

## COLONIAL WATERBIRD MANAGEMENT GLOSSARY

**Active nest removal** – Removal of nests during the breeding season.

**Adaptive management** – A management strategy whereby techniques are adjusted depending on changes in the conditions or circumstances of the situation.

**Biodiversity** – The variability among living organisms including diversity of ecosystems and species.

**Blue Flag beach rating** – An eco-label awarded to beaches that meet strict environmental criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, safety and other services. The Blue Flag Programme is run by the non-profit Foundation for Environmental Education. Toronto has six Blue Flag beaches including Cherry Beach.

**Colonial waterbirds** – Birds that obtain most of their food from water (i.e., fish, molluscs, invertebrates) and nest in large communal concentrations.

**Colony fidelity or breeding philopatry** – The tendency of a migrating species to return to the site where they were born or where they have bred in the past.

**Competition** – A concurrent demand by multiple individuals for limited resources (i.e., nest site or nest material).

**Cottonwood forest** – The eastern cottonwood tree (*Populus deltoides*) is a large native tree that typically grows rivers or other waterbodies on moist, well-drained sand or silt. It is fast-growing but relatively short-lived (< 80 years). In ideal growing conditions it often exists in pure stands. The cottonwood forest at Tommy Thompson Park is dominated by eastern cottonwood, but also includes other trees, notably willow species and birch species.

**Cull** – The selection and lethal removal of individuals from a population.

**Determent** – The act of disturbing, harassing or scaring birds from a specific area to discourage certain behaviours.

**Direct impact** – An effect resulting from an activity that has an explicit, measurable consequence.

**“Do nothing” management** – A management strategy whereby wildlife managers consciously do nothing to influence the wildlife population in question, but may still monitor the population.

**Ecosystem** – A community of organisms together with their physical environment, viewed as a system of interacting and interdependent relationships and including such processes as the flow of energy through trophic levels and the cycling of chemical elements and compounds

through living and non-living components of the system.

**Egg oiling** – The act of applying oil to bird eggs to clog the pores and asphyxiate the embryo. Permits from the applicable regulatory agencies are required and an approved oil must be used (i.e., Daedol 50 NF white, 100% pure, mineral oil).

**Environmentally Significant Area** – A designation by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority that identifies areas of environmental significance based on seven criteria. This designation is recognized in the City of Toronto's Official Plan. All the peninsulas at Tommy Thompson Park have been designated as an ESA.

**Epicormic or adventitious branching** – Branches that grow from the main stem of a tree instead of the top of the crown usually resulting from environmental disturbances and can be a symptom of tree stress.

**Erosion** – The gradual wearing away of soils and other land surface materials by the physical actions, usually water or wind.

**Fledgling** – A chick that survives until it is able to leave the nest and/or fly competently.

**Forest canopy** – The uppermost level of a forest formed by tree crowns that captures most of the sunlight.

**Forest dependant species** – A flora or fauna species that relies on forest habitat for at least part of its life history.

**Globally Significant Important Bird Area** – An international designation given by BirdLife International (a global partnership of conservation organizations) to sites that meet certain criteria based on the occurrence of key bird species that are vulnerable to global extinction or whose populations are otherwise irreplaceable. Tommy Thompson Park / Leslie Street Spit is Toronto's only IBA.

**Great Lakes Mixedwood Plains ecozone** – An ecozone is a way to categorize ecological systems on a broad scale. The Great Lakes Mixedwood Plains ecozone extends along the Quebec City-Windsor corridor and includes Toronto.

**Ground nest enhancement** – Improving ground nesting opportunities to encourage birds to nest on the ground instead of in trees.

**Guano** – Bird excrement or feces.

**Habitat restoration** – Rehabilitating, enhancing or creating habitat for flora and fauna species to carry out at least part of their life history processes.

**Hatching success** – The number of eggs that hatch and produce viable chicks.

**Inactive nest removal** – Removal of nests outside of the breeding season.

**Indirect impact** – An effect resulting from an activity that may not be linearly attributable to the activity or that may be the cumulative result of direct impacts.

**Invasive species** – A flora or fauna species that reproduces aggressively, is very persistent, typically lacks natural controls and usually exploits disturbed or marginal environments often displacing and out-competing other species.

**Marginal nest areas** – Nesting habitat that is less optimal due to a range of factors including exposure, less suitable nest trees, increased predation, increased human disturbance, etc.

**Native species** – A species indigenous to the country, region or local area.

**Natural succession or ecological succession** – The process of change in the structure and function of an ecosystem over time as influenced by site conditions, species interactions, and other random factors such as weather. Generally early successional communities are dominated by opportunistic, fast-growing pioneer species that are replaced over time with more competitive species as site conditions mature.

**Naturalized species** – A non-native species that has been introduced to an area and can successfully reproduce.

**Nest enhancement** – The improvement of nesting sites to encourage nesting or improve nesting success.

**Nest removal** – Physically removing nests to discourage nesting in subsequent seasons.

**Nest takeover** – The act of an individual bird or paired birds appropriating or seizing another bird's nest or nest site.

**Non-native species** – A species not indigenous to the country, region or local area.

**Percent forest cover** – The percentage of forest that covers a given area as determined by tree canopy and sub-canopy coverage.

**Productivity or breeding success** – Can be defined a number of ways, but most commonly determined by either hatching success, number of fledglings or survival to year one.

**Songbird** – Usually belonging to the avian order Passerine, most songbirds are small perching birds with or without a melodious song or call.

**Toxic contaminant** – A harmful substance that may affect human, plant or animal health, present in the environment due to human activities or natural cycles.

**Tree health** – The general health of a nesting tree as determined by percentage of the canopy intact and the degree of epicormic branching.

**Tree nest enhancement** – Improving tree nesting sites usually using artificial means such as standing structures with platforms to hold the natural nest.