They will have the unique experience of joining other students from across the Board. The students will spend four days immersed in the study of Carolinian zone ecology, with an emphasis on ornithology, in one of North America's top birding "hot spots". We have reserved the Henry Community Youth Camp, located within the park for our stay.

The trip will be staffed by Outdoor and Environmental Education personnel along with a group of knowledgeable volunteers who have been donating their time and expertise to our group for years. Student enrollment is limited to 30 and registration happens on a "first come/first serve" basis.

Registration packages will be sent to the schools at the beginning of February along with detailed information for parents and students.

There are documents for parents/guardians for registering their child for the trip. This is the text from the letter:

Your daughter/son has been selected to participate in Outdoor and Environmental Education's 27th annual field trip to Point Pelee National Park. The objective of the field trip is to provide interested students with an opportunity to study natural history, with an emphasis on ornithology. Located on the shores of Lake Erie, Point Pelee is the southernmost latitude of mainland Canada and home to much of our remaining Carolinian ecosystem. The experience will enhance your daughter/son('s)

appreciation and respect for the natural world and understand some international environmental issues.

The dates of the field trip are May 5 - 8, 2015. We have reserved the Henry Community Youth Camp, located within the park, for our stay. An equipment and clothing list along with trip rules/expectations is included in this package. There will be a pre-trip planning meeting scheduled for April 29th at the Durham Forest EEC (details to follow). There will be a maximum of thirty participating students and registration will happen on a first come/first served basis. All students who will be attending this trip must make their own transportation arrangements to be dropped off (7:30 a.m. May 5) and be picked up (6:00 p.m. May 8) at Durham Forest Environmental Education Centre, Uxbridge. The field trip is sponsored by the Outdoor and Environmental Education Department of the Durham District School Board so the student insurance policy is valid as with any other school trip. Field trip staff emphasize that safety of participants is our highest priority. In addition, this out-of-class excursion requires responsible behaviour and a willingness by the students to accept the rules of the field trip and the supervision of staff from both the Durham District School Board and Point Pelee National Park.

We are planning a swim/shower evening at the pool in the Leamington Recreation Centre. Please indicate if you have any concerns about your daughter/son participating in this activity.

Please read the attached information sheets carefully.

Your daughter/son must return completed Parental Permission and Health and Safety forms (appendices D, E and F) to her/his sponsoring teacher or school Principal, along with the \$180.00 fee, covering food, lodging and transportation as soon as possible.

Cheques must be made payable to:

Durham District School Board and may be post-dated to April 16, 2015.

Description of Program/Initiative (max 200 words)

The program starts with the students attending a group meeting at Durham Forest EEC DDSB to meet each other and get some training to prepare for the trip. The main part of the trip occurs at Camp Henry at Point Pelee. The program is organized and monitored by current Outdoor Education Facilitators and the Outdoor Education Interpretive Naturalist. The target audience is High School students with an interest in Geography, Science and who are in the SHSM program. The fee collected from students covers all elements of this trip, barring staffing. A team of DDSB teachers and outdoor education staff are assigned to this four day trip. Volunteer birders and naturalists from the community join us as expert guides. These experts work in a variety of fields – environmental assessment, binocular company, and University backgrounds. We provide the students with high quality binoculars to use for the trip which we purchased at a reduced cost from a supporter of this field trip. Bird Field Guides are also provided.

Our indicators of success are the connections the students make to nature and the positive experience they are involved in with the experts. We have had positive feedback from participants and occasionally have had students attend multiple times.

**What has been the Impact on Student Learning?**

- o Increase student knowledge and develop skills and perspectives that foster environmental stewardship**
- o Model and teach environmental education through an integrated approach that promotes collaboration in the development of resources and activities**

**This is an authentic and immersed experience for young naturalists. They have the opportunity to learn about spring migration, the Carolinian Zone and wildlife species identification. They also get the opportunity to meet other students from schools across the board who share some common interests. Finally they are exposed to working in several expert groups in the field outside of a regular classroom setting.**