



CITIZENS
FOR
CONSERVATION

CFC NEWS

Saving Living Space for Living Things

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Milkweed, monarchs and many other matters: CFC's Native Plant Sale

by Meredith Tucker

At its eighteenth Native Plant Sale this May 3 and 4, Citizens for Conservation is offering specially discounted prices on the sale of milkweed plants. We hope this promotion convinces you to buy several species of milkweed for your property so you can do your part to help restore the dwindling monarch butterfly population.



Monarch on stiff goldenrod. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

National publicity has portrayed the plight of the monarch. The massive migrations to Mexico are a thing of the past. Monarch populations are so small that you may not have seen more than one or two individuals all last summer. Property owners and gardeners must act now if we hope to support and sustain this beautiful and useful species. Homeowners can do it!

First, one may wonder why the species is dwindling. Monarchs must have milkweed to procreate (more on that later). Because giant chemical companies and agriculture have created and promoted "Round-Up Ready" corn and soybeans, farmers are drenching fields with that herbicide. As a result, the milkweed plants that formerly lined farm roads, grew between the crop rows, and inhabited fencerows no longer exist. Round-Up

has killed them all, but the GMO crops thrive. (Note that the chemical companies now have "2,4-D Ready" GMO seeds to promote further chemical use on croplands.)

In addition, when state transportation departments mow roadways, when development covers old fields with impervious surfaces, and when gardeners remove all "weeds" and non-lawn plants, the milkweed disappears. Monarch butterflies and many other specialized creatures are disappearing along with this host plant.

Although monarchs can nectar on various species of blooming plants, they can only breed using milkweed. Milkweed is the "host" plant for this butterfly. When the monarch eggs hatch, the larvae can eat only milkweed. If the fertilized female cannot find a species of milkweed on which to lay her eggs, she lays them on some other plant, but the larvae hatch and starve to death. Not only the monarch butterfly but also other species like milkweed bugs and milkweed beetles rely on this beautiful and often fragrant plant.

Now it's time for gardeners and property owners to come to the rescue. We can help support the remaining population of monarchs by planting milkweed at home. Most of these species are not as aggressive as the common milkweed can be, and CFC is offering seven species at its sale this year. Try several!

The monarch's favorite species is *Asclepias incarnata*, marsh or red milkweed. Although in nature this beautiful pink-flowered plant grows in wet areas, it does beautifully in good garden soil and full sun. It is not invasive.



Marsh milkweed. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

The butterfly's next favorite species is *A. syriaca* or common milkweed. It is rare to find plants of this species for sale, but CFC will have some at its plant sale. Sometimes people find it to be weedy. No doubt it is aggressive when it finds a location it likes, but if you have some space, please try it; and if common milkweed seed lands on your property, we hope you will let it grow and bloom. It smells heavenly! This is not the plant for a small backyard, but it's fine on more spacious properties.

A. tuberosa is the beautiful butterfly weed. Monarchs use this bright orange species as a host plant, and people love it. It grows in full sun and dry soil.

CFC will have other less common species of milkweed available at its sale, including both tall and short green milkweed (*Asclepias hirtella* and *A. viridiflora*), prairie milkweed (*A. sullivantii*), and whorled milkweed (*A. verticillata*). The last one can be invasive, so don't plant it with conservative companions or in small gardens.



Butterfly weed. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

We hope you will try a number of species, but be sure to buy several plants of each species and group them together. It is easier for the butterflies to find a large grouping of similar plants than a single specimen. We encourage you to buy three or five or seven of each species you like and install the plants about one foot apart in a group. **CFC is selling milkweed plants for only \$2.00 each, a deep discount, to encourage you to plant this genus!**

There is much more to know about our native plant sale this year. Preordering, choosing plants, and making a wise selection will be easier than ever. CFC's plant sale has its own website! 2050 Design, owned by David Underwood, has created and donated the new site to CFC, and it works seamlessly! Thank you, Dave, for the tremendous amount of time, energy, expertise, and patience you have expended to modernize and simplify ordering from the CFC sale.

Go to cfcnativeplants.org to see our online store. You can find



Common milkweed. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

the link on the CFC website or type the website into your browser. If you can order online, selecting plants is a piece of cake. There are instructions on the website, and please enjoy the color

photos of each plant! Often you can see the whole plant, a close-up, seedheads, fall color and so forth. You will have an idea of what each species looks like before you order. We



Purple milkweed *Asclepias purpurascens*. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

thank Diane Greening and Corie Washow for the massive amount of volunteer time they clocked researching the plants for the site and "feeding" them to David.

On the website you can use custom filters to find plants for sun or shade, wet or dry sites, deer resistance, color, and bloom period. This easy selection system will tempt you to use more native species and enlarge habitat for your family and for local critters. Be sure to set up an account when you start so that you can come back to the cart over and over as you make selections. Pay with PayPal or a credit card. (CFC saves processing fees if you use Pay Pal.)

Finally, the sale, thanks to hard-working chair Ginger Underwood, is providing lots more species this year, six new trees and eleven new shrubs. These will help support the native birds and beneficial insects we want to attract to our yards. There are also thirty-one new forbs including eight new woodland wildflowers.

The deadline for preorders is April 12, shortly after you receive this newsletter. Go to the new website and have fun, but do it soon! Plant pick-up is May 2 from 1:00 to 6:00 or on sale days if necessary.

Two final notes: We will have a few extra trees and shrubs this year, but don't count on these extras if you have a special woody plant you want to buy. Pre-ordering is the surest way to purchase. Second, if you don't want to order online, you can still download an order form and mail it in. If you don't use a computer, call CFC at 847-382-SAVE and leave a message. We will mail a paper order form to you.

Enjoy all the new plants and your old favorites, but remember that if you want your children and grandchildren to enjoy monarch butterflies, purchase, plant, and nurture milkweed!



Adult and nymph milkweed bugs on marsh milkweed. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

Restoration Report

Spring Prairie Flora

One of the great challenges in prairie restoration is establishing the spring-blooming flowers. Many restorations do a pretty good job of restoring the tall flowers that bloom in July and August but neglect extending the bloom season with spring flowers. One of the reasons prairie grasses grow so tall in most restorations may be that the grasses do not get competition from spring flowers. In July and August, prairie grasses tower over most of their competitors. Spring flora grow first and actually dwarf the grasses when they bloom. It's comical to get close to the ground and see a diminutive plant like yellow star grass looming over big bluestem grass in mid-May when the grass shoots are just beginning to grow.

CFC has used four techniques to establish spring flowers. Here is a discussion of the results, side benefits and drawbacks of each technique.

1. Plowing and disking a farm field, then sowing a general mix of seeds. This is the classic prairie restoration technique and the only one used by commercial companies and landscapers. In the seven fields we planted using this agricultural method, only one small population of spring flowers (golden Alexanders at Grigsby Prairie) ever germinated. Results were dismal. There were no side benefits, and the drawback is that it did not work. This may explain why there is no color in commercial restorations until July.

2. Transplanting of plugs into a non-native hay meadow. CFC conducted several plant rescues from prairie remnants that faced imminent destruction due to development or road-building projects. The target species were hoary puccoon, prairie phlox, bastard toadflax, yellow star grass and marsh marigold. All five of the target species survived, but for the first fifteen years or so, they merely persisted. We finally noticed seedlings appearing near the transplanted plugs. Five years after that the seedlings slowly began to reproduce.

From the original thirty or so specimens of hoary puccoon, we now have some three hundred plants at Grigsby. Grigsby's population of prairie phlox has expanded to about twenty-five, and scores of yellow star grass are slowly spreading in the wet prairie habitats of both Grigsby and Flint Creek Savanna (FCS). One can see multiple patches of bastard toadflax expanding in rough



Shooting stars. Photo by Donna Bolzman.



Hoary puccoon. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

circles around the original plugs at both Grigsby and Flint Creek. About fifty marsh marigolds lend the first color of the year to Grigsby's little rivulet.

We received a great bonus when we transplanted these virgin sods. Many of the companion species to the target plants accidentally came along: American vetch, meadow blue violet, Canada anemone, Mead's sedge, marsh vetchling, wild strawberry, Buxbaum's sedge and starry Solomon's seal expanded our plant list serendipitously. While we first introduced Leiberg's panic grass and bastard toadflax by plug, both have begun to germinate pretty successfully by hand broadcast seed. The only drawback to this otherwise wildly successful technique is that sadly there are almost no more unprotected remnant populations of these rare plants in our collecting area.

Because it spreads well by clone, three years ago we experimented by transplanting bastard toadflax from an established station in Grigsby to another part of Grigsby that had never received transplanted plugs. The plant survived and last year started to spread. This technique holds promise.

3. Hand sowing in established prairie. CFC has found that overseeding a specialized mix of conservative plant seeds (what we call the "successional restoration mix") into stable stage-two prairie works infinitely better than sowing into raw land. The pioneer native plants seem to prepare the soil, in some way making it receptive to the more conservative species.



Shooting stars at Flint Creek Savanna. Photo by Patsy Mortimer.

Shooting star does best. We now have at least a dozen spots at Grigsby and FCS where thousands of specimens turn the mid-May fields lavender with their blossoms. The next most successful species is golden

Alexanders whose bright yellow complements the pink of the shooting star. Almost as abundant are white-eyed grass, yellow pimpernel and wild hyacinth. We have had more modest success with northern bedstraw, prairie lousewort, Jacob's ladder, Indian paintbrush, heart-leaved meadow parsnip and Seneca snakeroot. We have established a nice population of fringed puccoon on our artificial gravel hills, the only part of our preserves where this gravel-loving specialist can grow.

The problem with this technique is that it is very hard to collect the seed of some of the spring-blooming flowers. The Native Seed Gardeners may solve this problem. This collaboration among CFC, the Spring Creek Stewards, and Audubon Chicago Region, with construction help from the Boy Scouts, has created sizable populations of the difficult prairie violet, violet wood sorrel, cream false indigo, prairie phlox, small skullcap, prairie alumroot and hoary puccoon in our cold frames and planting beds. Hopefully, these controlled conditions will allow us to increase the seed harvest of these stubborn rarities.

4. Transplanting individual garden-grown specimens. We have had several successes using this method. At the restored seep below the Peninsula at Flint Creek, we planted a few specimens of marsh marigold left over from the plant sale. The colony has expanded and is thriving. A dozen prairie alumroots we planted on the wet prairie border of the East Side Marsh have persisted, and for the first time one of the plants has self-sowed. Finally, a half dozen heart-leaved meadow parsnips planted fifteen years ago at the beginning of a wicked drought actually survived and are spreading very well on a dry, clay slope at Grigsby.

The drawback of this technique is that it is very labor-intensive: first one must grow the plant, then dig it up, dig a hole in the natural area, plant it and water it. In drought conditions often one must keep watering until the plants go dormant. Most transplanted specimens fail to survive the first year. Still, this may be the only technique available for the most difficult species. Again, our cold frames and planting beds will soon increase the supply of young plants, and we will have to buckle down and do the work.

CFC has expended considerable effort reintroducing spring-blooming flora to our restored prairies, and we urge all our members to visit the burned section of Grigsby or Flint Creek in the third week of May this year. It will warm the heart of any person interested in the restoration of Illinois' natural landscape to see the return of this collection of uncommon spring wildflowers.

— Jim Vanderpoel

Native Seed Gardeners — Challenges to restoring vital plant species

by Katherine Grover

Restoring beautiful vanishing native plant species to our landscapes is challenging work, but it increases diversity and improves the health of natural habitats for the benefit of all living things.

When partners Audubon Chicago Region, Citizens for Conservation, Friends of Spring Creek Forest Preserve and the Spring Creek Stewards created Native Seed Gardeners (NSG) in 2008, the goal was to produce more seed of dwindling yet crucial species. We sought volunteer gardeners to take our free NSG native seedlings and asked in return that they plant them in their home gardens, nurture them and return the seeds year-after-year to the NSG program. That seed would be returned to the land we are restoring in the Barrington area and neighboring communities.

Since 2009, the year we first gave plants to gardeners, it has been a formidable challenge to have seed returned from the plants we gave to hundreds of NSG members. Being gardeners ourselves, we understand the obstacles they face bringing the seedlings to maturity and producing the vital seeds. Here are guidelines we suggest using to overcome these obstacles:

- Determine the amount of space, sunlight and moisture in your garden.
- Visit NativeSeedGardeners.org to determine whether your garden is prairie, savanna or woods.
- Review the plants within each environment to determine those suitable for your site, and make a wish list of plants to grow. Learn about them.
- The species being offered in the new season will be listed on the NSG website in late spring. Compare them to your wish list. An email to members will give information about species and confirm the dates and times for plant pick-up.
- Plant same species seedlings near each other to improve pollination, and mark their locations with stakes for future reference.
- Remove weeds which will compete for space, sunlight, moisture and nutrients.
- Fertilize as needed in the first year. Once a plant is established, it needs no fertilizer.
- Water when the plant appears stressed from lack of moisture; otherwise, it will not produce seed. No seed means no future plants!
- Protect plants from predators that might browse on them. Animal repellents can minimize damage, and fences can keep predators out. **Avoid netting which can trap beneficial animals like birds and butterflies.**
- Look for seeds after the flower blooms and dries. The website describes individual seeds or pods.
- Check seeds for ripeness; weather influences timing. Collect seeds before the wind, rain or animals disperse them.
- Collect and dry the ripe seeds to prevent mold which will negatively affect their viability.
- Return the seeds to NSG per instructions on the NSG website.



Propagation beds at CFC headquarters. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

Do you have the diligence to plant, grow, and return so that we can help restore the species to preserves? The links between each seed, plant, garden, open land and community benefit all living things, including you!

We hope you will visit us at NativeSeedGardeners.org and Facebook to learn more about NSG and see the species. We are indebted to our volunteer gardeners who continue to plant natives for the diversity, health, and beauty of our communities. We are mindful of Margaret Mead's observation, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Annual Meeting recognizes 43 years of CFC accomplishments

by Julie Zuidema

The Onion Pub and Brewery proved to be a hit with those attending last year's CFC Annual Meeting, and on March 19, 2014, a record-breaking number of members and friends gathered at the Lake Barrington Pub to review and celebrate 2013. Everyone enjoyed appetizers and beverages while reconnecting with friends during the reception held before the business portion of the evening.

CFC President Peggy Simonsen opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and describing CFC's 2013 accomplishments in glowing terms. We celebrated the 25th anniversary of Flint Creek Savanna, now 131 acres, in September. After adding the Craftsbury Preserve last year, CFC now owns over 400 acres and has helped preserve an astonishing 3,150 acres in our 42-year history. Following President Simonsen's welcome, Edith Auchter delivered the treasurer's report, and Karen Hunter reported as chair of the Board Development Committee.

The keynote speaker for the event was Gerould Wilhelm, co-author of *Plants of the Chicago Region*. Although it would be interesting to hear from Mr. Wilhelm at any time, this is an exceptionally exciting point in his career as he and his colleagues prepare for the publication of *Flora of the Chicago Region*. This new book is much more than an updated fifth edition of *Plants of the Chicago Region*, and Wilhelm explained the profound changes in content and format that will make this new resource uniquely useful. CFC is proud to be noted as a contributor when this eagerly anticipated guide becomes available.

One of the highlights of our yearly celebration is the recognition of service by the volunteers who are the essential lifeblood of Citizens for Conservation. Here are those honored for their service in 2013:

Mighty Oak Awards: Please see sidebar.

Shooting Star 10-Year Awards

Tom Burke Corie Washow
Luke Dahlberg Julie Zuidema
Peggy Simonsen

Waid Vanderpoel 20-Year Award

Mark Vanderpoel

Great Blue Heron Award Recipient 2014: bestowed for significant contributions to Citizens for Conservation. This year's recipient was Edith Auchter, CFC Board Member, past President, and Treasurer.

William H. Miller Conservation Award: given for outstanding contributions in the community, CFC's most significant award. This year's recipient was Barrington School District 220 for

its exemplary elementary science curriculum which furthers students' knowledge of our natural world as well as the human impact on habitats and our environment. Goals include engaging students in collecting authentic data and analysis of concepts they have studied in the classroom while acting as environmental stewards and reconnecting with nature.

CFC said an official goodbye to long-time Board Members Tom Crosh, Ben Hammer, Karen Hunter, Patsy Mortimer, and Julie Zuidema who completed their terms of service. Hopefully we will continue to see them as they stay involved with CFC activities, and in the case of Patsy Mortimer, act as a consultant to CFC.

The evening concluded with the restoration "year in review" once again conveyed through a spell-binding series of photographs and commentary by Tom Vanderpoel.

Mighty Oak Award, 2014

The Mighty Oak Awards are bestowed on non-board members who have volunteered fifty hours or more in the last year. Many of these individuals have received the award year after year for service to CFC. They have our heartfelt gratitude for all that they do:

Bonnie Albrecht	Julia Martinez
Jim Bodkin	Rob Neff
Donna Bolzman	Bob Oliver
Dianna Collier	Wendy Paulson
Doe Crosh	Gail Rudisill
Demmy Giannis	Wayne Schild
Katherine Grover	Cliff Schulte
Ryan Guilfoil	Mary Stubbs
Carol Hogan	Ralph Tarquino
Bryan Hughes	Gail Vanderpoel
Steve Knutson	Ann Warren
Ted Krasnesky	Melissa Washow
Annamarie Lukes	

A new restoration record

In 2013, CFC's restoration campaign broke its 28-year record for both total hours worked and number of volunteers. During 101 workdays, 306 individuals volunteered, producing 3,601 hours of restoration work. (This number only includes volunteers who came to workdays of their own volition and does not include the corporate workdays or children's initiatives.) We are very gratified, thank everyone, and salute the volunteer spirit. There are few places on the earth where this occurs, and we can all be very proud.

Volunteer Portrait

Jim and Diane Bodkin



Diane and Jim Bodkin. Photo by a passerby.

This issue of “Volunteer Portrait” features two CFC volunteers: a husband and wife who often volunteer together as a team.

Like many CFC volunteers, Jim and Diane Bodkin had busy careers but eventually wanted to pursue their interests and indulge their passions. Jim, an electrical engineer, worked for GE in Virginia and Florida and for FMC and IBM as a consultant in Chicago. Diane, a registered nurse, worked in an ICU in Florida and as a Hospice RN and a hospital RN in Barrington.

They moved to South Barrington in 1985 and are active in their community. Sharing a love of photography, they are members of several camera clubs including the Morton Arboretum Photographic Society and the Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society.

Jim and Diane became involved with CFC as burn volunteers, responding when a notice in the South Barrington Village news called for controlled burn help with CFC. They were impressed by how leaders conducted the burns; as a result they became CFC members. The Riverwoods camera club allows only nature images in competition photos, and CFC membership helped them to learn about native plants and to embrace the philosophy of saving and restoring land.

Photography is their passion, and their goal is to “capture the moment” in photographs and then share with others. Their favorite photographic subject is birds, followed closely by landscapes and plants. They have traveled the world to capture these favorite subjects in various settings.

Jim’s first love (after Diane and their family) is everything “Apple” — software and hardware. He has been a Mac owner for many years, hooked by its ease of use. He keeps up with the latest features and is currently program chair for the local

Apple Users’ Group. He occasionally gives presentations about Apple products.

Jim uses his photographic skills and knowledge of software for CFC. He helped create large posters of several CFC preserves, featuring color photos of landscapes, plants, and birds of each preserve. He also makes the framed awards for CFC’s annual meeting.

Since joining CFC four years ago, Diane has been involved in many restoration activities — from burns, to planting, to seed harvesting and sowing. She is currently CFC’s Board Secretary. Diane also has used her photographic skills to benefit CFC. She takes photos at CFC events, and many appear in *CFC News*. In fact, she was thrilled when she saw her photo of a katydid on prairie gentian first appear in print in our newsletter (see below). She supplied close-ups of native plants for the plant sale and has led fall tours for fourth-grade children.

Last year Diane coordinated a successful Flint Creek Savanna 25th Anniversary celebration and guided the completion of large, cedar preserve signs by Eagle Scouts and volunteers. Her next project is to convert the QR codes from restoration experts’ videos into plaques to post along an interactive, self-guided trail at Flint Creek Savanna.

Diane was recently named the new chairperson of the South Barrington Conservancy Commission which oversees thirty-five acres of open land in the village. She has already used much of the knowledge she has gained from her four years of volunteering with CFC as she leads that volunteer-based conservation group.

Jim and Diane feel that CFC embraces dedicated, sincere people with a stable and healthy interest in saving their environment. The Bodkins are proud to be associated with CFC and are drawn to its down-to-earth, hands-on methods of restoration and education. They love the outstanding youth education program that inspires the love of nature in young people — love strong enough to give the kids’ smart phones stiff competition!

We are fortunate to have Jim and Diane as active CFC volunteers. Whether they volunteer individually or as a team, their work is of the highest quality. We look forward to seeing more of their wonderful images as they capture those “CFC moments,” showing a love and appreciation of nature and its beauty.



Katydid on prairie gentian. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

— Donna Bolzman

Tick Time: Defenses against creepy, crawling, blood-craving arachnids

by Sandi Alguire

Spring is just around the corner along with thoughts of getting outside in the warm sunshine and enjoying the beautiful local prairies and woods. It turns out we're not the only ones who like hanging out in the woods and grass! Wood ticks, also called dog ticks, are common in this area along with deer ticks.



Within the fish hook (the largest specimen) is the female deer tick. Below her is a male and directly in front of the female are two nymphal deer ticks. The largest tick in view (outside the hook) is a female American dog tick. The ruler on top is marked in 16ths of an inch increments. The fish hook is a #8. Photo by Jim Occi via <http://www.lymenet.org>.

We hear a great deal about these creatures, but only the deer tick carries a serious threat of Lyme disease which attacks the human immune system. If that infection is not caught early, there is no known long-term cure. With our large local deer population, ticks are common in the Barrington area so that being alert and aware is important.

Adult deer ticks are about the size of sesame seeds and have eight legs. They feed on blood, and if they are unable to find a host, they die. In nature ticks wait for their preferred animal hosts at the height of that animal, so ticks tend to linger on the tips of tall grasses ready to grab their first opportunity. As we move through a wooded area, these tiny ticks can easily hitch a ride on our legs without our knowing it.

It is helpful to remember these suggestions for yourselves and your children. Whenever you're outside in a natural area, wear light-colored clothing as that makes it easy to see a clinging tick. It's best to wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and good shoes if you're hiking or working in the woods, and tuck your pants cuffs into your socks. Ideally, wear a hat as well to avoid getting ticks in your hair where they can hide and are hard to find.

Always check children for ticks even after they've been playing in the backyard. Make nightly "tick checks" at bath time in the summer and try to launder children's clothing sooner rather than later in case the clothes harbor ticks. A tick that has been attached for seventy-two hours can cause infection, so timeliness is important.

Ticks instinctively crawl upward once on a host so that it's not unusual to find ticks high up on your body, especially on the nape of the neck and bottom of the hairline. If you do find a tick on your clothing, remove it, make sure it's dead and properly dispose of it. (A jar of alcohol will do the job.) If you find a tick that has attached itself, remove it immediately. Use fine-tipped tweezers to carefully grasp the tick and pull upward with slow, even pressure. Do not yank or twist as this could leave parts of it under the skin risking infection. Once you have safely removed the tick, disinfect the area and wash your hands. If you are concerned about infection, freeze the tick in a plastic bag until a professional can examine it.

Symptoms of a tick-borne Lyme infection usually occur ten to fifty-five days after a bite and include a "bull's-eye" rash around the site of the bite along with fever, fatigue, headache, and muscle and joint aches. Tick bites can also cause an allergic reaction with red, itching skin around the bite that usually lasts only a few days. When in doubt, always seek professional medical help for a tick bite.

Even though most ticks do not attach themselves to human hosts or transmit Lyme disease, we should all be aware and proactive to prevent infection and still enjoy summer outdoor fun! With a little caution, one need not worry about joining workdays and outdoor activities.

(Some information from letters written by District 220 first grade teacher and school nurse. Thank you.)

"A Natural Garden in Your Yard" earns Rice an HPC Leadership Award

On February 22, long-time CFC member Carol Rice received a Habitat Project Conservation Leadership Award. Created and presented by Chicago Wilderness and Audubon Chicago Region, the award honors worthy members of the conservation community.

More than 150 conservationists have been recognized with this Leadership Award since 2002. It celebrates excellence in conservation work and raises public awareness concerning local accomplishments for nature.

Carol was recognized for the mentoring program she initiated with The Wildflower Preservation & Propagation Committee in McHenry County called "A Natural Garden in Your Yard." When the current mentees plant their gardens this spring, the program will have guided some 140 homeowners since 2005.

Carol also writes for *CFC News* and is an active member of CFC's Community Education Committee. Carol, this is well-deserved recognition for your many contributions to environmental conservation. Congratulations!

Notable Natives

Rue Anemone

Rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides* or *Anemonella thalictroides*) is a delicate spring delight with a sometimes confusing identity. First known as *Anemone thalictroides* in 1753, the plant was transferred to a new genus *Anemonella* in 1839. In 1957 it was categorized in the genus *Thalictrum* of the buttercup family where molecular evidence now supports its placement. Today plant specialists use both botanical names while it is called by the common names wind flower, wood anemone, and rue anemone.



Rue anemone. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

This ephemeral beauty blooms in April and May throughout the eastern United States before the tree canopy leafs out bringing shade. Barely twelve inches tall, rue anemone provides a lovely display of one-inch upward-facing flowers in dense masses across the forest floor. After blooming in May, it sets seed and becomes dormant until the following spring. It has tuberous roots and is easily divided.

A challenge for the naturalist because of its similarity to other spring blooming plants, rue anemone can be easily identified by certain characteristics. Its flowers grow in a cluster not as single blossoms like hepatica. Hepatica may be white or pink or lavender, but rue anemone has only white blossoms. Rue anemone has smooth stems whereas they are hairy in hepatica. Anemone flowers have yellow anthers while hepatica has white. Leaves have three lobes and appear after flowering has begun. The plant may also be confused with false rue anemone which grows in moist bottomlands rather than on the wooded slopes that rue anemone prefers.

As with most spring flowers, rue anemone has a short bloom season. Many area preserves have beautiful displays of this species in wooded areas. It appears at CFC's Flint Creek Savanna, or try Baker's Lake in Barrington and Deer Grove in Palatine. Even more important, plant it under a tree in your own yard. It is easy to grow and forms nice colonies once established. Rue anemone is never invasive and looks great under the native oak trees.

Do seek out this shy little plant. Discovering it will make your soul smile.



Rue anemone. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

— Virginia Black



Camp "Beginning Naturalists"

Citizens for Conservation's Youth Education Committee is offering a Leave No Child Inside-oriented pre-school camp for Summer, 2014. "Beginning Naturalists" is for children ages four and five. It is scheduled for June 9 - 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. each day. The camp fee is \$100 for members and \$150 for non-members.

Register by calling 847-382-SAVE (7283). Additional details and registration form are found at <http://www.citizensforconservation.org/youth-education/>. Photo by Mary Sherman

News from Habitat Corridors

Invite Us Over!

Spring is here, and CFC's Habitat Corridors volunteers are getting ready to sign up residents for home visits starting this April.

Please contact us at info@habitatcorridors.org to add your name to our list for a visit. (If you don't have email, please call CFC at 847-382-SAVE and leave your name, phone number, and a message that you would like a visit.) A volunteer will contact you to set up an appointment that is convenient for you and for our volunteers.

Although we will make home visits throughout the growing season, we hope to make many of them in April to guide your planning and purchases at CFC's Annual Native Plant Sale if you choose to shop there. Our sale is a great source of strong, healthy native plants at reasonable prices.

We're looking forward to hearing from you and to seeing your property, your prospective healthy habitat!

— Meredith Tucker

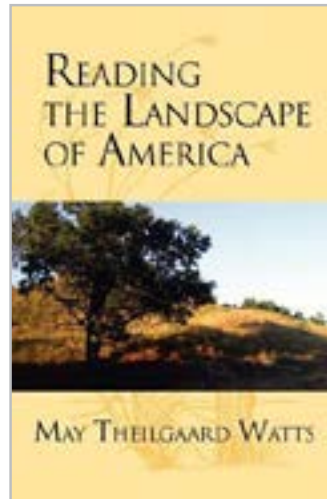


A Good Read

Reading the Landscape of America

May Theilgaard Watts

Reading the Landscape of America is a classic of American ecological and environmental writing, on a par with Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* but more educational. Watts studied with Henry Cowles, the father of ecology, and was the first naturalist at the Morton Arboretum; though a scientist, she imparts her knowledge with the easy prose of a short story writer. No reader will be intimidated by her insightful explanations of the tales she finds written on the land.



In each chapter Watts selects an American landscape (sometimes near Barrington) and acts like a detective, uncovering the history and ecological progress of and impacts on each environment. She interprets clues at each location to show how wildlife, people, and agriculture, among other things, influence the landscape. How do lakes become bogs? How do old cemeteries harbor native prairie plants?

One chapter describes the way islands literally march downstream. In this case the renowned Blackhawk statue on the Rock River near Oregon, Illinois watches the progression. Learn how plants initiate and inform the island's advance. It's fascinating.

Perhaps my favorite chapter is "Readin', 'Riting', and Recess" in which May Watts and her companions discover the history of an old school house by using the plants around it. Spoiler alert! I'm going to give away what was a shocker to me; that school house later became the first station house of the Barrington Hills Police Department!

Please read this book. You'll learn a great deal about how landscapes evolve; you'll be immersed in Watts' plant and landscape descriptions. Also, it's the sort of book you can read a little at a time. Each chapter is an entity onto itself to be savored and enjoyed.

— Meredith Tucker

Welcome New Members!

Barb Cunningham
Jeff Hoyer
Jim Jameson

Karla Jordan-Elbrecht
Linda Kuna
Mark and Cindy Pecilunas

Thanks to ...

Kyle Boatright, GIS Mapping Representative, for creating the CFC properties map for Habitat Corridors and for agreeing to keep it current with Habitat Corridors-certified properties.

Jack Peterson, who has moved to Denver but continues his tradition of asking people to write checks to CFC instead of giving him birthday gifts. In honor of his ninth birthday, CFC received \$152 from his new friends in Denver.

Thanks from ...

Jack Schaefer, President, Barrington Area Development Council, who emailed, "Hi Sam, That was a great article in yesterday's paper on CFC! You beautifully speak for what I believe is the most successful and passionate volunteer organization ever in the Barrington area. Congratulations to CFC and a heartfelt thanks for your years of commitment to such a vital conservation cause. Many more years of success to 'Citizens' as you say. Warmest regards, Jack."

Donors with their contribution, "Please accept this memorial donation in honor of our dad Gerald Elster. When he was still healthy, Cuba Marsh was one of his favorite places to walk. The work you do is incredibly important — Thank you! Sincerely, The Elster Family."

Conserve Lake County in a handwritten note, "Sam, Congratulations to you and your entire team for the outstanding media coverage. The quality of your work shines through and elevates the entire mission of conservation. Thank you for being out front on this and doing such a great job! It's your time and we are honored to know you. Well Done! From All of us at Conserve Lake County"

Annual Appeal donors with their contribution, "We hope that your good work continues."

"Knowledge generates interest, and interest generates compassion. My ... experience taught me that if I invested some effort in understanding nature and its various components, I would no longer feel compelled to squash it as soon as it inconvenienced me. ... I discovered this with a group of insects that are very good at inconveniencing people"

Douglas Tallamy from
Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens



Ant drawing by Margaret Hudson.

Greg Sheyka achieves his Eagle Scout Award

Greg Sheyka from Troop 35 chose to complete his Eagle Scout project with CFC. Greg cleaned, plastered, and painted the farmhouse kitchen and board room. In addition, he cleaned and buffed the board room's hardwood floor along with washing, ironing, and re-hanging the board room's café curtains. Greg also built and delivered two bat houses to CFC.

Finally, after receiving his Certificate of Appreciation from CFC President Peggy Simonsen and Eagle Coordinator Ted Krasnesky at the January board meeting, Greg announced he was donating \$300 to CFC, a portion of the gifts he received at his award ceremony with matching funds from his parents.

Thank you for your excellent work and for your generosity, Greg.



Eagle Scout Greg Sheyka, Eagle Coordinator Ted Krasnesky, Helen Sheyka and CFC President Peggy Simonsen.

Upcoming Events

Annual Native Plant Sale

Saturday and Sunday, May 3 and 4 – Check our website to order or for the order form and pre-order information.

Community Education Final Winter Program 2014

Saturday, April 12 – Gardening for Birds and Pollinators at the Barrington Village Hall at 10:00 a.m.

Youth Education Classes

Saturday, April 5 – Astronomy at Flint Creek Savanna, CFC headquarters.

The Natural History Society of Barrington

All meetings will be held at Lake Barrington Woods, 22320 Classic Court, Lake Barrington, IL. at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 17 – “Mega-Fauna Occasionally Occurring in Illinois” by Chris Anchor, Chief Wildlife Biologist for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

Thursday, May 15 – “Madagascar” by Josh Engel, Research Assistant with the Field Museum and tour leader for Tropical Birding; highlights of extraordinary birds and other wildlife of this remote island.

NHSB Outings

Tuesdays, April 22 & 29 and May 6 & 13 at 8:00 a.m. Spring Bird Walks at Crabtree Nature Center. Meet in the parking lot at Crabtree Nature Center off Palatine Road. Walks last about 2 hours.

Northwest Suburban Astronomers & Harper College

Saturday, May 10 – Astronomy Day at Harper College Building Z at 5:30 p.m. Attend lectures, see telescopes, displays, photographs, projects for children, hands-on activities, and campus observatory. Free.

Barrington Area Spring Bird Walks & Hikes

Cosponsored by Audubon Chicago Region and Citizens for Conservation with Barrington-area naturalist Wendy Paulson. See page 13 for details.

Interactive Trail to debut at Flint Creek Savanna

CFC will introduce its new interactive trail feature at Flint Creek Savanna on Sunday, May 11, 2014. We invite you to walk the trail between the hours of 1:00 and 3:00 and enjoy lemonade and maps with our volunteers.

The trail is dependent on your smart phone and tablet scanner apps, so be sure to come equipped. There will be a QR code to scan so that visitors can hear and see presentations from CFC restoration experts at various stations along the trail.

Please join this gathering to learn about the new CFC educational feature that allows you to learn as you tour our preserve. Additionally, you can enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded folks at this exciting event.

(Kudos to Diane Bodkin for all her hard work to make this feature a reality!)



Visitors hike the trail at Flint Creek Savanna. Photo by Bob Lee.

Habitat Corridors brings nature home: Be part of the solution!

by Sharon Pasch

In *Noah's Garden*, Sara Stein described backyards planted with native plants as “the mosaic ecosystem suburbia could piece together over much of America.” Douglas Tallamy calls the concept “a homegrown national park.” CFC calls it Habitat Corridors, and we want to bring the idea to the Barrington area by “saving living space for living things one yard at a time.”

In January, Meredith Tucker, Community Education Committee co-chair, presented an overview of the ambitious new effort along with some examples of healthy home maintenance practices. This was the first of four winter community education programs scheduled in 2014, all of them applicable to the new program.

Habitat Corridors will help homeowners make their yards part of a patchwork of healthy habitat for birds, bees, frogs, and toads to create passageways connecting larger nature preserves. As more and more homeowners participate, their properties could form a contiguous corridor for wildlife from Barrington Hills to the Fox River. This is a way to “act locally” — your own backyard! — to reduce the habitat fragmentation that contributes to the extinction of native plants and animals.

With her usual passion for native plants and the creatures they support, Meredith offered examples of environmentally friendly yard maintenance. More than fifty people at the Barrington Village Hall enjoyed photos from the beautiful yards of Community Education Committee members that illustrated rain gardens, proper planting and mulching of trees, and reduced pesticide use (“Love the holes in the leaves”). Habitat Corridors will offer individualized tips to homeowners who request a home visit. Professionals from Tallgrass Restoration LLC will join knowledgeable CFC volunteers to provide assessments beginning in April.

Plant lists, fact sheets, brochures for yard workers, and other information will be available on the project website, habitatcorridors.org. To request a home visit or get information, email info@habitatcorridors.org.



Habitat Corridors display. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

CFC program addresses homeowners' role in ground water management

by Karen Rosene

On Saturday, February 22, hydrogeologist Kurt Thomsen, coordinator of the Flint Creek Watershed Partnership, spoke to CFC members and others about the important contributions landowners can make toward ensuring that our water supply and quality are optimal. This was CFC's second 2014 Community Education winter program and embraced an important goal of Habitat Corridors, CFC's new initiative to support a healthy natural environment in the Barrington area.

Dr. Thomsen worked for years with BACOG as hydrologist for its water initiative program. The study targets approximately 600 square miles surrounding the Barrington area. For details about that program, go to www.bacog.org.

Thomsen explained hydrologic conductivity in detail, how the arrangement of various soil particles creates aquifers. He explained that the Barrington area gets its water largely from shallow aquifers. Data gathered from the BACOG project identified critical aquifer recharge areas. Most of these are in Barrington Hills, and it is vital to local water supplies that the recharge areas be protected. He noted how important this information is and how we might use it.



Kurt Thomsen answers audience questions after the presentation. Photo by Jan Sauer.

What can homeowners do to reduce storm water run-off and protect water quality? They can:

- Plant rain gardens;
- Use household cisterns;
- Install rain barrels;
- Introduce porous pavement;
- Improve stream banks by creating “pocket wetlands”;
- Plant “green roofs”;
- Plant rain-loving trees;
- Minimize lawn;
- Plant deep-rooted native plants;
- Eliminate pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

These measures will help to create the diversified habitat that CFC's Habitat Corridors encourages homeowners to establish.

President's Comments

Why do you support CFC? It's our nature!

There are many reasons people are members, donors, volunteers and friends of Citizens for Conservation. Their reasons for supporting us may resonate with you:



- You love birds and know that our restored preserves provide habitat for many species, some of them rare. You may participate in CFC-sponsored bird walks.
- You love open land and appreciate that CFC has helped preserve over 3150 acres in the Barrington area. You may enjoy walking the trails of our prairies and savannas.
- You are excited by the diversity of native plants on our preserves.
- You are concerned about butterflies and other pollinators and know CFC's habitats help them survive. Perhaps you have installed native plants to support bees and butterflies.
- You are passionate about all living things and are glad CFC provides habitat for so many native species including the sandhill crane family that returns each spring.
- You are glad that CFC buys and restores ecologically valuable land, and you may have contributed to our annual appeal so that you feel you "own" a piece of nature.
- You are concerned that young people need more exposure to nature and know how engaging our youth education activities are. Perhaps your kids or grandkids have participated.
- You value learning about nature and take advantage of the expertise shared by our Community Education Committee. Try attending a winter program.
- You love the beautiful nature photos taken by our expert photographers. Become one of them!
- You appreciate how much work our hundreds of volunteers accomplish each year, and you may like to join them.

We thank the many supporters who helped Citizens for Conservation achieve a very successful 2013. CFC purchased almost six acres, received twenty-seven donated acres, celebrated our most generous donors with an appreciation dinner, and launched a planned giving campaign and successful annual appeal.

We tallied 11,485 hours of volunteer time provided by 442 individual volunteers, including 4007 hours from our hard-working board of directors. We conducted eighteen active, outdoor programs for 500 children including our first-ever summer camp for beginning naturalists, and hosted all the fourth graders in District 220 for a day on the prairie and all the third graders for Nature Lady outings — 1233 students in all!

CFC launched its new Habitat Corridors program to encourage homeowners to use environmentally friendly practices in their yards and held our 17th annual native plant sale. We hired four summer interns who provided hours of service while learning about restoration, and we hosted five company workdays and five school groups for workdays. We celebrated Flint Creek Savanna's 25th anniversary, produced engaging quarterly newsletters and monthly E-updates about our activities, and regularly contributed great photos to our Facebook page.

We expect to do just as much in 2014 with your support!

— Peggy Simonsen

From the Staff Director

"There are moments when the heart is generous, and then it knows that for better or worse our lives are woven together here, one with another and with the place and all the living things." Wendell Berry

When I think about how many people are connected — woven together — through Citizens for Conservation, I think that it is quite amazing and very special. Over the winter break, seven CFC summer interns came back to help cut and burn brush on cold, invigorating Saturday workdays. A senior citizen plans to come by train from McHenry County where she has retired to help in the office as soon as the snow has melted. Many others have moved away, and when they return, no matter where they settle, they connect again with CFC by helping with the plant sale, youth education, restoration or any number of other places in CFC that they remember as their place here.

We are reminded, especially at our annual meeting, of the longevity of service of Citizens for Conservation board members and volunteers. Many start as field volunteers and add other essential roles as time goes on. It seems quite unusual to have so many members and volunteers who never lose their passion for the mission of CFC. *Saving Living Space for Living Things*, no matter how we choose to contribute to it, is what weaves us together.

— Sam Oliver

Garden Club Offers Environmental Scholarships

The Garden Club of Inverness is offering one or more scholarships of at least \$1000 to graduating high school seniors and college students living in parts of District 211 or 220. Scholarships will be awarded to students interested in fields concerning the natural environment, *i.e.* forestry, conservation, natural resources management, botany, environmental engineering, horticulture and others. Please contact Scholarship Chair Shirley Putman at shirleyputman@gmail.com for further information. Application deadline is April 22.

Barrington Area Spring Bird Walks and Hikes

Cosponsored by Audubon Chicago Region
and Citizens for Conservation

Get to know nearby nature with
Barrington-area naturalist Wendy Paulson

Walks are free and open to the public though space is limited and RSVPs are required. We strongly recommend waterproof boots for these hikes. Don't forget your binoculars!

April 4, 8:00 a.m.—Beese Park (Meet at Beese Park, east end of Cornell Avenue)

April 18, 8:00 a.m.—Beese Park (as above)

April 25, 7:30 a.m.—Baker's Lake (parking lot on Highland Avenue south of Hillside Avenue)

May 9, 7:30 a.m.—Beverly Lake (parking lot off Rt. 72)

May 16, 7:30 a.m.—Baker's Lake (as above)

May 23, 7:30 a.m.—Penny Road South* (meet at Penny Road Pond parking lot, less than a mile west of Old Sutton/Penny Road intersection)

May 30, 7:30 a.m.—Galloping Hill*(meet at Penny Road Pond parking lot, less than a mile west of Old Sutton/Penny Road intersection)

June 13, 7:00 a.m.—Galloping Hill *(as above)

June 15, 5:30 p.m.—Longmeadow* (north side of Longmeadow Drive off Bateman Rd)

*indicates a more strenuous hike

Please RSVP to: Rebecca Sanders (847) 328-1250 ext. 12 or rsanders@audubon.org and let us know how best to contact you should that be necessary.



Before you head out, please be sure to check the Citizens for Conservation website for any last minute changes or cancellations

Eastern kingbird. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

Seasonal Tip

Support pollinators in your yard

This spring resolve to help bees and other pollinators. In doing so you will help yourself and reap the benefits of assisting these beautiful insects. Your native forbs, trees and shrubs, and vegetable garden will be significantly more fruitful when you help these creatures. It's easy.

Pollinator populations are declining precipitously, but you can support their numbers by protecting them from toxic chemicals and other threats on your own property. For example:



Drawing of mason bee by Margaret Hudson.

- Stop using pesticides, particularly insecticides. (These chemicals kill both good and bad insects and allow many pests to survive without predation.)
- Plant a garden of native plants that are friendly to pollinators, or add natives to an existing bed. Try to incorporate species that bloom from spring through fall. (Shop at CFC's Annual Native Plant Sale on May 3 and 4.) Native forbs and some heirloom varieties have the blooms, fragrance, nectar, and pollen that attract and nourish pollinators.
- Install a bee house, but be ready to maintain it. Many houses are for sale online, but they require annual maintenance to prevent disease. Mason bees and the other solitary native bees are great fun to watch as they bring pollen and nectar to their nest cells.
- Provide water for insects as well as birds. A wet mud puddle or a slight drip from a suspended milk carton will help these small creatures stay hydrated.

A final note, never use neonicotinoid pesticides (from major manufacturers Monsanto and Bayer). They are sold under various names, including acetamiprid, clothianidin, imidacloprid (**the most widely used pesticide in the world**), sulfoxaflor, nitenpyram, nithiazine, thiacloprid and thiamethoxam. These chemicals are decimating bee populations and have proliferated in garden centers and nurseries. Some of the plants you purchase there are pre-treated with these systemic poisons. (Imagine — they named some of them “bee-friendly” plants!) In that case the whole plant is poisonous including the pollen and nectar. Please read labels and ask before you buy!

Attract these butterflies, native bees, beetles, and other pollinators, and enjoy the beauty and interest they bring to your yard and the benefits they bring to your garden.

— Meredith Tucker

(Some information from The Pollinator Partnership.)

Lessons persist, weather notwithstanding, at GBBC

by Pat Winkelman

On a blustery Saturday, children joined the 16th Great Backyard Bird Count, a Leave No Child Inside-related youth education class with Citizens for Conservation and Prairie Woods Audubon Society. After hearing a brief description of this global bird count and seeing photos of commonly encountered birds, children and caregivers ventured outdoors in search of birds.

Unfortunately, clouds from a snow storm in southern Illinois soon rolled in and kept the birds at bay. We counted a cardinal, blue jay, chickadee, cedar waxwing, and some mallards, and we had a surprise visit from flickers pushed north by the storm! The total count was six species and eighteen birds, considerably fewer than the twelve species and 151 birds we counted in 2013.

Inside the warm pavilion, everyone thawed out with hot chocolate, and Citizens for Conservation volunteers instructed the children in making pine cone bird feeders.

We give special thanks to Prairie Woods Audubon Society for providing the ever-popular “Audubon Adventures” activity books. Children and caregivers enjoy them.



Great Backyard Bird Count 2014. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

Citizens for Conservation offers both private and public year-round educational opportunities. To learn more, email youth-ed@citizensforconservation.org, call us at 847-382-SAVE (7283) or visit citizensforconservation.org/youth-education/.

Registration is open for the April 5 “Astronomy” class, the May 10 “Birds and Plants of Grigsby Prairie,” and for the Leave No Child Inside-related camp “Beginning Naturalists” for children ages four and five.



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