

The Birch Islander

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August 2025

Membership Contributions are Due

Annual contributions remain at \$50.00. Your contributions help BIRPOA do the things that help build our community. Did you know that BIPOA provides the following?

- Trail maintenance and upkeep
- Signage on the trails and cottage numbering
- Carts for luggage transport at the docks
- Liability insurance for your use of non owned property
- Social Events and other island activities
- Financial contribution to annual:
 - Fireworks
 - Canoe race
- Archive of historical land survey and agreements with Birch Island Estates
- Liaison with government authorities and associations for common interests
- Mediation of cottager disagreements

Our goal is to have every cottage owner contribute and be part of your cottage community. Our preferred method of payment is e-transfer anytime - send to birchisland@gmail.com. Code word is "cottage".

Fire Restrictions

Just a reminder that the island and Rideau Lakes area are under a **LEVEL 4** fire restriction. This means the following:

- **No open fires whatsoever this includes grate, barrel and pit fires**
- **No grass or debris fires**
- **No Fireworks**

- **No Charcoal unless within 100metres of permanent structure and on your own land**
- **USE EXTREME CAUTION regarding anything that can start a fire.**
- **Portable liquid fuel or gas cooking devices can be used if they have a shutoff valve**

Forest Health Initiative

Have you ever wondered if the health of the forest on Birch Island is good? Did you know that we have our own professional forester on the island? Wendy Weiseger and friends were recently on the island and contributed immeasurably to clearing some trees on the loop trail. Thanks so much Wendy and friends!



Additionally, she did a quick survey of the forest and discovered the following:

Invasive species:

Norway Maple: " Norway maple can be highly invasive with a potentially profound impact on forested habitats throughout

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southern Ontario and eastern North America. It has many competitive advantages over native sugar maple, such as making more efficient use of light, water and nutrients. "

https://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/BMP_NorwayMaple_April2021_WEB.pdf

Honeysuckle: The species are considered invasive in North America, and Ontario in particular, include the Tatarian (*Lonicera tatarica*), Amur (*L. maackii*), Morrow, (*L. morrowii*) and Bells (*L. × bella*) honeysuckles.
<https://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/plants/invasive-honeysuckles-2/>

Common Buckthorn: Common buckthorn can thrive in a wide range of soil and light conditions, enabling it to invade a variety of habitats. It is most often found in woodlands and open fields, where it forms dense stands under which few other plants can grow. Buckthorn can spread widely with the help of birds and animals that eat its fruit, carry the seeds long distances and deposit them in their droppings. Stands of buckthorn can invade roadsides, riverbanks, mature forests, farm fields and hydro corridors.
<https://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/plants/common-buckthorn-2/>

Black Swallow Wort: Black swallowwort also known as dog-strangling vine, from the milkweed family, can quickly establish dense stands that outcompete native plants for resources.
<https://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/plants/dog-strangling-vine-2/>

Extreme weather events: We have all witnessed over the past couple of years mature trees that have fallen in extreme weather and unfortunately some of us have experienced property damage. Most of these occurrences

are natural and there is little we can do about it. Cottagers should be encouraged to evaluate their tree stands to minimize impact and damage on their property. Professional help is available if needed by local arborists and tree services, check out some of the listings on the BIRPOA website.

<https://birchisland.info/contact-links/>

Deer: Perhaps the most impactful issue to our forest health is our deer population. While we all love having the deer on the island and marvel at the herds every year. Overabundant deer populations can degrade forest ecosystems, making them more vulnerable to invasive species and less resilient to disturbances. Deer unfortunately alter the species composition of our forest, reduces the plant diversity, impacts the regeneration of the forest by reducing the understory, which ends up favouring invasive species and altering our canopy structure.

In essence we have two competing natural phenomena going on which is complicated by being on an island. All islanders have a vested interest in trying to balance these competing interests. **We should encourage the natural ecosystem to do its thing.** This means not feeding the deer, manage the invasive species by taking preventative measures as outlined in the attached documents, minimize and discourage non natural species on the island, and encourage our natural tree species to thrive. This may include transplanting to under grown areas on your property and in common areas.

Dates to Remember

August 31st - Annual Canoe Race

September 27th - Birch Island Velo

October 12th - Thanksgiving Weekend

October 18th - Closing Weekend

Look for an upcoming survey via email so we can find out your priorities for the island and BIRPOA.

On Behalf of your Board of Directors and Volunteers, Rob Jackett

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