



PEACEFUL  
PARKS  
COALITION

## For Immediate Release - May 10, 2008

### *Action to Save the Double-crested Cormorants at the Spit*

*International Migratory Bird Day – Saturday, May 10 – at the Leslie Street Spit*

Toronto -- During birding events celebrating International Migratory Bird Day at Tommy Thompson Park/Leslie Street Spit, located at the bottom of Leslie Street, the Peaceful Parks Coalition will be informing participants from 9:30 am that not all migratory birds are welcomed here.

For over a decade, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) has been destroying tens of thousands of Ring-billed Gull and Canada Geese eggs across the city's waterfront. The City is now considering a proposal to add the eggs of Double-crested Cormorants to this list.

The Leslie Street Spit is home to the largest colony of Double-crested Cormorant and the Black-crowned Night Heron on the Great Lakes. The Ring-billed Gull colony produces 6% of the birds' total national population, and Canada Geese are iconic Canadian symbols, yet egg destruction is widespread for these species.

In April 2005, Councillor Paula Fletcher (Ward 30, home of the Spit) endorsed Mayor David Miller's proclamation announcing April 12, 2005 'Welcome Home Cormorant Day'. Today, Councillor Fletcher is endorsing the destruction of cormorant eggs.

"Cormorants are being killed by government agencies throughout their nesting habitat across the Great Lakes. Tommy Thompson Park remains one of the last safe refuges for these birds. The last thing these birds need is another layer of ignorant politicians causing them harm," says AnnaMaria Valastro, Peaceful Parks Coalition.

"Mayor David Miller did the right thing in protecting the Double-crested Cormorant colony at Tommy Thompson Park in April 2005. It was an outstanding decision that made Torontonians proud. We think Toronto has an obligation to protect these birds," says Simon Luisi, Peaceful Parks Coalition.

On May 23, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority will present to the Executive Authority a proposal to test egg oiling on nesting cormorants at the Leslie Street Spit. This is in spite of public consultations that rejected management of the colony and minority support on the advisory committee. To date, the TRCA has not publicly released the details of this proposal, stifling public participation at the executive level.

press release

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