

The Mosquito Post

March 2002

"If you think you're too small to have an effect, then you've never been in bed with a mosquito."

WHAT'S THE BUZZ

Imagine... It's a hot and muggy summer night. It's 2:00am. You'd be sleeping if it weren't for the oppressive heat and that noise, that high-pitched screech. That tinny-sounding scream. How can anything so small make such an irritating racket?

It fades in and out of hearing range. Louder, then quieter, and then louder once again. ...ZzZeeeEEEEee... There's no ignoring it. You realize you'd better do something or you'll never get any peace.

Well, here at the Caledon Countryside Alliance, we're having a similar effect. We're small, but we cause action. And we don't mind being pesky either. The way to get rid of us is to do something.

So remember, *if you think you're too small to have an effect, then you've never been in bed with a mosquito!*

This news flash will be sent out regularly to keep you up to date about our Ecological Footprint project. Read on to find out how you can stop the buzzzz..

HERE'S THE SKIMMY...WE NEED SMALLER FEET

In a nutshell, Ecological Footprint (EF) is what our project is all about. EF is an environmental accounting tool. It adds up the land area needed to produce the resources we consume and the wastes we discharge. Expressed in square metres, Ecological Footprint allows us to measure the load we each place on the environment.

Dr. William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel from the University of British Columbia devised this tool. By determining the amount of bio-productive land we have on the planet (~12-billion ha) and dividing it by the 6 billion people who now inhabit it, they know what an individual's allocation should be (2 ha or 20,000m²). Unfortunately, in places like Canada, we live far beyond our ecological means. The average Canadian has an EF that is almost four times his or her allotment.

But we have a choice. Each of us can take actions that will reduce our EF. We don't want to beat you up about your large EF, but, as we said earlier, we don't mind being pesky.

A CALCULATOR... WITH AN ECOLOGICAL TWIST

The first step is to determine the size of your EF. Our Ecological Footprint calculator is on line (visit www.woodrising.com/cca/efhomepage.asp). It will ask you questions about food consumption, transportation, waste and home energy use and use this information to determine the amount of land area needed to support your lifestyle. Compare your result to the average resident of Caledon (EF of 7.5 ha), the average Canadian (EF of 7.7 ha), the average American (EF of 12.2 ha) or the average citizen of India (EF of 1 ha).

TAKE ACTION. (IF YOU DON'T, WHO WILL?)

Once you've determined your EF by using our calculator (or even if you haven't), sign a pledge to reduce your Ecological Footprint. We've come up with over 20 actions you can take to reduce your impact on the planet. Each action is measured in square metres (m²). By choosing one or more of these actions, you'll be eligible for great prizes. Furthermore, if you reduce your EF by 6,000m², you'll become a Friend of Caledon or a Friend of Headwaters (depending on where you live).

GET ON THE MAP!

Another component of our website is an interactive map of Caledon. The map shows how many people are taking action to reduce their EF. So far, Bolton is in the lead, with Belfountain close behind. How is your community faring? Check it out on our website

(visit www.woodrising.com/cca/efhomepage.asp).

IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

Vehicle idlers beware...violations are coming. Green lawn care keeps your family healthy. Celebrate Earth Day at Harmony Whole Foods and receive a complimentary sapling. And more!

Our website www.woodrising.com/cca/efhomepage.asp and our telephone 519-927-0548.

Note: If you'd like to be taken off of our monthly e-mail list, please send me a note at lseverinac@woodrising.com, titled 'unsubscribe.'



Brought to you by the
Caledon Countryside Alliance's
Ecological Footprint Project.