



Reboot! CFC Website provides wealth of information

by Diane Greening
Website Content
Manager

Clean up the website. Make it easier to navigate and update. Bring it into the 21st Century of smartphones and tablets. CFC's board sent these instructions to Dave Underwood of 2050 Design, and he produced the all-new CFC website on a WordPress platform.

WordPress automatically adapts sites to computers, tablets, or phones and separates the complex structure of a website from the content, meaning that it doesn't take a technical wizard like Dave to update the content; mere mortals like myself can add articles or make quick corrections. What that means for CFC is faster response time for website changes and a greater pool of volunteers for the content manager role.

Take a quick tour. You can find your way back home by clicking on the little house just under the CFC logo.

Home

The Home Page provides both an introduction to CFC and keeps members current on the latest events and news. Want to know what's going on in the next few weeks? Look at Hot off the Press located just under the Welcome paragraph. This section is frequently updated and lists hikes, classes, programs,



Screen shot of native plant library — a useful new feature on CFC's redesigned website.

plant sales and other events. Below that are snapshots of what CFC does: What We Do (CFC's multi-faceted mission), Our Preserves (the properties we own and manage), Ways to Get Involved, Upcoming Events (a calendar), and Community Programs and Education.

At the top of the Home page is a line of drop-down menus. (If you're using a small tablet or phone, these menus may be condensed into a "hamburger," three stacked horizontal lines. Click on the hamburger to see the menus or rotate your tablet to horizontal.)

Participate

Participation is at the heart of CFC, and this

menu offers many ways to volunteer. You can assist with our restoration efforts, make your own yard part of a Habitat Corridor, educate yourself or your children, or monitor wildlife, to name just a few.

One of the richest sources of information is Community Education, found under Educational Programs. Here you can find illustrated lists of the worst invasive plants, download native plant lists, read about local plants and animals in "Notable Natives," find out about slide programs available for group meetings, get seasonal gardening tips, and see recommended books.

Don't miss the Event Calendar. There you can elect to see all CFC events or select specific categories such as "Workdays." The Calendar defaults to agenda style, but you can change it by clicking on Week or Month in the upper right.

Resources

The resources menu provides a quick way to find more information about plants, animals, gardening, and restoration. If you're still stumped after reading all these links, you can check out "Ask CFC," a new section featuring questions posed by our members and friends and answered by knowledgeable sources.



Screenshot of website's new "Ask CFC" feature.

News

All the news that's fit to post resides here. The newest articles appear first. "News from CFC" highlights CFC activities. "Press Releases" are just that, and "Published Articles" were written about CFC in other periodicals. Only the first paragraph or two is displayed to keep page sizes under control. To continue reading, click on the "Read more" or "Learn more" buttons.

Support and Contact

These two menus are self-explanatory. Note that the bottom of every page offers our contact information, a chance to join our email list or donate to CFC.

But what about ... ?

If all else fails, use the search box found at the bottom of every page. A search for "native plants" turns up four pages of suggested articles. Each page contains the start of the original post. Click on the title—which turns red when your mouse is over it—to see the full post.

I hope you'll enjoy browsing the new site as much as I do. It should be very useful and educational to everyone.

Baker's Lake nest count interesting — not encouraging

by Diane Bodkin

When we got word from former CFC board member Patsy Mortimer that the Baker's Lake nest count should be done as soon as possible while the fledglings were still on the nests, we put a plan together. The unique opportunity for photography caught my attention and that of my husband Jim. Wayne Schild answered the call for a canoe, and Tom Benjamin offered the use of his SUV to haul it. Jim, Tom, and I moved the canoe out through Wayne's basement window and hoisted it up on Tom's SUV. Robert Sliwinski, Senior Wildlife Biologist for Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. who has done the count for the past several years, was available on short notice, so he, Tom and Jim paddled to the island to do the count early on the morning of June 7.

Robert reported sighting four black-crowned night herons compared to more than 200 in 1984, more than fifty in 1991, and about fifteen in 1992. The numbers have stayed at less than fifteen since then. Robert checked three experimental tower nests he had built at a personal cost of \$500 to try to entice the great blue herons to use the structures and the island. One of his nests did contain a great blue heron family, but the other two structures held cormorants.

Sliwinski voiced concern about the current deteriorated state of the nests and platform structure, stating that the Forest Preserve District of Cook County would need to decide about funding repairs. In part the purpose of the platforms is to encourage more heron nests.

The great egrets seemed to be happy nesting at the base of the structure in the Christmas trees and along the water's edge. Their numbers have increased steadily since the late 1980s.

The official report found about 300 nests. There were only four black-crowned night heron nests, two great blue heron nests, 116 egret and 177 double-crested cormorant nests. Sliwinski questioned continuing the annual survey if the heron population remains minimal and the cormorant population continues its dramatic increase.



Great egret fledglings at Baker's Lake. Photo by Jim Bodkin.

Restoration Report

Restoration — planting beds, an advanced technique

CFC has always tried to use the whole range of native plants in its restorations. We have done an admirable job of establishing a great diversity of plants, far more than one typically sees in restorations, but there are still some plant species that we have not been able to acquire or that are less common than they should be. We have noticed that in almost all cases the plants will germinate if we can just get the seeds although it may take a long time for the plants to thrive. There are three reasons that it is difficult to collect the seeds of certain plants.

First, all of the desired missing plants are extremely conservative. They drop out of the original habitat when the land is disturbed. When we started collecting seed over twenty-five years ago, there was still high quality remnant prairie along the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks between Palatine and Crystal Lake. Now most of the remnant has been severely disturbed, overwhelmed by non-native invasive species. Each year it gets harder to find the plants we want because the unprotected remnants of native landscape are dying out.

Second, some of the desired plants are rare. An example of this is prairie alumroot; it is rare even in high quality remnants. Contrast this to hoary puccoon and prairie panic grass, both of which are quite common in the best prairies. Palatine Prairie has been preserved and is by far the best remnant along the Metra tracks today. Prairie panic grass is probably the most common grass there!

Finally, some seeds are just very hard to collect. The seeds of hoary puccoon are only ripe for one day. The seeds explode out of the seed head when ripe giving the collector just one day to grab them.

What has CFC done to address this seed shortage? Our answer is the planting beds. With the help of the Boy Scouts and other volunteer groups, we have built six planting beds and two cold frames at CFC headquarters. All have been planted with specimens of the stubborn rarities. The plants have all thrived in the carefully tended beds. It is exciting to see prairie phlox and cream wild indigo in the spring, New Jersey tea and purple milkweed in the summer, and rough white lettuce and aromatic aster



Scurfy pea from the planting bed. Photo by Donna Bolzman.



Prairie panic grass. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

in the fall. The wildflowers grow in a matrix of grasses that is difficult to restore like prairie brome, Scribner's panic grass, northern dropseed and prairie panic grass. The beds are easy to monitor every day, so we are assured of picking the seed at the right time. It is also easier to protect the plants from deer browsing in the planting beds than in the field.

Is it working? For some plants it is. Most of our seed of the most desirable plants comes from the planting beds. In the case of northern dropseed, scurfy pea and prairie panic grass, all three species are coming strong in the field. We have had more modest success with hoary puccoon, purple milkweed



Planting bed at CFC headquarters. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

and small skullcap. For the first time in twenty-seven years, three prairie alumroots bloomed at Grigsby in 2014. The seed for these specimens surely came from the planting beds because we have never collected it in the wild.

There are still some failures. We have yet to spot any seedlings of New Jersey tea even though it is doing splendidly in the raised beds. This is unfortunate because it is one of the key plants for butterflies and is an important plant in both prairie and oak savanna. We have also been disappointed with prairie violet and violet wood sorrel. Only a few have germinated in the field even though they are thriving in the beds. Also, we have not been successful with rough wild lettuce which has exploded in the newest bed.

We will not stop trying as we have found with most aspects of ecological restoration, perseverance is the key to success.

— Jim Vanderpoel

Citizens for Conservation has a home: our farmhouse

by Tom Benjamin

The year 2000 was pivotal for Citizens for Conservation. We did not have a permanent headquarters or much of our own land to restore to native landscapes, a large part of our mission. This was a year when Good Shepherd Hospital was selling some land just south of their campus on State Highway 22. After a complicated negotiation process with two separate developers, CFC acquired approximately fifty-two acres including a farmhouse and outbuildings. The acquisition became part of Flint Creek Savanna and helped put CFC on the map with increased recognition and an ideal home base.

Our CFC farmhouse is probably well over a hundred years old. The building depicts how farmers during the early 20th century lived on their land. It is a small house which originally consisted of a bathroom (most likely without a toilet as an outhouse was more common), kitchen, dining room and small living room on the first floor and three small bedrooms on the second floor. If the family was large as many farm families were in those days, the quarters were tight.

The basement served as a coal bin, workshop and wood- or coal-burning furnace room. Heat rose through the house using a couple of registers cut into each floor allowing the heated air to rise from the basement furnace to the first and second floors. The foundation was made of field stone the farmer would have collected from his land, using mortar to hold the stones in place to provide a solid foundation for the wood frame building.

Eventually an addition was put on the south side of the house to provide a larger kitchen and enclosed porch. This became the main entrance because it provided a protected entry into both the living quarters and the basement. One can picture this space filled with heavy coats and boots used by the hard-working farm family.

The farmhouse has been through a lot of stress during its lifetime. Extreme seasons in the upper Midwest with many snow, rain, and wind storms severely challenged the house, but it has held up fairly well. Of course, over the years the farmer and now CFC have provided considerable maintenance.

Last year we made one important capital improvement and are in the process of making another. Last fall we replaced our furnace for safety reasons. The old chimney was not venting properly, and the furnace itself was old and inefficient. As a result we installed a new, high-efficiency furnace that does not require a chimney. The chimney is blocked off in the basement, and the new furnace vents by PVC piping.

Our second capital improvement will be exterior siding. The clapboard is in poor condition with paint peeling and chipping off in large areas, exposing a substantial amount of wood rot. We considered hiring a contractor to paint the entire exterior,

but after learning that the labor-intensive prep work drove up the cost, we decided to look at other solutions. At the moment the House and Grounds Committee is talking with several contractors about installing vinyl or Hardie Board siding which will look good and require much less maintenance than paint for many years to come.

Our hands-on House and Grounds Committee solves smaller maintenance issues. Recently the committee replaced columns in the basement that support the stairs going to the basement and first floor at the south entry. The old columns were rotted, and two of them were just hanging from the stairs not supporting them.

While working in the basement, we wondered why our water softener wasn't plugged in. Subsequently we learned that the equipment had been donated by Angel Water Conditioning, Inc. in Barrington. After we called Angel for advice on being operational, Andy Angel sent out a service tech to get it going again and if necessary to replace the unit. Our committee didn't have to do much on this once Angel got on it. The service and materials were generously donated by Andy Angel, and we thank him for his assistance.

The building committee handled other small maintenance issues: replacing windows, small plumbing and electrical repairs and some grounds maintenance. Old buildings require lots of attention so the committee is constantly on alert for things that need fixing.

Other volunteers have contributed substantially to maintaining CFC's properties. Several Eagle Scout projects have significantly improved CFC's grounds and buildings, and, of course, the regular CFC corps of volunteers is also on hand to step in when needed. All together the various support groups will help this old farmhouse last another hundred years.



CFC headquarters. Photo by John Schweizer.

Share the image of oaks with hand-drawn note cards

by Barb Cragan

Many of our members have told us how much they appreciate the wonderful watercolors by Jane Christino that have appeared in the membership brochures for many years. Jane is a Barrington resident and a former English teacher at Barrington High School. Chickadees, scarlet tanagers, sandhill cranes, red-winged blackbirds, frogs, rabbits, and even our iconic CFC farmhouse are just some of the subjects of Jane's artwork. Citizens for Conservation is fortunate Jane has donated her nature-related watercolors to us for so many years.

At our Annual Meeting in 2013, Jane donated some of her original watercolors for a silent auction. Her husband Joe Wolnski matted and framed them for us. We are most grateful for these gifts of their gifts.



One of Jane's most popular paintings is the image of oak leaves and acorns. Now that picture is available as a note card printed on high-quality paper. CFC is selling packages of five cards with envelopes for \$5.00. Proceeds from the sale of the cards support CFC's efforts to preserve and protect land in the Barrington area. If you are interested in buying some of them, please call our office at 847-382-SAVE (7283). Leave a message with your phone number, and we will make arrangements for your purchase.



Bird tape example from abcbirdtape.org.

Seasonal Tip

Songbird migration hazardous!

When you receive this newsletter, birds will be flying south for the winter. This is prime time for window strikes. We all have had birds hitting glass, frequently dying, sometimes not; but during migration, the number of songbirds colliding with windows increases dramatically. Here are a few things you can do to prevent these accidents.

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) at abcbirdtape.org sells a product called "bird tape" that helps prevent collisions. Birds hit windows because they can't see the glass and fly toward the sky or trees reflected in the windows. If there are windows on opposite sides of a house, birds may try to fly through what they perceive to be a clear passage. The impact can kill or severely injure a songbird.

Applying bird tape to your window allows birds to see a barrier to avoid rather than a space through which they can fly. The suggested spacing of the translucent tape is every four inches placed vertically on the glass. Check the ABC website for specific information.

Another idea is to apply decals to windows prone to bird strikes. Although three or four decals may not be as effective as bird tape, it will likely decrease the number of collisions at that window.

Screens over windows are a good solution to bird strikes. Not only do screens decrease the reflectivity of the glass, but they also cushion any impact. I have seen small birds hit the screens on my porch and bounce off to fly away without even touching the ground.

One final and creative solution is to paint a window with a seasonal design to warn the birds away. Please see the accompanying photo. It works!



Halloween skeleton warns birds. Artwork and photo by Robert Cantwell.

Help birds detect the glass, and you will help decrease the one billion bird deaths annually in the United States from such collisions.

by Meredith Tucker

Youth education efforts featured at Biz-Ed Expo/STEM Fair

by Gail Vanderpoel

On June 14, Citizen for Conservation's Youth Education Committee attended Barrington's yearly STEM Fair sponsored by Barrington School District 220 and held at the high school. This year the fair was markedly different from the previous two events; the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Fair was combined with the Barrington Biz-Ed Expo, sponsored by the Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce.



Volunteer Bonnie Albrecht assists with hands-on learning at the fair. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

We continued to present information about our Youth Education classes and to provide hands-on learning with our mammals kit, but we had many more adult visitors this year. Our volunteers gave out flyers created by CFC's Community Education Committee on invasive plants and many other aspects of taking care of landscapes and gardening with native plants. Many people who stopped by our booth thanked CFC for what we do to preserve and restore land in the community. Some people had questions ranging from what herbicides to use on buckthorn to "Where's Sam Oliver (CFC's staff director)?"

Young visitors discussed their favorite mammals with us. One young man had questions about where our animal pelts actually came from and called them, "Creepy but cool." Two Barrington High School girls stopped by and reminisced about the fourth grade prairie visits CFC holds every fall. We invited them to come to our Saturday workdays where they can enjoy the beautiful prairie scenery and work to help preserve it (from 9:00-11:00 a.m.). We distributed our Youth Education Class Schedule to children and their parents and are looking forward to two more classes in October and November. For more information, please visit us at www.citizensforconservation.org or call 847-382-SAVE (7283).

This event provided an opportunity for us to discuss our mission of "Saving Living Space for Living Things" with community members and to learn about local businesses and other educational activities in the STEM Fair area. There were close to 100 booths at the fair; our favorite may have been the Great Harvest Bakery table where we purchased healthy wholegrain treats from CFC members and neighbors Steve and Jena Wu. In addition we were happy to "get the word out" about Citizens for Conservation thanks to a live interview provided by WRLR 98.3, "The Voice of Lake County." The Biz-Ed Expo was well-attended and gave CFC a chance to share information about what our organization has to offer to the Barrington community.

CFC News e-update: All the news, none of the paper

by Sarah Hoban

The newsletter you're holding in your hands now has long been a valued benefit for CFC members. Readers can get in-depth coverage of CFC activities as well as rich photography that illustrates CFC's work in action as well as educational articles. However, as you know if you're a CFC member, there's always something going on, and four years ago, CFC began looking for a way to communicate upcoming events, volunteer needs, and other news that needed quick distribution.

Therefore, CFC launched *CFC News e-update* in February, 2011, using Constant Contact, a popular e-mail marketing service, to distribute the monthly publication. Not only can readers find out what's coming up, but they can also follow links to signup forms on our website, to longer documents, or to outside articles or websites of interest. The e-newsletter has proven popular; we sent the first issue to 297 readers; the latest—September's issue—went to 1,154.

We can use Constant Contact throughout the month to send out reminders, ask for volunteers, or advertise a last-minute activity. Because Constant Contact has helpful analytic tools, we can see what links have been popular. In July, for instance, twenty-two readers clicked on a link to "Bird Song Hero," an interactive matching game from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We can also tell how many people are opening and reading the issue. In addition, e-update is a low-cost membership marketing tool; nonmembers can sign up for it on our website, see the broad scope of our activities and mission, and then decide if they'd like to join us.

If you're not getting *CFC News e-update* and would like to, please send us your e-mail address at cfc@citizensforconservation.org.

CFC's Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale looking good

As this newsletter goes to the printer, our Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale customers are picking up their orders. Based on early indications, we have doubled the usual number of orders this year with over 160 specimens.

CFC greatly appreciates the many hours of hard work put into organizing and managing the sale by our new volunteers Barb Overbey and Linda Krauss. From choosing species to creating order forms to publicity to finding healthy plants to ordering and then picking up orders, it is a monumental task!

No doubt online ordering at CFC's new website has been instrumental in the increased sales, but Barb and Linda's dedication and knowledge of native trees and shrubs has been the driving force. Thank you!

CFC summer internship: a journey of continuous discovery

During the summer of 2014, Citizens for Conservation provided college students majoring in the environmental sciences a hands-on learning experience through our Summer Internship Program. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the program. Interns participated in the ongoing restoration of CFC properties including activities like installing native plants, seed gathering, weeding, brush cutting, removing invasive species and water monitoring. They experienced the restoration techniques CFC uses at various stages in the land management/restoration cycle.

In addition, the interns assisted CFC's Youth Education Committee by working with young children in activities designed to inspire and encourage their involvement as future environmentalists.

A grant from the Oberweiler Foundation funded the 2014 intern program as it has done for many years. Citizens for Conservation is extremely grateful for this funding; we could not do the work to which we dedicate ourselves without the support of organizations like the Oberweiler Foundation.

CFC will continue its intern program during the summer of 2015. Candidates should be enrolled in college studying environmental science or a related field. They should have a passion for environmental service and live in or near the Barrington area during the ten weeks of the internship starting in late May or early June.

Interested candidates can email a resume to cfc@citizensforconservation.org Attn: Intern Chair Ralph Tarquino.

by Ralph Tarquino

Emily Pecilunas

Emily was born and raised in Arizona but resides with her parents in Cary during school breaks. She attends the University of Arizona pursuing a bachelor's degree in Rangeland Ecology, Management and Restoration.



2014 summer interns L to R: Emily Pecilunas, Katie Badskey, Meghan Elgan, Max Orlandi
Photo by Katherine Grover.

Ten things that I, Emily Pecilunas, learned during my summer internship at Citizens for Conservation:

1. I really, really, really dislike sweet clover.
2. ... and mosquitoes.
3. Actually, I dislike anything invasive or that makes me itch. (Chiggers, I'm talkin' to you.)
4. Nothing tastes more refreshing after a volunteer workday than watermelon.
5. Ecological restoration doesn't happen overnight or get done by one person. So while my work this summer may not have had an immediate impact, it will in the long run as evidenced by all CFC's successful restoration efforts.
6. If you lose your keys in the prairie, they are very, very difficult to find. The idiom "needle in a haystack" comes to mind.
7. Speaking of cars, my Hyundai Elantra is not designed to go off-roading. (I learned this the hard way after having my car towed from Spring Creek Forest Preserve.)
8. Ecological restoration can make you shed blood, sweat and tears, sometimes all on the same day
9. Max, one of my fellow interns, is strong enough to move a floating island by himself. Also, he is the only one of us four brave enough to dive to the bottom of the pond looking for a cement anchor.
10. The people involved in Citizens for Conservation, from Tom Vanderpoel to workday volunteers to Native Seed Gardeners and to everyone else that makes this non-profit successful, are some of the most passionate, generous and kind people I have encountered.

I feel so privileged to have been part of an organization that has allowed me to work outdoors, grow as a person and make a difference. To everyone who took a part in making my summer internship possible, educational and memorable, I sincerely thank you.

Max Orlandi

Max grew up Hanover Park. He attends Harper College and will transfer to the University of Wisconsin Whitewater in the fall. His major is Environmental Resource Management with a minor in Political Science.

A prairie is like nothing I have ever experienced. Given different daily tasks, my fellow interns and I were left to

defend the precious prairie from foreign invaders. I never understood how prized Flint Creek Savanna and the other preserves were until I met the regular volunteers on Thursdays and Saturdays. They regularly work to restore what once was there. That made me want to do a good job, but the task is difficult.

Our task was almost impossible. Whether it was wicking, spraying, pulling, or picking, there always seemed to be another plant to target. Our daily results frustrated me at first, but my motivation grew as we passed the halfway mark. I was disappointed with our progress and didn't look forward to telling our boss Tom Vanderpoel that there was still more to do. I expected his disappointment or a speech to make us work harder, but he never seemed phased by the news.

Now I believe that "Patience is a Virtue" is needed to survive this internship. We can do nothing substantial in just ten weeks. Tom talked about former interns and how long he, his family, and the other volunteers have been coming to CFC. It dawned on me that I needed to enjoy the experience rather than worry about it. This is where I could learn what I wanted to learn. I focused on quality over quantity.

Seeing crickets jump away from me at every step or watching a baby sandhill crane develop into a high-flying machine fifteen feet above my head on my last day are things I can cherish forever. I learned that restoring the prairie is a nearly impossible feat. It won't be completed in ten or twenty years, but I do know that every hour we spend helps. I learned first-hand what needs to be done, and I consider myself a well-trained assassin of weeds.

I am grateful to have found Citizens for Conservation and even more grateful to have spent my time with truly wonderful people. I could not be any happier with the outcome of the ten weeks I spent at CFC, and I will never forget what we accomplished.

Meghan Elgan

Meghan is from Algonquin and a University of Wisconsin Stevens Point alum. She majored in Wildlife Ecology with a minor in Conservation Biology. She is returning to the Ozark Natural Science Center in Huntsville, Arkansas to teach children about the natural world through environmental education.

As always, working with the CFC volunteers is a great learning experience. Everyone is so knowledgeable and passionate about the work this organization does, it's contagious. The internship provides networking opportunities as well, and I've met many experienced CFC people whom I look forward to collaborating with in the future.

This was my second year as a CFC intern, and it is encouraging to see progress in the ecosystems during those years. I feel a sense of pride and ownership walking through a CFC property because I know I helped restore it! For people passionate about wildlife, this work gives the satisfaction of knowing you are

making a difference for species. Creating habitat gives wildlife a chance to share this beautiful planet with us.

Summer always seems to fly by, and this one was no exception. I had so much fun in the field. It was hot as all get out some days, and sporting a breeze-proof suit that doubles as a personal sauna isn't my idea of fun, but having a good attitude makes all the difference. The crew of 2014 had so many laughs! The most memorable moments were the countless times we all fell in the field pulling the not-so-sweet sweet clover that was taller than us, and the impressions that each one of us "specialized" in (Max's T-rex and Emily's beluga whale, Katie's chickadee and my awful sandhill crane — try it, it's hard).

Working for CFC is a unique and unforgettable experience. The organization is a gem and has given me a "hands-on" understanding of ecological restoration. I recommend the internship for any student interested in natural resources. Come to volunteer workdays and see for yourselves!

Katie Badskey

Katie grew up in Tower Lakes and has just finished her freshman year at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. She is studying civil and environmental engineering, hoping to specialize in the environment and hydrology.

This summer I joined Citizens for Conservation's wonderful internship program. I am thankful that I heard about it through Sam Oliver and Tom Vanderpoel. This summer has been a real opportunity for me to learn new things and make new memories.

When people ask me what I learned through the internship, it's hard to answer because I have learned so much. Before the internship I did not know much about native plants or prairie ecosystems, but now I can identify the worst non-native invasive species and techniques to remove them.

It has been a pleasure to work with Tom Vanderpoel. He is incredibly knowledgeable. We learned something new in every conversation with him. He taught us to focus on the details. I learned that every little plant matters. If you leave behind one sweet clover plant, there will be dozens more the next year. Details make up the whole picture and create a beautiful restored prairie.

In addition to the learning and hard work, I had fun getting to know the other interns. We progressed from coworkers to friends. After spending eight hours together nearly every day, we have an almost sibling relationship; we quarrel occasionally but work together well as a team. I also really loved the volunteers. It is amazing that CFC has so many people who come back day after day, year after year. I learned from them too.

This summer I gained the patience which is necessary in restoration. I learned about teamwork and leadership. I can point out garlic mustard and reed canary grass. I formed many new and wonderful relationships. I treasure this experience and will remember it forever.

A Good Read

Cooler Smarter: Practical steps for low-carbon living

The Union of Concerned Scientists



This book is a tool for individual action "... offering practical advice ... as to how each of us can take steps that ... can effect meaningful, positive change to combat global warming." It encourages everyone to lower his carbon emissions by 20% while improving quality of life, saving money and improving health. If all Americans reduced their emissions by 20%, heat-trapping carbon dioxide entering the atmosphere each year would drop by over 1 billion tons! That is like eliminating 200 coal-fired power plants.

Americans each cause more than four times the carbon emissions of the global per-person average and more than twice the amount emitted per person in other industrialized countries with high standards of living.

For the doubters about global warming, studies show that the planet's global average temperature was the highest ever recorded in the decade 2001-2010. The distinctive pattern or "fingerprint" of the warming shows that human activity is responsible.

There are five areas in which we can lower our personal carbon footprint: transportation, "stuff you buy," home heating and cooling, other home energy use, and food. Most people could achieve a 20% reduction by changing the car they drive to one that gets 40 mpg.

One of the most useful aspects of this book is the detailed analysis of the carbon dioxide and other gases created in the production, processing, packaging and delivery of food. Not surprisingly, beef and pork produce 5.74 pounds of emissions per pound of food while vegetables produce 1.6 pounds of emissions per pound of food. Food for thought!

The ease of following the authors' recommendations makes the reader want to take action. They show how to keep or improve your standard of living while saving money. And they show that "In 2008, for the first time, global investments in renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar power exceeded total investments in carbon-based energy," and when businesses focus on energy efficiency, revenues increase.

The authors are optimistic about how quickly we can make positive changes for the environment, asking who could have imagined that our current cell phones have more than ten million times the computer capacity of the Apollo 11 spacecraft when it traveled to the moon. It's "hard to envision how dramatically things could change when we wean ourselves off fossil fuels and move into an economy based on efficient renewable energy."

— Peggy Simonsen

Volunteer Portrait

Rob Neff

Growing up on a 400-acre farm in Minnesota ignited Rob Neff's interest in nature and in all living things at an early age. These early influences eventually led him to become a restoration volunteer with Citizens for Conservation.

His major educational focus at the University of Minnesota at Duluth was on computers and software applications. After college he followed his early career interests to positions in Texas and the northeastern part of the country. Eventually he came to Lake Zurich with his wife, who had family and friends in the area.

Rob's first contact with CFC was on Earth Day 1995. He was seeking an enjoyable activity different from his daily desk job. In 1996, he worked on CFC website development with Donna Bolzman, partnering with her on several early projects while continuing to volunteer for restoration workdays. Rob was elected to the CFC Board of Directors in 2000 and served as a board member until 2012.

In addition to his website activity, Rob continued an active restoration work schedule with Tom Vanderpoel's guidance. Rob knew many Minnesota plants, but he was eager to learn trees and the plants of the Illinois prairie. He says Tom was very patient with his many questions.

Because of the time commitments of having a young family, Rob left the CFC board in 2012. Eventually he became involved with the Oak Ridge Marsh volunteer restoration activity in Lake Zurich. This marsh property encompasses fourteen acres of land owned by Lake Zurich. Volunteers have worked on it for several years, and Rob said he has cut a lot of buckthorn from that property. A recent purchase of about five more acres will expand the volunteer task.

Even with his Lake Zurich activity, Rob still frequently joins CFC workdays. Most recently he introduced his teenage son Philip to CFC restoration efforts. We thank Rob for his years of dedicated service to CFC, its properties, and the natural environment.

— Gene Branson



Rob Neff at Flint Creek Savanna. Photo from CFC archives.

Notable Natives

Hackberry

If you're planning to add a tree to your yard and want something beautiful, hardy, native, and wildlife-friendly, please consider a hackberry *Celtis Occidentalis*. As a mature tree the hackberry has a broad crown with arching branches, its silhouette resembling that of an American elm. It is sometimes called a "false elm" and is an excellent replacement for that venerable native tree.



Young hackberry tree. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

The hackberry reaches 50' to 70' tall and 50' wide, and under good conditions it lives up to 200 years. Its yellowish gray bark often has corky warts or ridges. Its flowers are unremarkable,



Corky warts and ridges in common hackberry bark. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

and the fruit is a very small greenish drupe (a pitted berry like cherry) ripening to dark red or black. The drupe is attractive to birds like the cedar waxwing and robin as well as other wildlife. These fruits persist into the winter months providing sustenance for birds and other wildlife when they most need it.

The tree hosts the hackberry butterfly *Asterocampa celtis*. Other butterflies using it are the hackberry

emperor, mourning cloak and question mark. Additionally, it provides cover for wildlife and nesting sites for birds.

The common hackberry has been called "one tough tree" for a variety of reasons. Although it likes moist soil, it is especially tolerant of a wide range of temperatures and rainfall, soil conditions, winds and air pollution. It can tolerate periods of drought because of its deep root system; those roots also serve as a deterrent to soil erosion. Hackberry has been used as a tree-line planting to combat wind erosion.

Its growth rate varies considerably from one place to another, but it can grow 12" to 15" annually in moist or wet areas. As rainfall decreases, so does its growth rate. In drier soils the

hackberry can be shorter and more shrubby in appearance. However, it tolerates dry soils and is a wonderful choice for a street tree. It is subject to nipple gall which creates small bumps on the leaves; the condition has no deleterious effect on the tree.



Please consider planting a hackberry if you want a strong, healthy native tree that provides ecosystem services to our birds and pollinators and to ourselves.

— Karen Rosene

Young hackberry tree in autumn. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

From the Staff Director

One Dime At A Time

In our Spring issue, we told readers that during April, May and June, Citizens for Conservation was fortunate to be the non-profit organization chosen by Whole Foods Market Kildeer to benefit from its One Dime At A Time program. Customers who used reusable shopping bags received a ten-cent refund on their bill and, if they chose, could donate that to Citizens for Conservation.

What a great surprise it was to learn that because of generosity all around, Whole Foods Market Kildeer was able to contribute a check for \$1,538.60 to CFC. My first reaction was, "That's a lot of dimes!" We thank everyone who made this possible and look forward to more opportunities to partner with the team at Whole Foods Market Kildeer.

— Sam Oliver



CFC Staff Director Sam Oliver and Floyd, Store Team Leader at Whole Foods Market Kildeer, among the vegetables for the One Dime At A Time presentation.

Help! Save our bees! Avoid neonicotinoid insecticides

by Meredith Tucker

Bees, both honeybees and natives species like bumblebees, are in serious trouble. Their populations are plummeting. Although a class of insecticides called neonicotinoids has long been suspected to be a major cause of the problem, that is now undisputed.

It is true that habitat loss and other pesticides are also impacting pollinator populations, but these nicotine-based chemicals provide the most serious threat. Neonicotinoids include our most frequently used landscape insecticide (Imidacloprid), and many nursery plants are pre-treated with them. It is a sick joke that these poison-treated plants are sometimes labeled “Bee Friendly” and are sold at popular big-box stores. More than half of ostensibly “bee-friendly” plants sampled at eighteen Home Depot, Lowe’s and Walmart garden centers in the United States and Canada contained high levels of neonicotinoids.

Studies show that 192 parts per billion (ppb) of a neonicotinoid will kill a honeybee, and dozens of studies have found impairments in bee navigation, memory and foraging ability at between four and thirty ppb. This exposure poses an especially serious threat to wild bees and butterflies whose populations are in precipitous decline. The life cycle of wild bees leaves them extremely vulnerable. While honeybee hives contain thousands of workers and can sustain some losses, many wild bees live in small groups containing just a few dozen workers. If some individuals lose their way or gather contaminated food, the hive suffers drastically. These are small annual colonies, perhaps thirty workers with a queen. If workers die or disappear, no nectar or pollen is brought to the hive. That native hive declines, and it won’t produce a queen.

Often these nicotine-based insecticides don’t kill the bees outright. However, even in small doses, neonicotinoids impair pollinators’ immune systems and ability to navigate. They are considered the primary cause of colony hive collapse in which beekeepers find their hives empty, without worker bees. At sub-lethal doses, the workers simply can’t find their way home and die in the field while the queen and larvae starve in the hive.

An important problem with these pesticides is one of the reasons that arborists and other horticulturists love them. They are systemic. Inject, spray, or drench the soil and the entire plant becomes lethal since the chemical travels throughout the plant making trunk/stem, leaves, flowers, pollen, and nectar poisonous to pollinators.

Neonicotinoids are among the most frequently used chemicals for treating emerald ash borer. Because they are systemic, when applied to the soil or injected into the trunk, neonicotinoids make the plant a poison popsicle. Treated ash trees kill the larvae of our beautiful moths and butterflies,



Bumblebee on wild bergamot. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

larvae that birds rely on to feed their nestlings. Leaf hoppers, beetles and other native critters die as well, all who use the tree. What is the effect on the woodpeckers and nuthatches that eat the borers? We don’t know, but it can’t be good.

By now the season for buying ornamental plants for the home garden is almost over. We must be sure that pre-treated plants don’t return to big box and other garden centers next spring. Consumers can make the difference. Stores don’t stock items that customers don’t buy. Please read labels before buying any insecticide, and don’t buy pre-treated plants at garden centers. Before you buy, ask. Tell the management what you think.

Also please think long and hard before contracting to have your ash trees treated with systemic poisons. We know that neonicotinoids kill all the insects that use the tree (as do other systemic insecticides); it’s much less clear that they will save the tree in the long run.

Finally, the newest research from Europe, which is far ahead of ours, is that bird populations are dropping in areas with high neonicotinoid use.

Editor’s Note: To download and print a chart showing the names of many common garden products containing neonicotinoids, go to <http://citizensforconservation.org/educational-programs/community-education/healthy-maintenance/>.

Have your well water tested

The Barrington Area Council of Governments (BACOG) with the Lake County Health Department is facilitating private well water testing during November. Residents can pick up a well water test kit for \$10 at their own village hall or township office from November 10 to 13. Then turn in your kits at The Garlands on November 18. For additional information contact BACOG at www.bacog.org or (847) 381-7871.

Upcoming Events

Community Education Programs – Winter, 2015

All programs are presented at the Barrington Village Hall, 200 S. Hough Street, Barrington. Programs begin at 10:00 a.m. but please come at 9:30 for displays, handouts, coffee, and conversation! Please RSVP to 847-382-SAVE.

Saturday, January 10 - “The Effects of Corridors on Biodiversity.” Jeffrey D. Holland, Associate Professor, Department of Entomology, Purdue University.

Saturday, February 7 - “Insects and Others Up Close and Personal.” Joan Sayre, Photographer.

Saturday, March 14 - “Native Plants in the Home Landscape.” Meredith Tucker, Co-Chair CFC Community Education.

Saturday, April 11 - “Organic Power Vegetable Gardening and Native Plants.” Mark Lyons from Green Thumb at Your Service.

Youth Education Classes

Saturday, October 25 - Owls – Raptors of the Night.

Saturday, November 8 - Reptiles

Self-guided Prairie Walks at Flint Creek Savanna

Sunday, October 5 - Interactive walk free to the public from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

The Natural History Society of Barrington

Meetings will be held in the Zimmerman Room at the Barrington Area Library, 505 N. Northwest Highway at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 9 – “Wildlife Management at O’Hare Airport.” Speaker Aaron Spencer of USDA’s Wildlife Services provides an overview of the program to reduce risks to O’Hare’s aircraft and wildlife with emphasis on raptor relocation.

Thursday, November 6 – “Four-wheel Drive Birding in Columbia’s Andes.” Mary Lou Mellon recounts her 16-day, 1,500-mile birding adventure through Columbia’s Andes Mountains in a 4-wheel-drive vehicle.

NHSB Outings

Tuesdays, October 7 & 14 at 8:00 a.m. – Fall Bird Walks at Crabtree Nature Center. Meet in the parking lot off Palatine Road. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. Walks last about two hours.

CFC Youth Education brings “Nature A to Z” to young people

by Gail Vanderpoel

On June 25, Gail Vanderpoel and CFC’s four summer interns visited the Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington. The children, ages two to six, were excited and curious to discover all that could be found in their “own back yards.”



CFC summer intern Meghan Elgan works with students at Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington. Photo by Ekaterina Fedorova.

We started by having the children listen to the story *N is for Nature: An Environmental Alphabet Book* by Tim Magner. The children discussed what they already knew about nature. Then we viewed posters with a variety of birds, butterflies, insects and prairie plants to show them how many different names there are in every group of living things. We assigned each child a letter to find on their nature hunt but also encouraged them to gather and observe items from A to Z.

Our interns Katie, Emily, Meghan, and Max helped by adding some additional props to the scenery. These included a fish fossil, deer antler, turtle shell, plastic owl, abandoned wasp nest, porcupine quill and many more items. The children followed us around the yard looking and listening for living and non-living natural items. We encouraged them to observe from the dirt beneath their feet up to the tall oaks and the sky above. The magnifying bug viewers which allow children to capture a small insect were once again the favorite tools for observation. The children could scoop up a snail, worm, daddy longlegs, millipede or small bee, and share their finds with others. Our least favorite finds were the mosquitoes which kept us busy swatting!

Here is a summary of our ABC list: Antler/ant, Bluebird/butterfly/beehive, Clouds/centipede/cardinal, Dragonfly/dirt/dandelion/deer skull/daddy longlegs, Eggs/earthworm/earwig, Flower/feather/fossil/fungus, Grass/grapevine, Hive/hill/hay, Insect, Jawbones, Kentucky bluegrass/killdeer, Leaf/ladybug, Mosquito/mud/milkweed/moth/mushrooms, Nest, Oak/owl, Petals/pine cones/praying mantis, Quill, Rock/robin/red-winged blackbird, Seeds/stems/snakeskin/spider/spiderwort, Tomato/trees/turtle shell, Ungulate (deer), Violets/vine, White oak/worms/water/weeds, eXoskeleton, Yellow sweet clover, Z? We had hoped to see a zebra swallowtail butterfly. As you can see, we helped these children put names to many natural items as they explored the wonderful environment at their school.

Finally the children colored posters (compliments of the Illinois Natural History Survey) with alphabetical pictures and names of native Illinois animals and plants. The interns and I appreciated the opportunity to provide a guided nature experience for the children as we shared their sense of wonder and enthusiasm about the living world around them.

Facebook powers CFC outreach and network growth



by Donna Bolzman

Five years ago we began to hear in our nonprofit circles that using social media was the latest way to reach potential supporters and volunteers. We knew that people in astonishing numbers were using it. The catch phrase of the day was “Are you on Facebook? ‘Friend’ me.” It seemed fine for young people to keep up with what was going on in their friends’ lives or for grandma and grandpa to use it to see pictures of the grandkids, but how would CFC as an organization use it?

On April 5, 2010, we took the plunge and joined Facebook although we didn’t know whether it would be worth a volunteer’s time and effort to maintain it. From the beginning, we knew that we would post a lot of photos. We have many volunteer photographers who take excellent pictures, many of which are featured in our newsletter. We host programs and classes through our Community and Youth Education Committees, so we could post those as Events. We always have lots of news to share, but would anyone find us on Facebook? Would we have any “friends?”

We spread the word that we were on Facebook through notices in our online and print newsletters, by word of mouth at workdays and classes, and we began to include it on our literature. A dozen people “friended” us immediately, primarily long-time members and volunteers who wanted to keep up with our activities and enjoyed looking at the pictures. We continued to post something every few days in order to keep our page fresh and interesting, and people gradually found us.



Screen shot of CFC's Facebook page.

Currently 489 people “like” our page (Facebook changed from “friending” to “liking”). The vast majority (449) is from the United States, but we also have followers in other countries, including Chile, the U.K. and India. We are reaching people in states from Washington to New York and Wisconsin to Texas. Sixty-seven percent are women, thirty-three percent men. Forty-six percent are ages thirty-five to sixty-four.

Has the move to Facebook reaped benefits for CFC? While we can’t say that it definitely garnered new members, donors, or volunteers, it has helped in other ways. More people locally

and all over the world know about the work we are doing and the progress we have made; they have seen and learned about a wide variety of Illinois native plants; and they can see that almost everyone can get involved in restoration work.

We have connected with other conservation groups as close as Friends of Deer Grove East in Palatine and as far away as Gorse Hill Nature Reserve in the U.K. We are able to share stories, triumphs, and challenges. We have received feedback from our Facebook friends through photo sharing, questions, and comments; and we enjoy the dialogue! The bottom line is that using social media such as Facebook has helped tremendously with education, awareness, and communication. It is a great P.R. tool.

In the future our Facebook page will have more of the same: more photos; more links to interesting, fun, or helpful information; more CFC upcoming events. We also plan to add some historical information (old photos and historical trivia) in a nostalgic look back. After all, we have been around as an organization for more than forty years and have been doing restoration for nearly thirty.

If you are a Facebook user and are not following us, please type “Citizens for Conservation” in the search box in Facebook. Then “like” us and follow our posts in your News Feed. Let us know if you like our posts; send us a message or share a picture. Talk to us; we would love to hear from you!

News from Habitat Corridors

Our new website

After a very busy spring and summer visiting local yards and awarding Habitat Corridors signs, CFC’s Community Education Committee decided that the next step in the Habitat Corridors program should be to show the results of the efforts local property owners are making to create earth-friendly properties.

Former CFC intern and current GIS professional Kyle Boatright volunteered to generate a map showing the CFC preserves as well as public open space in the greater Barrington area. Then he plotted the properties for which we awarded Habitat Corridors signs or found homeowners successfully creating healthier habitat. You can go to the habitatcorridors.org website to see the progress we are making in creating corridors of environmentally healthy properties to connect our preserves and other natural areas.

Also at the Habitat Corridors website you can see photos of local yards providing good habitat for birds, pollinators, and people. You can view and download native plant lists organized by sun/shade/water requirements and deer resistance. This is a work in progress and will expand with time. If you have ideas for other features you would like to see on the website or if you would like to request a site visit, send an email to info@habitatcorridors.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

— Annamarie Lukes

Festival of the Oaks celebrates “wise”-ness of conservation

by Larry Anglada

Thoreau in his Journal of 1861 wrote: “What are the natural features which make a township handsome? A river, with its waterfalls and meadows, a lake, a hill, a cliff or individual rocks, a forest, and ancient trees standing singly.... If the inhabitants of a town were wise, they would seek to protect these ... for such things educate far more than any hired teachers or preachers, or any present recognized system of school education”

CFC and partners are planning a Festival of the Oaks for October 11 at the Lake Barrington Village Hall to encourage what Thoreau noted as “wise.” We hope to reestablish in residents an understanding of the importance of trees to our environment. We cannot create this wisdom virtually; it must be a product of experience. Visitors can experience fall by collecting acorns from the remaining heritage oaks and bringing them to the festival to donate to our planting program. We will plant and oversee germination so that each visitor can return in spring to adopt a baby oak for his own yard. (Please plan to attend the Festival even if you don’t have acorns to donate. It will be a pleasant and educational afternoon for everyone.)



Bur oak acorns and leaves. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

Planting oaks is especially important because the oak trees currently dotting the landscape are mere remnants of those left by the early settlers. The vast majority of them are 160 years old or older and are entering the latter stages of their lives. Loss to old age, storms, and urban development is not being supplanted by a new generation of trees. Only residents can provide for the continuation of this once dominant species of the native ecosystem.

More is at risk than the oaks. Every component of the ecosystem they anchor as well as the connection of local residents to this historic landscape hang in the balance. E.O. Wilson discussed the deep human need for nature and felt

that removing people from it eventually leads to an “atrophied” version of the original. This “atrophy” of our understanding of nature is dangerous because people making decisions about the environment will base those decisions on personal and cultural biases rather than on experience.



Swamp white oak seedling. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

Richard Louv advocates developing connections to nature in childhood. Children are mentally and emotionally healthier when they have access to natural habitats, and they will make better decisions regarding nature when they are adults.

The Festival of the Oaks is another avenue for Citizens for Conservation to develop a child’s love of nature through planting and sustaining trees grown from the acorns of the last local monolithic individuals. The survival of woodlands and other natural systems depends on the future stewards of our land developing a conservation ethic rooted in experience.

Besides collecting acorns from visitors, we will have many activities at the Festival including demonstrations on how to plant trees and acorns. Youth Education will provide nature crafts for children, and there will be a nature walk to identify local woodland trees. Besides CFC, other organizations will have informational displays. We hope you’ll attend this event and join CFC’s commitment to ongoing community-based conservation.



CFC’s entry in Barrington’s 4th of July parade. Photo by Bob Lee.

July 4th Shooting Stars

A dedicated group of walkers came out to support CFC’s entry in Barrington’s Fourth of July parade. CFC’s interns handcrafted a model shooting star in honor of Barrington’s official wildflower. They dressed up in costumes as pollinators and created signage used as props by our walking group. CFC’s volunteers and interns were well received by a very large crowd as they gave a “Shooting Star Salute”!

President's Comments

Electronic Media Volunteers

Most people who volunteer with a conservation organization do so to work outdoors, and CFC appreciates the many restoration volunteers who have made such a difference in the properties we are restoring. (We highlighted restoration volunteers in our last newsletter.) However, we are fortunate to have another few superb volunteers who keep things running behind the scenes. Since this edition of *CFC News* focuses on our electronic media, it is appropriate to highlight the volunteers who make it all happen.



Diane Greening is CFC's new website coordinator. Dave Underwood has built the new website with many new features that are highlighted in the cover article of this issue. Diane will maintain the site, upload timely information, keep the calendar current and make the site appealing and informative for all visitors. Additionally, she is a leader on the Native Plant Sale team. She researched photos and descriptions of all the plants in our Native Plant Library and produced our plant sale photos. Diane was a volunteer with CFC years ago, moved away, and has returned; we are extremely fortunate to have garnered her knowledge, website expertise and willingness to take on this demanding job.

We are very grateful to all these volunteers and others who so willingly share their knowledge, experience and huge amounts of time to help CFC excel in social media and state of the art electronic publications. See more information about their work in this issue. We could not manage without them!

by Peggy Simonsen

Annamarie Lukes is a new CFC board member who is a computer wizard! She manages the layout and graphics for each edition of *CFC News*, creates appealing flyers and display boards with photos and professional-looking presentations. She produced CFC's annual report this year and bails me out when I have Adobe problems! Annamarie is also co-chair of the Community Education Committee and co-creator of our new Habitat Corridors program. She supports our presenters with technical expertise and is always willing to add a thoughtful perspective to our work.

Another new board member is Wayne Schild, the talented manager of our complex database, handling all the data input and preparing mailing lists for any of us who request them. He also submits all our electronic publicity for Youth Ed classes and Community Ed programs, special events and press releases. In addition, Wayne is the PowerPoint expert who creates slide programs with Meredith and helps me with the technical aspects of my presentations.

Donna Bolzman is a CFC volunteer who has given us many hours of volunteer time for years. Currently Donna is CFC's Facebook coordinator and takes many of the photos she uses as she narrates informative posts. I have received positive feedback from colleagues in the native plant industry that CFC's Facebook posts are the most interesting and informative of any they follow. Donna also manages the CFC computer records and has created a huge archive of photographs from past years — photos she has taken but also those from Diane and Jim Bodkin and Bob Lee, some of our other talented photographers.

Sarah Hoban volunteers her work behind the scenes, but you see her superior product as editor of *CFC News E-Update*, the newsletter we email monthly. She gathers input from CFC leaders and writes brief but compelling articles to promote our activities. We have over 1100 recipients of this monthly electronic newsletter, and Sarah keeps everyone up to date and actually generates volunteers for our many needs.

Welcome new CFC members!

Countryside Church of Palatine	Susanne Kushner
James and Joanne Glazebrook	Dan and Cindy Mjolsness
John and Teresa Goerner	Erik Monsen
The Green Family	Rob Pento
Diane Jorns	Nancy B. Ronquillo
Barbara Kemp	Pat and Greg Samata
Paulette Krom	Jan Stepto-Millet

Thanks to ...

Wendy Paulson for once again leading fall bird walks in the greater Barrington area, cosponsored by Audubon Chicago Region and Citizens for Conservation.

Thanks from ...

Steve and June Keibler who said in a note (including a donation) to CFC, "Steve and I so appreciate everything CFC is doing and even more so after spending the day with Tom and Gail seeing the wetland projects and Grigsby Prairie. Truly inspiring. We are awed!

Then we had a bird walk with Wendy—such fun.

We've enclosed a small gift in appreciation of all you do and for the great time we had with three of your hard working leaders. Thank you."

Starting young: preschool nature camp = new naturalists

by Susan Lenz

Spending the morning with a bunch of curious four- and five-year olds at Flint Creek Savanna is a wonderful eye-opening experience. During the week of June 9th, Citizens for Conservation offered a Leave No Child Inside-oriented preschool camp with a hands-on nature-based curriculum created and facilitated by Susan Lenz and her son Nick. Each day camp focused on a specific theme: Trees, Mammals, Birds, Butterflies and Insects.



Nature camp participants. Photo by Ed Plum.

The campers loved the stories, educational materials, crafts, songs, games and, of course, their favorite activity which was a daily hike using their senses at beautiful Flint Creek Savanna. During hikes, they heard the chorus of frogs and the wind whistling in the grasses. Campers saw herons through binoculars and examined the leaves of the milkweed plants with hand lenses looking for eggs. They felt the texture of the compass and prairie dock plants as well as the varying textures of tree bark.

The knowledge of nature that many of these preschoolers shared at camp was amazing. They learned about herbivores,

carnivores, and omnivores. They also learned that mammals have lungs, hair/fur, live births, backbones and that we are mammals. Campers learned about how a tree grows, the different parts of a tree, products that come from trees, and the importance of a tree even when it decays. Additionally, we talked about how the tree is home to various animals. We counted the rings on tree cookies and looked at a stump inside the farmhouse that dates back to before the Civil War! We talked about the lifecycle of a butterfly, developmental stages of robins and the interdependence between plants and animals.

Daily crafts included making grapevine and pinecone wreaths, painting with

feathers and making a bird's nest with milkweed pods as birds, animal track replicas made of clay, insect catchers, and butterfly wings and masks. On the final day of camp, children took home the nature discovery journals in which they drew after their hikes throughout the week as well as Junior Naturalist coloring books. It was truly wonderful at the end of the week to hear the chorus of young campers as unassisted they pointed out the compass plant, butterflies and crickets, birds, and were whining in disappointment that camp was over. Thank you to Marcy Trojak, Bob Lee and Ed Plum for photographing the week's adventures and to Doe Crosh for assisting with the clay animals.



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