



CFC NEWS

Saving Living Space for Living Things

Vol. 22, No. 2, Spring 2003

32nd Annual meeting recognizes 2002 achievements

by Melissa Washow

CFC had a near record turn out for its annual meeting on February 4th. John Rogner, Field Supervisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, introduced the “foremost authority” on stream restoration, guest speaker Steve Pescitelli. Mr. Pescitelli spoke about the important resources of the 32,000 miles of stream ecosystems in Illinois, their rich biodiversity and the importance of restoring and maintaining these ecosystems.

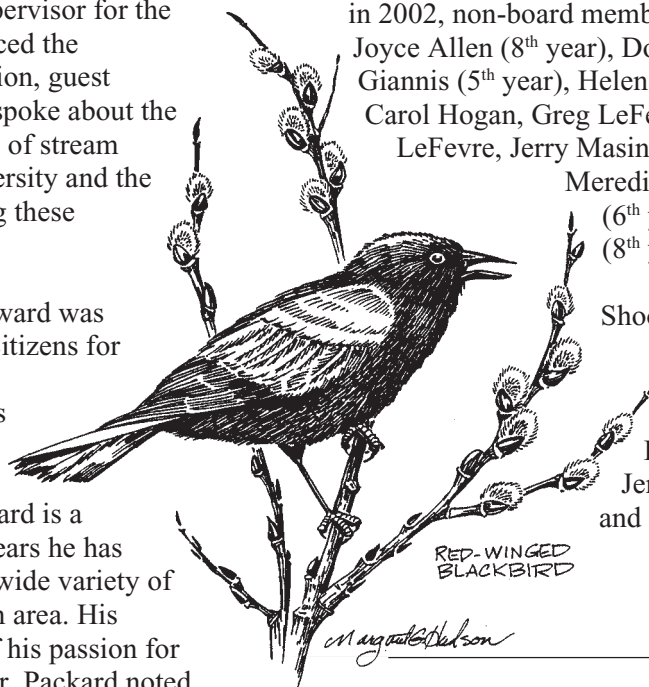
The William H. Miller Conservation Award was presented to Stephen Packard. This is Citizens for Conservation’s highest award, given in recognition of outstanding contributions toward conservation in the Barrington area. In presenting the award Tom Vanderpoel stressed that although Packard is a conservation professional, for twenty years he has volunteered his expertise and help in a wide variety of conservation activities in the Barrington area. His extraordinary dedication is borne out of his passion for conservation. In accepting the award Mr. Packard noted that CFC has played a leading role in conservation efforts and has provided a blueprint for the future of restoration in the region and beyond.

The Great Blue Heron Award, for outstanding contribution toward conservation within CFC activities, was awarded to Sharon Pasch. She has devoted many years of service to CFC in a wide variety of activities. Pasch was also given a special appreciation award as she retires from the CFC board. Her family’s gain of her time will be CFC’s loss, but her expertise will continue to be a valuable resource for CFC.

Mighty Oak Awards (50 hours or more of volunteer work in 2002, non-board members) were given to Joyce Allen (8th year), Donna Ducay, Demetra Giannis (5th year), Helen Hawthorne (8th year), Carol Hogan, Greg LeFevre (2nd year), Cathy LeFevre, Jerry Masino (8th year), Neil Timlin,

Meredith Tucker, Gail Vanderpoel (6th year), and Ruth Vanderpoel (8th year).

Shooting Star Awards (10 years or more of CFC volunteer work) were presented to Bonnie Abernathy, Karen Hunter, Jeanne Kelley, Jerry Masino, Dorothy Sigel, and Jim Vanderpoel.



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Annual meeting *(continued from page 1)*

A new addition to the awards ceremony this year was the presentation of special Thank You Awards. These awards were given for one time projects completed in the past year. Recipients of the award are: Karin Lee and Will Bashaw (serving as high school board representatives), Eagle Scouts Matt Bayer and David Tessmer (for bridge building projects), Eagle Scout Brent Ratter (propagation beds), Eagle Scout Thomas Cafcas (seed cleaning boxes), Brad Allen (for work with Eagle Scouts and bird houses), Katherine Grover (heading up the Grigsby 15th anniversary celebration and the building of "Grigsby" the buffalo), Mary Kaiser and Chuck Breuch (leading a strategic planning session), Tom Podgorski (obtaining and moving the dedication boulder), Mark Vanderpoel (work on silo plans), Marty Stillwell (stewardship work), and John Wagner (brush clearing). Wagner also received an Appreciation Award as outgoing board president.

Tom Vanderpoel concluded the evening's activities with a slide presentation showing the year in review. It began with restoration activities (brush cutting at 9 sites) burns (usually 10) when weather permits, backpack herbiciding, weeding (about 200,000 cattails pulled). Vanderpoel noted this is the 17th year of consistent workdays and that seed cleaning began in 1986 with 13,000 hours spent in the collection, cleaning, sorting and the sowing of seed. Since restoration and management are only a part of what CFC does, the review concluded with slides of other CFC activities ranging from education to the July 4th parade.

In his opening welcome, John Wagner emphasized that CFC's success is due to two main factors. One is support through monetary donations. These donations help to make the second factor possible, the work of all the dedicated volunteers. As demonstrated by the awards given this year, CFC has a wide variety of hard working, dedicated volunteers committed to "saving living space for living things."



Just a reminder

Membership renewals for the year 2003 are due. If you've misplaced yours or didn't receive a membership folder, just call CFC at 847-382-SAVE (7283) and will be happy to send another one to you. Thanks.

— Dorothy Sigel



(L-R) Ruth Vanderpoel, Helen Hawthorne and Demmy Giannis pose after receiving their Mighty Oak Awards at the annual meeting.

7th Annual plant sale

CFC's Annual Native Tree, Shrub and Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 3rd 9 a.m.- Noon. We are thrilled to see the surge in popularity of native landscaping and are proud to offer a large assortment of healthy plants. This year we are presenting a free seminar titled, "Landscaping with Native Plants" at 10 a.m. Many native trees, shrubs, grasses and more than 150 easy-to-grow forbs (wildflowers) will be available for sale. All profits from this sale will be used to help us fulfill our mission statement, "Saving Living Space for Living Things through protection, restoration and stewardship of land, conservation of natural resources and education."

CFC's Annual Native Tree, Shrub and Plant Sale

Saturday, May 3rd 9 a.m. - Noon



CFC Headquarters
(White farmhouse with silo across
from Good Shepherd Hospital)
459 W. Highway 22
Barrington, IL 60010
Call 847-382-SAVE (7283)
with any questions

Cut-out and post

From the Staff Director

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”

John Muir, naturalist

We welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors at the CFC annual meeting. In becoming acquainted with them, one sees that they are well attuned to these words of Muir and will be great additions to the board.

Edith Auchter and husband Tom have lived in Barrington Hills for seventeen years and have three children: Patrick (21), John (19), and Carolyn (16). Edith began her involvement with CFC by bringing her children to nature classes, fostering their interest and curiosity in the world around them. Edith served on the Education Committee during the design of the Junior Naturalist program and has been a Nature Lady at Grove School for about nine years.

Edith served on the District 220 (Barrington area) Board of Education for over ten years, 1991 to 2001. Other involvements include League of Women Voters, Girl Scouts, marriage preparation with St. Anne, Northwest Suburban Astronomers, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and keeping up through the years with the activities of three children.

Having volunteered for years with CFC, Edith was delighted to be asked to serve on the board. She hopes to help further CFC’s mission of “saving living space for living things” primarily through educating our youth to have an appreciation of their environment and following legislative action to protect the environment. Edith is also serving on the Finance Committee, an area of interest to her.

Since the 1960’s, when she first encountered it, Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring has influenced **Meredith Tucker’s** life and informed her passion for environmental conservation. Her concern for the environment induced her to spend a year doing independent research which ultimately allowed her to convince the Village of Itasca (her home at the time) to become the first municipality in the State of Illinois to ban the use DDT— a proud accomplishment.

Meredith graduated from Northwestern University with a B. A. in English and taught high school at Maine West in Des Plaines. After raising her son and daughter and seeing them graduate from college and begin independent lives, she returned to school at

Roosevelt University and earned a Master of Public Administration degree with a major in Environmental Management. She is presently pursuing a Certificate in Plant Conservation Biology at the Chicago Botanic Garden and attempting a total restoration of her property in Inverness.

When Meredith completed her formal education, she decided to prioritize her conservation goals. The timing was right when CFC, with which she had been a member and volunteer for many years, invited her to join the Board. She believes that “‘saving living space for living things’ is the most effective way she can work to ensure that my children will live in a world that includes whooping cranes, white prairie fringed orchids, and all the other species it is meant to support.”

These new directors, so “attached to the rest of the world,” bring talent, ideas, energy and proven dedication to the mission of Citizens for Conservation.

—Sam Oliver



Many thanks

...to **Marj Larson** for a floor lamp for the education office

...to **Derek Oliver** for the generous donation of office supplies and furnishings

...to **Joyce Allen, Donna Bolzman, Mitzi Bradshaw, Demmy Giannis, Kathy Johlie, Teri Masino, Bob Parnell, Jo Seagren, and Ruth Vanderpoel** for the delicious snacks and desserts at the annual meeting

...to **Laura Arndt, Henry Gron, Margaret Hudson, Mark Morris and Marcy Trojak** for providing illustrations and photographs to use in this issue

CFC News E-Update highlights



Below is an excerpt from a recent CFC News E-Update.

For those of you who have not received a CFC News E-Update before, let me explain what it is. CFC News E-Updates are e-mail messages that I send out every 2 - 3 weeks from Spring through Fall, containing primarily CFC news and activities. You will receive E-Updates if you included your e-mail address on your CFC membership form. E-mail is a great way to keep informed about late-breaking news. If you'd like to be added to or removed from this distribution list, just send a message to me at dbolzman@hotmail.com.

CFC is already gearing up for warm weather activities. This year we will continue working on our wetland complex at Flint Creek Savanna by doing lots of planting (wetland plugs) and lots of pulling (cattails). Work on a demonstration garden at the CFC Headquarters will continue featuring techniques for using native plants in your home landscaping. Finally, we'll be celebrating the 15th anniversary of our Flint Creek Savanna nature preserve this summer with lots of fun activities. Watch for more information about all of these in future E-Updates.

ATTN: THURSDAY CFC WORKDAY VOLUNTEERS!
Mark your calendars! Thursday workdays began on
April 10 at 9 a.m.

WILDFLOWER RESCUE SITES — Each spring CFC relies on the sharp eyes and ears of its members and friends to give us tips about where wildflowers may be destroyed due to construction. We check out the site, and if there are wildflowers worth saving, we ask permission from the owner to go in with a group of volunteers to dig them up and transplant them in CFC preserves. We can't begin to tell you how many wonderful native plants we've saved that would otherwise have been destroyed. Be watchful! Spread the word to your friends and neighbors to be on the lookout! Call the CFC office at 847-382-SAVE (7283) with the location of any possible sites. Please be specific as to the area in which the wildflowers can be found.

MONITORING OR COUNTING (FROG, BIRD, BUTTERFLY, PLANTS, RIVERS) — Any of these strike your fancy? Volunteers do it all and it's easy! Contact Rob Neff at rob@neff.net if you are interested in volunteering so that he can hook you up with other monitors or help you with the training. For more information about monitoring programs we participate in, go to the following Web sites: Frogs, birds, butterflies, and rare plants ==><http://www.habitatproject.org/> Rivers and trees ==> <http://www.ecowatch.org/>

EDUCATION COMMITTEE — Please be aware that we always need teachers or teacher's helpers. We have just a few instructors who teach all of our classes and fill any requests from groups in the area for education-related programs, so, if you can help with just one class a year, it would be a big help! Call the CFC office for more information.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD — If you are willing to represent CFC at village planning commission meetings that are open to the public and where conservation or environmental issues are on the agenda, please contact the CFC office. Even in cases where development is inevitable, local citizens' speaking up can affect policies related to lighting ordinances (of concern to us due to possible light "pollution" that can negatively affect wildlife) and other issues. You CAN make a difference, especially at a local level.

CHECK OUT THESE WEB SITES!!

Chicago Wilderness magazine:
<http://www.chicagowildernessmag.org/>

Great pictures. Great articles. Great magazine to subscribe to. Check out their new message board where you can post questions and share experiences.

GreaterGood.com:
<http://www.greatergood.com/partner/cfc/>

If you shop online, go to this Web site first and then on that page go to the link of your favorite e-store. If you do, a percentage of every purchase you make through one of the participating retailers will benefit CFC...at no additional cost to you!

Look for another e-mail update in a few weeks. Meanwhile, watch for the return of your favorite migrant bird and tell me about it; I'll share it in a future CFC News E-Update.

— Donna Bolzman

❁ Volunteer profile ❁

Neil Timlin moved to Lake Zurich and began volunteering for CFC almost four years ago. Having grown up in Deer Park, his concern over rapidly disappearing open spaces that were being replaced with strip malls and housing prompted him to respond to a CFC's *Courier* advertisement calling for volunteers. Surprisingly, Neil lists Saturday winter brush clearing as one of his favorite activities, saying that "in winter you have to have a good reason to be out in the cold, but once you're there, it feels great!"

In addition to the demands of workdays, he has also volunteered for CFC frog monitoring, which included familiarizing himself with the mating calls of frogs on a provided tape, then actually going out into the night and listening for those calls. April 1st is the suggested official starting date for the frog monitoring, but with the recent warm weather Neil believes he will be starting early this spring.

Through his restoration work with CFC, Neil has begun to list invasive plant species and the persistent work it takes to control them as one of the biggest, if not the biggest, challenges that CFC faces. After spending years volunteering, he has a great appreciation of how much work goes behind the words "pristine land" and "prairie restoration." His personal projects include landscaping his parents' backyard with native shrubs and flowers. Neil points out that apartment living doesn't require any yard work from him, so his parents and CFC are the beneficiaries of the knowledge and appreciation he has gained for native plant species. So far he has been successful in his garden with plantings of asters and rye grass, and he plans to expand the variety as soon as weather permits. When asked about favorite trees and flowers that he has come across in his prairie work, he unhesitatingly lists the oak and the butterfly weed, both of which may work themselves into his future landscaping plans.

Neil was recently awarded CFC's Mighty Oak Award for over 50 hours of volunteer work. He immediately asserts that his work for CFC is a gladly given long-term commitment and that he looks forward to many future Saturday workdays.

—Tamara Oberholtzer

15th Anniversary Celebration Flint Creek Savanna, July 12, 2003

by Elaine Parnell

Warm spring rain washes away winter snow that covers the ground like a closed curtain on stage. The actors, famous plants, insects, and animals, await their call. Nature directs a spectacular performance that keeps her human audience in awe. This multi-act show dramatizes Nature's struggle to survive and provide for the needs of living things, including humans. The special effects include a sea of tall grasses, dancing wildflowers, and a symphony of rare sounds.

On Saturday, July 12, 2003,* from 3–7 p.m., CFC proudly highlights the restoration of its privately owned Flint Creek Savanna. We will celebrate this extensive project begun in 1988 by spirited volunteers to provide habitat for native plants and animals that thrive in wetland, prairie, oak grove and savanna. (*Rain date: Sunday, July 13, 2003)

Adults and children are invited to our headquarters at 459 West Highway 22, Barrington, to join the activities or just enjoy the scenery. The festivities will include walking tours, crafts, nature bingo, nature education, music, story telling, wildflowers, demonstration gardens, exhibits and more.

Purchase tickets by reservation only for the "Taste of the Prairie" Buffet served at 5 p.m. Look for details in future issues of the *CFC News*, your area newspapers and by calling CFC at 847-382-SAVE (7283).



Nature class students and a "friend" enjoy the outdoors! Be sure to check out this year's classes in the flyer included in this issue.

The effect of West Nile Virus on wild bird populations

by Meredith Tucker

The advent of West Nile Virus (WNV) has frightened residents of the Chicago area, but the disease is apparently much more serious for wild birds than for human beings. Birds are unable to escape the ravages of mosquitoes during dusk and dawn; they are unable to apply repellents or to wear appropriate clothing to deter the insects. In addition, many bird species are extremely prone to this infection, an infection which frequently kills them.

In 2002 the Chicago Region Audubon Society conducted its Christmas Bird Count in Cook, Will, Lake, DuPage, and Kane counties in Illinois and Lake County in Indiana. They analyzed the data and compared it with statistics collected in the eleven previous counts. Examination revealed major declines in populations of American crows (-81%), blue jays (-66%), and black-capped chickadees (-35%) while in Barrington and Evanston-North Shore areas, crow and jay populations decreased by 90% from the 10-year average. Throughout the country WNV has decimated crows, jays, and other corvids. However, the significant decrease in chickadees is puzzling to ornithologists; they wonder whether the culprit is WNV or pesticides sprayed to control mosquitoes.

Scientists agree that they understand very little about West Nile Virus. The disease has not behaved as most viruses behave. The ease with which it has spread is uncharacteristic of mosquito-borne viruses. WNV's avian pathogenicity - its ability to cause damage and death - is also curious as is its extensive range of hosts. WNV has infected a large number of bird species, many mammals, and at least one species of reptile. Since knowledge is power, this article will explicate just what the scientists do understand about WNV; one must learn about the physical nature of a virus to understand something about this disease.

Viruses are merely pieces of genetic information with coats of protein. Animal viruses have an added outer coating made from their hosts' cellular membrane material. Viruses cannot use energy, make proteins, or reproduce. However, they are able to exploit their hosts' cells (those of individuals they infect). The hosts reproduce the virus. Viruses are not cells; they are merely tiny particles of genetic material that can change over time. The membranous coating recognizes and attaches to specific molecules on the cells they

infect. This device determines which species or type tissue the virus can infect. Most animal viruses infect a single species of animal or a few species of the same type, those which share similar cell-surface molecules. West Nile Virus' ability to victimize so many types of animals has confounded scientists.

West Nile virus belongs to a group of viruses that includes St. Louis encephalitis, several equine viruses, yellow fever (upon which the horse vaccine is based) and dengue fever. Most of these viruses are quite host-specific; WNV, however, has affected 175 bird species, including songbirds, raptors, even penguins, parrots, flamingos, and ostriches. Ducks, doves, woodpeckers, vultures, and cranes also have been infected. Approximately twenty species of mammal are susceptible, including bats, rodents, cats, dogs, skunks, sheep, cattle, and especially horses. At least three alligators in Florida succumbed to WNV.

As an "arbovirus," one carried from host to host by an arthropod, WNV is mainly an avian virus that is usually transmitted from bird to bird by mosquitoes. When a mosquito bites a bird to sip its blood, the virus particles disperse in the bird's blood while in the mosquito they lodge in the salivary glands, reproduce, and pass to the next bird bitten. Virus particles injected into host species recognize the cells of certain tissues and induce those cells to make more virus particles which then circulate in the blood. Mammals can become infected when they are bitten by an infected mosquito, but they do not usually transmit the virus since it does not build up to sufficient levels in their blood. They are "dead-end hosts." In certain species some individuals can produce antibodies that overcome the virus with viral particles disappearing as antibodies increase. No one knows how long this immune response lasts. Individuals of species unable to produce an effective immune response usually die within a week or two of infection, often through effects on the central nervous system although some species suffer damage to all major organ systems as in the case of crows and blue jays.

New means of West Nile Virus transmission are surfacing as scientists study the disease. In a laboratory healthy crows became infected with WNV perhaps through contact with the secretions of infected crows kept with them. Healthy crows were also

infected by eating diseased mice. It is additionally possible that female mosquitoes can pass virus particles to their eggs.

At this time no vaccine is available for humans or birds. The new equine vaccine has proven effective, but not entirely so. In some cases zoos are using the horse vaccine on birds including the endangered California condor although it has not proven especially useful for birds. Meanwhile the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is cooperating with other institutions to develop an oral avian vaccine that could be administered at feeding stations.

The most important action one can take to decrease the chances of a major disease outbreak this year is to reduce mosquito breeding opportunities. Eliminating standing water may be the single most important deterrent. Empty water from flower pots, barrels, tires, cans, and pet dishes. In addition, change birdbath water every few days (but daily is healthier for the birds). Keep gutters clean and flowing; dump wading pools when using them; aerate ornamental pools or stock them with larvae-eating fish; use native plants to eliminate standing water. Besides getting rid of mosquito breeding sites, replace outdoor lights with yellow bulbs that will not attract insects. In addition, residents can help themselves if not the birds by using repellents and light-colored clothing to avoid mosquito bites. Stay indoors around dawn and dusk, the main feeding times for most mosquitoes.

Birds are especially vulnerable now, and populations of some species are depleted. Birds in a weakened condition are more likely to succumb to WNV than are strong individuals. If you feed wild birds, keep the feeders clean and full. Although feeders encourage birds to congregate in groups, evidence indicates that flocking birds would gather at food sources even if a feeder were not available. Finally, to help wild birds it is imperative for one to keep his cat in the house. Cats are highly successful predators; it is their nature whether they are feral or domesticated, hungry or satiated. For many years cats have been a leading cause of death in songbirds.

Audubon's Chicago Region director Steve Packard states, "Next summer will be a time of stress for recovering bird populations..." ("Local Counts Tell Grim Story.") He asks municipalities to carefully plan their responses to new virus eruptions. Spraying for adult mosquitoes is ineffective in eliminating disease and very disruptive to wildlife and ecosystems. He suggests that safer and more effective methods be

used, such as public education concerning standing water as well as applying bacterial larvicide to stagnant water known to harbor mosquito larvae. Citizens can help by contacting local government officials in this regard.

Here is one final note after all this doom and gloom. A local ornithologist recently stated that based on attacks of WNV in Israel, New York, and elsewhere in the world, he believes that during the first year the virus occurs, there are only a few avian cases. In the second year bird populations are severely impacted, but many birds acquire immunity by the third year and fewer succumb. In ensuing years he believes the disease will follow the path of other arboviruses and become less problematic. Let us hope that he is right.

Eagle Scout projects

by Bob LeFevre

CFC strives to achieve its mission with a small army of volunteers. Some of the most prominent projects that have been accomplished are the work of area Boy Scouts completing their Eagle Scout requirements.

Matt Bayer and David Tessmer completed two bridges. These bridges are major links in our nearly completed Flint Creek Trail system. When finished this self-guided nature trail will meander through prairies, oak savanna, creek course, flood plain, and wetland mitigation project constructed over the years. Anyone collecting seed this year will be putting it in our new seed drying racks made by Thomas Cafcas. Using racks to dry seed is a huge improvement over the floor! Luke Thominet constructed boardwalk sections for use in damp areas and signs for use in our nature trail. Information on the signs will explain the major ecosystem features in the preserve as well as plant or animal species to be found in the area. All of the boards for the boardwalk sections came from the old barn (Remember the barn? I surely do!) Take a walk around the barn foundations and you'll see new seed propagation beds built by Brent Ratter. These beds will provide seed from hard to collect and rare plants, particularly the spring forbs.

Other Eagle Scout projects in the past have included fence removal, bird box construction, the installation of carp netting in a section of Flint Creek and wire netting selected trees along the creek as protection against hungry beaver. (*continued on next page*)

Scout projects *continued...*

As you can see, Scout projects provide CFC with valuable work, many times beyond the scope of "regular volunteer" effort. We thank all of the Eagle Scouts who have participated in the past and look forward to a continued relationship with area Scouts.



Tom Vanderpoel presents Thank You Awards to area Scouts at the annual meeting this past February.

Upcoming events...

- ❁ **Sat., May 3, 9 – noon, CFC Headquarters**
Annual plant sale and free seminar at 10 a.m.
"Landscaping with Native Plants."
- ❁ **Sat., May 10 5:30 p.m.**
Harper College Building D
Northwest Suburban Astronomers and Harper College Astronomy Day. All ages welcome lectures, displays, projects, planetarium, telescope observing. FREE
- ❁ **Sunday, May 11, 2 p.m. Baker's Lake**
Take a nature walk and inspect the newly cleared area on the lake, see gorgeous spring wildflowers and get a telescopic view of baby herons on the island rookery. Meet by the parking lot on Highland Ave.
- ❁ **Saturday, May 17, 8:30 a.m.**
Flint Creek Savanna
Enjoy a late spring bird walk with Dave Johnson (Wild Bird Center). Meet at CFC's headquarters parking lot.



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