

## Morgan Arboretum - General Rules

Several incidents that have been reported to the Gatehouse clearly indicate that many members of the Arboretum are not aware of the basic rules that apply to all who enter a conservation or wilderness area. As members we individually have a responsibility to preserve what Heather Munroe-Blum, Principal of McGill University, referred to as 'the lungs of the city' in a published note to the McGill community.

These rules apply to everyone entering this unique area unless otherwise authorized. So if you see someone who is not following these rules, ask them to respect the rules and not endanger our privilege of access to this special place.

- Stay on the designated trails at all times.

People tend to underestimate the importance of cumulative impacts. If one person goes off a trail, the impact is minimal, but with each additional person going off trail, the understory vegetation is destroyed, the soil becomes compacted which then leads to an alteration in the forest drainage and hence the vegetation.

- Preserve the habitat. Leave all vegetation - flowers, fruit, fungi, ferns, branches etc. where they are. Take only pictures.

Picking flowers not only destroys the possibility of flowers for the next year, but also removes a source of food for insects particularly butterflies. Fungi are important in the woodland lifecycle as they are part of the process of returning dead leaves, wood debris etc. back to the soil - without them the regenerative process is slowed, the soil is impoverished and consequently the vegetation is altered.

- Respect the wildlife. Leave birds, nesting sites, animals, ponds, wetlands etc. undisturbed.

Once disturbed, birds and animals often do not return to their nesting or feeding areas for some time and may as a result put their young at risk. If they are repeatedly disturbed over time, they will leave, often never to return.

- Park bicycles and all motorized vehicles in the defined areas.

Cyclists and walkers don't mix well on busy trails and off road biking inflicts damages to the forest floor.

- Registered dogs only. Please pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste in the cans provided.

The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates that a single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria, which are known to cause cramps, diarrhea, intestinal illness, and serious kidney disorders in humans and other mammals.

- Place all garbage in the appropriate trash or recycling containers provided.