

News Release

CWF and Chalk Art Festival Celebrate Biodiversity

March 24, 2010 – The Canadian Wildlife Federation and the 1000 Islands International Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival will celebrate biodiversity with award-winning children’s book creator Wallace Edwards on May 15 in downtown Gananoque, Ont.

“Biodiversity plays a vital role in sustaining life on earth and is a natural theme for the 2010 Chalk the Walk Festival in Gananoque,” said Wade Luzny, Executive Vice President of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. “This is a wonderful opportunity to show our appreciation for the great diversity of wildlife and habitat in Canada.”

The 2010 Chalk the Walk Festival is a fun-filled family event featuring sidewalk chalk art, paintings, drawings and fine art. A barbecue, face painting, music and entertainment will also be featured at the festival, which takes place from 9 am to 3 pm. Admission is free for the general public to tour the festival, but those drawn to participate must fill out a registration form so they can be assigned a portion of the sidewalk to create their nature-inspired art. The festival registration fee is \$2, and the chalk is free. A certificate of participation will be given to all registrants.

Acclaimed author and illustrator Wallace Edwards will be there to share his imagination and love of drawing with children and adults. Edwards won the Governor General’s Award for his book *Alphabeasts* and has published many other popular picture books, including *Monkey Business*, *Mixed Beasts*, *The Extinct Files* and *The Painted Circus*.

Edwards is well known for his creative and colourful animal portraits, and in 2010, the Canadian Wildlife Federation reproduced one of his paintings on a conservation education poster in celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity.

The Chalk Art Festival Alliance was so impressed with CWF’s poster that it partnered with the non-profit conservation organization to advance the biodiversity theme at the 1000 Islands International Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival. CWF biodiversity posters will be on display throughout the picturesque community of Gananoque in May, and Edwards will be working with local students to explore the conservation theme through art.

To celebrate life on earth and the value of biodiversity for our lives, the United Nations has declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity.

David Ansley, co-chair of the Chalk Art Festival, hopes the Gananoque festival will inspire other communities to work together to promote biodiversity and build new partnerships and learning experiences.

“There are some fabulous people working on this endeavor from this end—people who are focused on being successful for education and community development,” he said.

For more information about the 1000 Islands International Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival, please visit www.chalkthewalk.ca.

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About the Canadian Wildlife Federation:

The Canadian Wildlife Federation is a national non-profit charitable organization dedicated to ensuring an appreciation of our natural world and a lasting legacy of healthy wildlife and habitat. By spreading knowledge of human impacts on the environment, developing and delivering educational programs, sponsoring research, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, recommending policy changes and co-operating with like-minded partners, CWF encourages a future in which Canadians can live in harmony with nature. For more information, visit CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca.

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