



## Volunteers lend hands to CFC Earth Day celebration

by Gene Branson

CFC celebrated Earth Day on Saturday, April 26, during its regularly scheduled restoration workday. The event was well attended by twenty-eight volunteers including Boy Scouts and parents, families with young children, high school students, and a large group of regular CFC restoration volunteers.

The volunteers planted legume seeds gathered last fall on our preserves. Legumes supply nitrogen and other beneficial elements to the soil during the growing season, and their presence in the prairie is essential to a high-quality habitat. Some of the seeds scratched into the soil by volunteers were purple prairie



*Restoration volunteers prepare the soil and scratch in the legume seed mix. Photo by Donna Bolzman.*

clover, lead plant, and white wild indigo. Tom Vanderpoel explained the planting technique and noted that this seed mix would be valued at about \$10,000 if CFC were to buy it.

After the workday, Chris and Heather Wu, CFC members and owners of Great Harvest Bread Co. in Hoffman Estates, provided sandwiches, muffins, scones, cookies, and specialty breads.

Thank you! The great food provided a marvelous conclusion to our Earth Day activity.



*Post-workday refreshments photo by Donna Bolzman.*



*Purple prairie clover photo by Diane Bodkin. White prairie clover photo by Donna Bolzman.*

# Website and volunteers deliver spectacular plant sale

by Ginger Underwood

This year the CFC Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale had the “Perfect Storm” for creating a record-breaking success.

First, CFC launched its new Habitat Corridors Program and helped many people learn about planting natives in their yards. They were enthusiastic to order the best possible plants for the environment and for their homes, and we had what they wanted!

Second, we offered about forty new items that were available by pre-order and at the sale itself. The response was terrific!

Next, the public really responded to the plea to plant milkweed for the monarchs! It was heartwarming to see how many people really cared and were willing to help! Over half of the 209 orders included milkweeds. Our downright cheap prices and offer of seven species of milkweed put thousands of the plants into the ground locally.

Sadly, a large amount of milkweed did not make it to the sale due to circumstances beyond our control or that of the nurseries. A great many plants did not survive the severe winter. Additionally, thousands of plants we back-ordered as replacements also grew poorly. We apologize to those of you who back-ordered milkweed and waited so patiently! We will be sending out refunds very soon to over 100 of you. Unfortunately, we have no control over the nurseries or good old Mother Nature! We'll try again next year for sure, but we did sell more than 2000 milkweed plants that will help the monarch butterfly.

Finally, based mostly on all the feedback, we believe the main reason for our big bounce up this year was the terrific website created *pro bono* for CFC by 2050 Design, owned by Dave Underwood. Dave created and developed an e-commerce platform for taking orders online which also doubled as a reference database for plants. People found it easy, quick, educational and efficient. Orders came from all over, some orders from fifty to sixty miles away! Dave's patience with his mother in setting up the site in spite of her worrying, fretting, and lack of confidence in the electronic world was amazing! I'm now a believer! We are still receiving many compliments on our new site, and Dave is still helping us with many odds and ends.

Citizens for Conservation and the Plant Sale Committee send big, big thank yous to the Catlow Theater, Heinen's, Midwest Groundcovers, and Country Road Greenhouses for their gifts and donations. They really made a huge difference! We especially thank Jim and Tamara Voris who hitched up their horse trailer, filled it with our sale tables double-decker, and took two days to pick up orders in Harvard and Kirkland, Illinois (to say nothing of delivering a huge serviceberry to Marengo)! This gave us a significant savings in delivery costs. Again this year Tom Vanderpoel donated over eighty celandine poppies and

Virginia bluebells for the sale. That meant lots of digging by CFC volunteers, but it was so well worth it. Thank you all!

Here are some stats for those who are interested:

- 70 volunteers counting just the sale week logged over 1200 hours,
- 83 people became members, mostly for the first time,
- 206 people sent pre-sale orders,
- CFC ordered 13,817 plants for the sale (516 were shrubs or trees), and not a one is left.



First day of CFC's 2014 native plant sale. Photo by Ed Plum.

The committee for the plant sale consists of Ann Warren, Melissa Washow, Corie Washow (Melissa's daughter from Maine — nothing better than young blood mixing in), Peggy Simonson, and Diane Greening who commuted from the North Shore daily. They are not only a great bunch of efficient, capable, reliable, dedicated and hard-working people but also great fun to be with!

We appreciate all the many volunteers who helped to make the plant sale such a success. We had a lot of fun, and we hope you did too! We know the land and all the critters that live in or on it or fly over it appreciate it as well. It's a great cause! We hope to see you next year and at our Fall Native Tree and Shrub sale this September. (See the announcement below.) Thanks so much for shopping with us. You are definitely the great people who make it all happen.

**CFC's Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale**

Select from a large number of beautiful, healthy native plant species

Pick-up on September 20, 2014

**All sales by pre-order only; no plants available for purchase on the date of pick-up**

Please check [citizensforconservation.org](http://citizensforconservation.org) for additional information. The order form will be available on-line this summer!

## Restoration Report

### The mint family

The mint family is part of the supporting cast in the Illinois prairie, marsh, and open woods. It does not produce the biomass of the three foundation families — the grasses, composites and legumes. Mints are quite common though and make up an important portion of all three of the habitats. An interesting trait of all of our native mints (also known by the scientific name Labiatae) is the minty smell and flavor of their leaves.

Wild bergamot is the mint most familiar to Illinois nature lovers. This plant is one of the three pioneer plants of the stage one restoration along with black-eyed Susan and prairie coneflower. It is extremely easy to restore; it blooms by the thousands in the first five years of restoration. If you can't



*Small skullcap. Photo by Donna Bolzman.*

restore wild bergamot, you'd better get out of the business. It seems to diminish (but not disappear) in the full sun of a well-established prairie. It persists best in the partial shade at the prairie border and open woods as found along Buckley Road next to Grigsby Prairie. As though its abundance and handsome lavender flower were not enough to endear it to the restorationist, it has the added benefit of being a great favorite of bumblebees and butterflies.

CFC has restored three members of the skullcap genus within the mint family. The marsh skullcap and the fancifully named mad dog skullcap are doing well in the sedge meadows at both Grigsby and Flint Creek Savanna, adding some nice color to

the meadow in its great August peak. We have had less success with the diminutive small skullcap which grows on the open soil of eroded clay slopes. This spring it thrived in the new seedbeds, so our seed source will explode this year.

The yellow giant hyssop is an interesting and attractive addition to the savanna habitat. Another savanna denizen, the selfheal, is a weedy native that we don't bother to restore as it comes into the savanna on its own. This plant has the distinction of being one of the few native plants rated a zero in Swink and Wilhelm's natural area rating index indicating that it is a survivor.



*Obedient plant at Flint Creek Savanna. Photo by Donna Bolzman.*

The most beautiful mint in our area is the false dragonhead, also known as obedient plant. Its spikes of bright pink flowers appear in the great late-summer bloom display with its classic associate prairie dock. A subspecies grows on riverbanks. A small population appeared along Flint Creek when we cleared the left bank at Hospital Grove and is now a member of an improving community with such rare plants as cardinal flower, white turtlehead and prairie loosestrife.

During most of the growing season our sedge meadows are lush and green but not very colorful. This changes in August when the meadows burst into a great riot of color. Leading the way in diversity are the mints: the purple of rough hedge nettle and the white of common mountain mint, common water horehound, northern bugleweed and wild mint (in the

same genus as the gum flavoring, non-natives spearmint and peppermint). When this assemblage of flowers blooms, the butterfly and bee populations peak. It is a wonderful sight to watch these busy creatures swarming around the flowers during the hot, humid, dog days of August.



*Bumblebee on wild bergamot. Photo by Donna Bolzman.*

CFC exerts its strongest efforts to restore the entire range of native plants to our preserves. The mints are generally easy to restore. Their seeds are easy to collect, and they consistently germinate, and yet most restorations neglect planting the more obscure members of this family. CFC sows them all, which is something of which we should be proud.

— Jim Vanderpoel

## Moon phases and star gazes highlight April youth class

by Edith Auchter

Amateur astronomer Edith Auchter treated more than two dozen participants to an astronomy program at Citizens for Conservation headquarters on Saturday, April 5, a youth education class. Edith discussed phases of the moon, moon exploration, the moon's surface features and its rotation around both its own axis and the Earth.

Participants made lunar flip books so that they could see the progression of the phases as well as the lunar rotation around the Earth that results in those phases. Then they understood why only 59% of the moon is visible from Earth.

Even after 100 lunar missions, much is still a mystery, such as the difference in features seen on the near side (predominantly maria) and far side (predominantly craters). The next total lunar eclipse in North America is on October 8.

Another activity involved everyone's making a pocket scale model of the solar system. It was a surprise to discover that on a 39" long piece of paper, the first inch from the Sun includes the rocky planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars while the asteroid belt and gas giants Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune are widely spaced in the other 38".

Darkness came, and it was very clear, not too cold and not windy. These were perfect conditions for viewing the sky through binoculars and telescopes provided by Tom and Edith Auchter and five other members of the Northwest Suburban Astronomers. It was fascinating to observe the moon, Jupiter and its Galilean moons, Mars, the Pleiades, the Orion Nebula where new stars are born, the Double Cluster in Perseus, and other galaxies.



Astronomy class participant observes the night sky. Photo by Bob Lee.

## BACT bestows inaugural Acorn Award on CFC board member Lukes

When Annamarie Lukes saw the notice for this year's Great Oaks of Barrington contest from Barrington Area Conservation Trust (BACT), she asked herself, "What makes a great oak?" Without reading the contest rules, she decided that an oak she and her husband had planted in their front yard seventeen years ago was truly a great oak. Then she read the rules. She knew her oak wouldn't win for its age or its size, but she thought it had a chance with its story. This is her entry:

"I am nominating our swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*) for its health, form, beauty and especially its fecundity. We planted this oak in 1997. It was about 8 feet tall. Now the oak



Award-winning swamp white oak. Photo by Robert Cantwell.

is well over 20 feet tall. Our oak has spawned six other oak trees on our property. This oak dispels a few myths about oaks—that they are slow growing and that they are difficult to transplant. This oak was, of course transplanted, and we moved one of its babies three years ago. The baby is thriving in its new location.

"I feel our oak is a deserving contest winner because it should inspire people who aren't lucky enough to live on

a property with mature oaks to go ahead and plant an oak tree now. In less than twenty years, the tree will be a prized specimen. Oak trees love the Barrington area!"

Recognizing that Lukes's entry did not conform with the other Great Oaks entries, the judges created a new category, named it the Acorn Award and granted it to Lukes. Now people who aren't fortunate enough to live on a property with century-old oaks will have a chance to win the Acorn Award in future Great Oaks of Barrington contests.

According to Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*, oak trees support 534 species of butterflies and moths. Tallamy states, "The value of oaks for supporting both vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife cannot be overstated. ... oaks are the quintessential wildlife plants: no other plant genus supports more species of Lepidoptera, thus providing more types of bird food, than the mighty oak."

Citizens for Conservation thanks BACT for inspiring people to plant and nurture oaks and congratulates Annamarie Lukes on her Acorn Award win.



Baby swamp white oak. Photo by Robert Cantwell.

## Public invited to interactive Flint Creek Savanna tours

by Diane Bodkin

Interactive self-guided prairie walks at Flint Creek Savanna are free to the public on the first Sundays of July, August, September, and October, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Usually the preserve is open only to CFC members and guests, but the public is welcome to explore the trail on these dates.



Scan this QR code for a tour preview.

Bring your smartphone with a scanner app to access videos from CFC restoration experts at six locations along the trail. Speakers discuss plants and animals living on the savanna as well as the twenty-five years of restoration that have made this an award-winning preserve.

Throughout the seasons the displays of wildflowers, grasses, and birds are always changing so that each Sunday provides a different experience with nature. CFC provides lemonade, maps and a guide.

## Sisters' farm house nostalgia at Flint Creek Savanna

by Diane Bodkin

Sisters Cherie Scher and Gail Slusser, residents of Lake Barrington Shores, saw an announcement that Flint Creek Savanna would be open to the public for a few hours on Mother's Day afternoon. They realized this was a chance to see the farm house where they had visited their uncle and aunt when they were grade school girls. They hadn't been back since Good Shepherd Hospital purchased the land many years ago.



Sisters Cherie Scher and Gail Slusser.  
Photo by Diane Bodkin.

Cherie and Gail enjoyed seeing the kitchen, which they declared was much smaller than they remembered it as young children. They remembered the big family dining room (in which CFC holds meetings) and the many upstairs bedrooms for their cousins (which are now youth education classrooms).

They recalled CFC's open wetlands as a large cattle pasture and the big hay barn that was removed because it had become dangerous. They remembered playing upstairs in their "chalet" which is now the seed cleaning loft above the shed. CFC volunteers were pleased to greet the sisters and to share their memories of the property as it was when they were girls.

## A Good Read

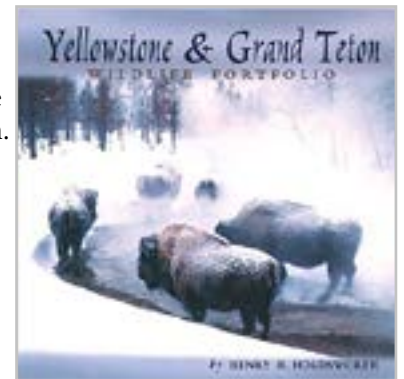
### Yellowstone & Grand Teton Wildlife Portfolio

Henry H. Holdsworth

In April 2000, my husband Larry and I traveled to Big Sky, Montana, for the wedding of Chris and Terri Leech. Chris grew up in Deerfield but early in his adult life moved out west, bought land along the Madison River about twenty miles from West Yellowstone, and became involved in conservation and working as a hunting and fishing guide. Terri found her niche in ranch management. Their marriage took place in the rustic Big Sky Chapel with Lone Peak Mountain viewed through a Gothic-style log-framed window behind the altar. A golden eagle soared gracefully past during the ceremony.

We spent the next two days driving through the Gallatin Forest, visiting West Yellowstone and the Grizzly Discovery Center into the northern reaches of the park as far as we could go before the official opening date. We marveled at the Mammoth Hot Springs and a large herd of elk encamped in the Gardner town square, the bison ambling along the roads.

Chris and Terri "come east" to visit their respective families at Christmas time, and their gift to us last year was Henry H. Holdsworth's book *Yellowstone & Grand Teton Wildlife Portfolio*. The author and photographer, a resident of Jackson, Wyoming, has immersed himself for over twenty years in one of the greatest and most diverse wilderness areas on earth. He captures the majestic sweep of the mountains, valleys and waterways, the daily events through all the seasons in the lives of the creatures whose domain it is.



He gives us snippets of information beyond a caption. For instance, bison use their immense heads as snowplows to find grasses under deep snows for winter food. Also, trumpeter swans do not migrate but winter instead in the high mountain valleys along with herds of bison. After near extinction, the swans now number about 350 thanks to the protection of the park.

Imposing is a magnificent full height photograph of a grizzly, and joyful are three mountain lion kittens roughhousing. The extremes of the environment, the times of abundance or scarcity for the inhabitants of the park, are memorably captured in this book, a treasure "for all seasons" and a window into a world where we could spend only a short but precious time.

— Barbara Benson

## Volunteer Portrait

### Wendy Paulson

CFC would not be what it is today without the talent, passion, and dedication of longtime volunteer Wendy Paulson. She is a past president and an early restoration volunteer. As CFC's first education director, Wendy started the quarterly newsletter, the first CFC nature classes for children, and with Laura Arndt, the Junior Naturalist program (a series of activity books to help preschool through sixth grade children appreciate and respect nature).

"Wendy is a true teacher," says CFC's staff director Sam Oliver. "She has an enormous store of knowledge that she is willing and eager to share." After college, Wendy taught professionally in the Boston Public Schools and at a private school in northern Virginia. When she moved to the Barrington area, she restarted the Nature Lady program for District 220, teaching K-2 students about local wildlife and third graders about the prairie habitat.

"Literally thousands of children in the Barrington school district have been touched and deeply influenced by her commitment to education and conservation," says Michele Gillett who has volunteered with Wendy at CFC's Fourth Graders on the Prairie project. "Another link in Wendy's long legacy." Recently Wendy has brought teaching through nature to children in Chicago with Birds in My Neighborhood in partnership with Openlands and Audubon Chicago Region. She is active in many bird and conservation groups, locally and nationally.

Wendy traces her interest in conservation back to family field trips to museums and national parks. "It was always about learning." As her family moved around the country (her father was a U. S. Marine officer), she experienced different landscapes and developed a love for them.

In her 20s, Wendy accompanied a group in Maryland that banded peregrine falcons at the height of the DDT crisis. "There was lots of time to learn ... from hard-core birders," she says, and she found a passion for bird watching. She has been leading bird walks for over thirty years. It was the decline in Henslow's sparrows near her Barrington-area home that helped her appreciate the need to restore grasslands.

She remembers her early years with CFC — classroom visits (exclusively on recycling at first), talks to community groups, and programs for scouts and homeschoolers. When the CFC board decided to dive into the still-new field of restoration, it felt overwhelming, like "trying to clean a barn with a toothpick." The hope is in "engaging hundreds and thousands of volunteers through local conservation and land management groups. It can't be done by government. There's not enough staff." She says there are many groups like CFC making an enduring contribution to the protection of local natural history. After visiting with groups from El Paso to China, she says, "We all speak the same language of landscape restoration."

"Whether Wendy is in casual conversation or speaking before hundreds about conservation, the commitment of CFC volunteers is always the cornerstone and is hailed for its exemplary success," says Michele Gillett. Wendy says, "CFC is the best example I know of effective, community-based conservation. The deep engagement of the volunteer corps is the secret ..." that makes CFC a thriving organization. When asked by CFC founder Bill Miller to start the education program, Wendy turned down the paid position he offered but took on the job as a volunteer. She finds volunteering empowering. As citizen volunteers become expert, "it breaks the wall between citizens and professional land managers." Volunteers also "have an impact on public agencies. They see what's possible."

The joy and privilege of volunteering includes "... unanticipated discoveries. It could be coming across a walking stick when you're picking seed or watching a great crested flycatcher coming and going from a nearby oak," she says. "There's also the human benefit, associating with others who have a sense of wonder about nature and who want to help it thrive. Volunteering is an enriching experience." Wendy encourages families to volunteer together, "... putting down deep roots in the community, like a plant." The Barrington area certainly is a better place because Wendy Paulson chose to put down deep roots here.

— Sharon Pasch



Wendy Paulson leads a local bird walk. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

## DAR salutes Meredith Tucker's conservation achievements

by Annamarie Lukes

When Meredith Tucker was young, two of her parents' wishes for her were that she carry on their efforts for nature and gardening and that she someday be involved with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). In April, her parents' hopes meshed when the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) through its Kishwaukee Trail Chapter granted Tucker their national Conservation Award.



L to R: Regent, Kishwaukee Trail Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Pat Holcomb; award-winner Meredith Tucker; CFC tech support Annamarie Lukes; Conservation Chairman, Kishwaukee Trail Chapter Kathleen Hartke. Photo by Mike Hartke.

Kathy Hartke, Conservation Chairman of the Chapter, recounted Tucker's many achievements in conservation beginning with her anti-DDT campaign in the 1960s in Itasca, Illinois, where she lived. Thanks to Tucker, Itasca became the first community in Illinois to ban aerial spraying of the pesticide DDT for Dutch elm disease. Today Tucker is the co-creator of CFC's Habitat Corridors program and spent most of her spring providing evaluations and recommendations for homeowners on site in their yards. Tucker is the managing editor of this newsletter and a regular contributor to it.

In addition to her individual efforts, Tucker is a past president of CFC, a current board member and vice president, and co-chair of CFC's Community Education Committee. Through her efforts CFC has brought noted speakers such as Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*, and Jennifer Hopwood of The Xerces Society to present programs to Barrington area residents. Meredith assisted in creating five permanent Community Education programs. She delivers these programs several times a year to community groups on request. Her favorite program, "Native Trees and Shrubs" features trees and shrubs from her yard.

After the award portion of the DAR meeting concluded, Tucker delivered her "Native Trees and Shrubs" program to the group. Whenever she has the opportunity to spread the word, Tucker takes it. Congratulations, Meredith, and thanks for your many contributions to CFC and the natural environment!

## Katie Tipsword achieves Girl Scout Gold Award

by Pat Winkelman

The Gold Award is the highest award in Girl Scouting and recognizes girls who make a difference in their communities. Katie joins one million other girls who have earned this award since 1919.



Katie Tipsword at Junior Naturalist preschool summer camp. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

As a ten-year old, Katie volunteered through her Girl Scout troop to assist at the Leave No Child Inside (LNCI) kick-off event in June, 2009, leading outdoor nature-based games. Over the next few years, Katie stayed involved with Leave No Child Inside by joining educational events like the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Katie and her troop leader wanted LNCI to benefit from her Gold Award project. Katie and Pat Winkelman, co-founder of the local LNCI initiative and then vice president and Youth Education Chair of Citizens for Conservation, developed a project to assist both LNCI and Citizens for Conservation (a member of LNCI).

Katie's first challenge was to find and coordinate student volunteers for the 2013 KidFest, a collaboration among the Barrington Breakfast Rotary, Barrington Park District, and LNCI. It allows families to enjoy outdoor, nature-based, educational activities offered by local businesses, schools, non-profits, and other organizations. It was daunting since KidFest had grown to over 1500 participants.

Beyond Kidfest, Katie's biggest challenge was achieving sustainable and measurable impact assisting at a new LNCI-related Junior Naturalist preschool summer camp sponsored by CFC. Katie worked with the camp educator Susan Lenz to develop crafts suitable for preschoolers and the curriculum. Katie raised funds to purchase craft materials and led the craft projects each day. She quickly learned that not all crafts go as planned. She needed to be spontaneous! She ensured campers left each day having learned a new skill and enjoying nature.

Katie created a banner using the campers' handprints and sketches for CFC's Youth Education Committee. Lastly, Katie coordinated her peers in volunteering at CFC's 25th anniversary celebration of Flint Creek Savanna.

Throughout her project Katie set and achieved high standards for herself and others. She learned fundraising techniques, becoming both a team member and a leader while honing her time-management, budgeting, problem-solving, and communication skills. Katie met and exceeded her goals, ensuring that the preschoolers learned to appreciate nature during their creative camp experience. Thank you, Katie! You deserve this great honor.

## Farewell but not goodbye

by Meredith Tucker

This is a special thank-you from Citizens for Conservation to Karen Hunter as she leaves the board of directors after decades of service. Karen has had a remarkable impact on CFC.



*Karen Hunter. Photo by Les Spinner.*

Karen was a volunteer and director for many years, served several terms as secretary and three terms as CFC president. She led with the combination of strength, tact, and goodwill that is her trademark. Beyond that, however, she was responsible for initiating programs that changed and improved CFC forever.

Eighteen years ago, Karen started the Native Plant, Tree, and Shrub Sale, chairing the sale for thirteen years. It continues to flourish and grow, allowing tens of thousands of native plants to thrive in the Barrington area and beyond. Eventually she added a Fall Tree and Shrub Sale to help homeowners replace the native woody plants that are essential but are disappearing.

As chair of CFC's Development Committee, Karen created its annual appeal program. That appeal remains CFC's major fundraising project helping us purchase land, restore preserves, and educate both children and adults. It allows CFC to implement its mission.

Karen has served CFC in countless other ways like helping create the Community Education Committee and doing countless yard visits with that committee. She has promised to do yard visits for Habitat Corridors in the near future!

Karen, we miss you and trust you will continue your association with CFC as a volunteer. We recognize the enormous impact you've had on the organization and look forward to working with you for many more years.

## CFC's Diane Bodkin named to BACOA's Hall of Fame

by Donna Bolzman

The Barrington Area Council on Aging (BACOA) held its nineteenth annual Hall of Fame Award Tea on May 21. CFC's candidate Diane Bodkin, long-time volunteer, was inducted along with honorees from other Barrington-area organizations. Nominees are selected based on their contributions and active participation in an organization, outstanding service to the community, years of service, and other achievements.



*BACOA award-winner Diane Bodkin. Photo by Jim Bodkin.*

Diane has served on CFC's Board of Directors for three years and currently holds the position of Secretary. Last year she

coordinated the highly successful Flint Creek Savanna 25th Anniversary celebration, and recently she spearheaded the implementation of a new interactive trail at Flint Creek Savanna. She also directed the design and creation of new signs for CFC's preserves.

Diane is actively involved in other local organizations as well. She was recently named chairperson of the South Barrington Conservancy Commission which oversees thirty-five acres of open land in the village. She chairs the Scholarship Committee for the South Barrington Garden Club and the Outings Committee for the Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society.

Congratulations, Diane, for induction into BACOA's Hall of Fame!

## From the Staff Director

### Partnering with the community

There is always something new happening at CFC. For instance, Whole Foods Market in Kildeer gave Citizens for Conservation the opportunity to be its One Dime At A Time recipient during the months of April, May and June.

The process is simple; the idea behind it is to reward the store's customers who use reusable bags by taking ten cents off their purchases for every bag they use. That ten cents is then donated to an organization that Whole Foods has chosen. CFC thanks Whole Foods for this unique opportunity to help raise awareness about our mission and accomplishments. We have partnered with Whole Foods for a special restoration workday and look forward to more joint efforts in our mission of Saving Living Space for Living Things.

Another pleasant partnership is the Birdhouse Building Contest at Crabtree Nature Center at 3 Stover Road in Barrington Hills. Crabtree is one of the Cook County Forest Preserves. CFC has entered a birdhouse built by Jim Stein, and we hope that you will walk the trail and vote for our entry "Pulling for Preservation!"

Once again, the process is simple and quite enjoyable. The fifteen birdhouse entries are along a shorter trail that begins at the back door of the exhibit hall where you will find pencils and ballots. Follow the birdhouse trail and vote for your favorite in each category: Best Kid's, Wackiest, Most Creative, Best for Birds, Forest Preserve Centennial. It's easy to spot



*CFC's birdhouse entry. Photo by Bob Kosin.*

CFC's entry, a very creative team of horses pulling a covered wagon with "CFC" on the wagon. The birdhouses' holes are plugged during the contest so that they won't interfere with local nesting birds. Birdhouse viewing and voting will be available from June to September, and the winner will be announced at Crabtree's "Art in Nature" event on September 21.

— Sam Oliver



## Notable Natives

### Fireflies: Summertime Magic

For people of a certain age, simple joys often filled our summer days and nights. One of my favorite memories was watching and catching fireflies (lightning bugs) on warm summer evenings. We'd capture a few and keep them in a jar next to our beds overnight, letting them go the next day – at least I hope we always did.

That special joy may not seem so exciting when it must compete with the technological wonders of cell phones and other devices, but if you are still lucky enough to find fireflies in your yard, you should try to appreciate the magical occurrence. Here is a beetle that can produce light without heat and can blink a pattern. Other creatures create light, but only fireflies have intermittent bioluminescence. The firefly is the most efficient light producer; 100% of the energy is emitted as light.

Fireflies are members of Lampyridae, a family of insects that is part of the order of winged beetles or Coleoptera. In North America, most fireflies are in the genera *Photinus* and are about a half-inch long or in *Photuris* which are larger. *Photinus* are the more common fireflies. They are nocturnal, spending their days in the grass.

Fireflies have a short life span and produce light in all their life phases. The larvae live in rotting wood and litter or duff

in wooded areas near water. When they are larvae, their light might be a warning to predators while the adults may produce light to attract mates. The larvae and adults may have different diets, larvae eating small insects, snails and bugs and adult fireflies eating insects, pollen and plants. Scientists have only recently begun studying fireflies, so there are many secrets for them yet to discover.

Unfortunately the simple magic of fireflies is becoming very rare. An article in February's issue of *Smithsonian* indicates that "Fireflies are little seen in areas developed by human beings." Development destroys the habitat needed by fireflies, and (it is thought) light pollution also contributes to the disappearance of these wondrous insects. If you want to create habitat friendly to fireflies, keep your yard light off at night, have an area where leaves and litter can accumulate along with rotting logs, and have water features on your property. The water feature can be as small as a depression that holds water longer than the surrounding area. (Chemically treated swimming pools don't count.)

Another factor contributing to the loss of fireflies is night-time spraying for mosquitoes. There are other methods of mosquito control that don't create such problems for fireflies and other nocturnal insects. You can help if you don't mow your grass too short, use natural fertilizers, avoid pesticides, and plant trees.

If you want to learn more about fireflies, there is a website dedicated to them. <http://www.firefly.org>

*Firefly illustration by Margaret Hudson.*

— Carol Rice

## Seasonal Tip

### Water conservation

Water conservation is getting a lot of press lately. Recent droughts in the Midwest, Texas and the severe drought in the state of California have brought much needed awareness that we mustn't take our water for granted!

Fresh water makes up only 3% of the water on earth, and agriculture uses 70% of it. In the Barrington area, we are dependent on a shallow aquifer for our entire water supply. Being too far from Lake Michigan for practical access, over 35,000 people rely on the aquifer.

Since 1900, we've lost half the world's wetlands which act as water repositories, and as we face more dramatic changes in weather and rainfall patterns, conserving the water we have becomes imperative. It is no surprise that Americans tend to overuse: the average African uses five gallons a day while the average American uses more than 100 gallons per day. In addition, a dangerously low water table can result in a contaminated water supply so that keeping it healthy is essential. We can affect the future by conserving today.

Some easy water-saving habits include turning off the faucet when you're washing dishes, brushing your teeth or even showering. Lather or shave with the water off; then turn it

back on as needed. Only run full loads in the dishwasher and washing machine, and when upgrading appliances, always choose energy-efficient models.

When cleaning a can or jar for recycling, fill it with a little water, then shake the can to clean it versus letting water run through it. A little water and scrubbing cleans just as well as a strong stream of water. Never hose sidewalks, driveways or wash your car at home. Fix any leaking faucets, and make sure your hoses and outdoor water equipment are in top shape.

The most significant contribution you can make to conserving our precious water is to convert some or all of your water-thirsty lawn to native plants, including native ground covers. Many native plants thrive in drought conditions and can literally help put water back into our aquifer. Concrete streets, driveways and traditional lawns cause water runoff and only contribute to the problem. Rain gardens, on the other hand, use native plants that have roots that run deep into the ground allowing water to seep down and infiltrate the soil. They are nature's way of helping to keep our water table in balance — not to mention that it is easier caring for native plants than for non-natives!

Water conservation is here to stay, so think when you use and help to ensure a healthy aquifer in our beautiful Barrington area.

— Sandi Alguire

# Cultivars: They just aren't native (or natural)!

by Meredith Tucker

Citizens for Conservation is all about native plants. We buy land to help preserve native plants and their habitat; we restore land using native plants; our youth and community education committees teach the importance of using natives. It is time that we enlighten our readers about the status of cultivars created from native plants. Once the species is a cultivar, it is no longer native!



Blossoms on native crabapple. Photo by Meredith Tucker.

Cultivars are plants that are “cultivated varieties.” They are created in three ways:

- **Natural selection** may occur in nature or in a greenhouse. A single plant may be different from the rest of its species in appearance or behavior. It is as if all your brothers and sisters are blond until one is born with dark hair. Someone notices that a plant is different and propagates it to retain the difference.
- **Hybridization** occurs when a horticulturist breeds two different species or varieties to each other and then propagates the offspring. Most hybrids are created in nurseries.
- **Genetic engineering** occurs when scientists directly manipulate plant DNA to produce a particular trait. Expense usually limits use of the technique to non-native plants.

Horticulturists generally produce cultivars by cloning; about 70% of cultivars are clones. These specially named plants have identical DNA and are grown from cuttings, by division or by tissue culture. Because the clones are identical, a serious loss of genetic diversity accompanies their use. This is important because diversity protects a species from calamity due to disease, pests, drought or other natural phenomena.

One can recognize a cultivar because its name involves more than the two-word Latin name of the native species. Take a reference like the CFC Plant Sale form to the nursery with you when you buy plants; it provides the binomial Latin names for many native species. A cultivar can be identified by an additional name written capitalized, unitalicized, and in single quotation marks. The native great white trillium may become the cultivar *Trillium grandiflorum* ‘Rosalie,’ two words in Latin for genus and species; one word in English indicates the created cultivar.

A particular cultivar may be grown for its unusual flower color or form, leaf color, size, growth rate, or disease resistance. We may recognize the appearance of that cultivar, but we can't necessarily identify all the losses that accompany its creation. Can the bees still use it? Does it have nectar? Is it still drought resistant? Can the larvae of Lepidoptera use the leaves as nourishment? Too often there is a serious loss that we cannot identify even though we recognize the appearance of the cultivar.

Another problem is gender. Too often trees and shrubs are bred to be all males so that they don't produce fruit to drop on the driveway or patio. Alternatively, a cultivar like that for *Ilex glabra*, inkberry, is only female, but there still won't be fruit without an available male.

Cultivars often fail to perform the same ecological role as the true native species. *Echinacea* cultivars have been manipulated to provide strange colors and shapes. They may be sterile, providing no seed for the finches. They are sometimes double, providing no accessible pollen and nectar for pollinators. One of the popular cultivars of our native shrub *Physocarpus*, ninebark, no longer serves as a host for the specialist native ninebark beetle because its leaf chemistry has changed.

Finally, many cultivars are bred to be “pest free.” This is one of the greatest drawbacks to using cultivars. Those insect pests provide food for birds, amphibians and other native wildlife. Learn to love the holes and knobs and imperfections on the leaves and stems of your native plants. They indicate that your yard provides for toads and nestlings. Our native insects do not eradicate their food supply by harming the plant species on which they feed. They evolved together, and they need each other. It is the alien insects like Japanese beetles and emerald ash borers that destroy plants.

Please plant native species not cultivars, and watch for the bumblebees and catbirds and chickadees that use the truly native plants in your yard.

## Upcoming Events

### Youth Education Classes

Saturday, August 23 - Life in the Prairie at Flint Creek Savanna, CFC Headquarters, 1:00-3:30.

### Self-guided Prairie Walks at Flint Creek Savanna

Interactive walks free to the public from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 6

Sunday, August 3

Sunday, September 7

Mr. Dennis Hansen has built and donated to CFC fifty kits for butterfly and bluebird houses. As part of Leave No Child Inside, we used the houses at our nature camp and will use them at future Youth Education classes. Hansen included a completed prototype to show where all the pieces belong and even sent sanitized tree bark for inside the butterfly houses. Many thanks, Mr. Hansen!

# Children and parents study Grigsby's plants and birds

by Gail Vanderpoel

On May 10, a group of young birdwatchers and botanists visited CFC's Grigsby Prairie to celebrate spring's arrival. Armed with binoculars and the newly published Grigsby field guides, parents and young people walked the trail searching for spring plants and birds.



Plant sightings included: Indian paintbrush, Jacob's ladder, marsh marigolds, marsh violets, toadflax, prairie lousewort, dropseed, porcupine grass, orange puccoon, rattlesnake master, common blue-eyed grass, shooting stars, and compass plants. We learned that we must tread lightly even walking on the trail because the shooting stars like to grow on the path!

*Grigsby Prairie students. Photo by Alison Vanderpoel.*

Because it was afternoon, birds were more scarce than plant species but included kingbirds, savanna sparrows, red-winged blackbirds, tree swallows and a turkey vulture. The kids were excited to record their discoveries on the lists in the front of their booklets. They enjoyed comparing the colored photos to the real specimens. We also discovered crayfish holes, a possible coyote den, and a few butterflies.

The main lesson of the day concerned differences. We observed the unburned part of the prairie covered with tall yellow and rust-colored grasses and then the short green plants in the area which had been burned in March. All of the children and their parents had seen a prairie in summer and fall, but they were impressed to see the smaller spring-blooming plants. We discussed burning the prairie and how it makes the plants grow faster. We noticed that in most years the plants are taller with more flowers blooming, but the long winter and cold spring had slowed their growth. I explained that many more birds were active when I did a scouting trip at 8:00 that morning. I had seen at least seven more bird species at that time.

Students each received three plants: rough blazing star, pale purple coneflower, and swamp milkweed. Each child also got a packet of common milkweed seeds and an "Illinois Prairie Poster" printed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. They proudly took their Grigsby field guides home to show their day's observations.

We thank the Garden Club of Barrington for its grant to pay for the native flowers students received and for printing of the Grigsby Prairie booklet complete with color photos to make plant and bird identification easier. It was a beautiful class on a beautiful day, and we all appreciated Grigsby Prairie in May!

# CFC brings mammals to the children – KidFest 2014

by Gail Vanderpoel

Saturday, May 3, was a great day for Citizens for Conservation Youth Education Committee members to greet and educate hundreds of local families at KidFest. The event is sponsored by the Barrington Park District, Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club, and Leave No Child Inside. From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. an estimated 1700 children flew kites and learned about nature, visiting booths presented by local groups and businesses.

CFC Youth Education volunteers presented information using its mammals kit which includes tracks, pelts, skulls, skeletons and scat. A favorite hands-on activity was digging in the sand for deer bones and placing them on a life-size skeleton chart. We also offered children the chance to make clay animal footprints they could take home. This activity was extra special because two young volunteers, ten-year old Chloe Monteiro and her six-year old sister Eloise, assisted the children in making their clay prints. Children received the booklet "Mammals of Illinois" as well.

KidFest was a great opportunity to provide information about upcoming CFC nature classes and to network with local families. Thanks to Doe Crosh, Bonnie Albrecht, Julia Martinez and Tom Vanderpoel for their help at this event. Also, thanks to Jean-Marc Monteiro for providing two excellent young volunteers. Finally, thank you to Virginia Smith, a Woodstock art teacher, who donated the clay for making animal footprints. The success of this program was clearly a collaboration of many generous volunteers.



*KidFest participant at CFC's Display Table. Photo by Jean-Marc Monteiro.*

# Our coldblooded friends and why we need them!

by Karen Rosene

On Saturday, March 22, Citizens for Conservation presented the third of four educational programs to support its exciting Habitat Corridors Initiative. The speaker, biologist Michael Redmer of the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, focused on how homeowners can create habitat friendly to amphibians.

He explained the life cycles of frogs and salamanders and their valuable place in a diverse ecosystem. Some amphibians are environmental indicators, similar to canaries in a mine. They need clean water to survive. Redmer described wetlands necessary to amphibian survival and reproduction, particularly seasonal or ephemeral ponds. These are semi-permanent wet areas that allow amphibians to breed and the tadpoles to mature but that do not sustain fish which are tadpole predators.

Redmer also explained that the adults can venture a good distance from the water source, about 2/3 of a mile. How you keep your yard matters particularly if you are within that distance from water. Woodlands can provide good amphibian habitat if they are near a water source.

Some of the things you can do to make your yard amphibian-friendly are:

**Know the threats and minimize them.** Threats include mowers, pesticides, buckthorn, window wells and other animals. Covering window wells and removing buckthorn will help amphibians survive. As we all know, buckthorn destroys habitat, causes erosion and emits “emodins” which are toxic to amphibians and small animals.

**Use groundcovers and mulches which hold humidity near ground level.** These include compost, leaf litter and grass clippings.

**Provide sturdy hiding places.** Commercially available toad houses, upended broken terra cotta pots and natural ground covers provide shelter. Tree frogs sometimes share accommodations in bluebird houses. The birds don't seem to mind them.

**Plant diverse organic garden vegetables and prairie flowers.**

**Provide water features.** These could include ponds; if so, plant heavily around the edges. Horse owners note that even a full livestock tank will do. Please avoid fish as amphibians and fish do not co-exist well.

CFC's Community Education Committee thanks Trader Joe's for providing cookies and Starbucks for providing coffee for the event. Enthusiastic audience members and all the volunteers enjoyed them immensely!

## CFC welcomes new Board Members

CFC's Board of Directors looks forward to a friendly and successful working relationship with new directors Annamarie Lukes (who completed a partial term in the fall and began a new three-year term in March), Wayne Schild, and Ralph Tarquino, both of whom will fulfill three-year terms. Welcome aboard! (That's a pun. MT)

## Building pathways for birds and pollinators: Habitat Corridors

by Robert Cantwell

At the Barrington Village Hall on April 12, 2014, CFC's Community Education Committee presented “Gardening for Birds and Pollinators,” the final of four educational programs in support of its Habitat Corridors initiative. Judy Pollock of Audubon Chicago Region and Kelsay Shaw of Possibility Place Nursery described how homeowners can make a positive contribution to the well-being of birds and pollinators.

Pollock related the importance of backyard environments to the estimated 280 species of birds that migrate through the Chicago area. Many in the audience were surprised that the densely populated Chicago area north of the “corn and soy bean desert” is vital to the survival of our migrating birds.

The Chicago area with its rivers and forest preserves and neighborhood yards is an essential component of the flyway and feeding grounds for our feathered friends. Birds stop to feed in yards during the day so they can continue to their breeding grounds at night. Migrating birds need to eat, and they eat either native plants or what lives on the native plants.

Both speakers emphasized the importance of planting and maintaining native plants in order to provide nutrition for the insects, spiders, and caterpillars that thrive on native plants and that are an essential component of birds' diets. Shaw emphasized that birds need layers of plants — trees, understory trees, shrubs, and ground vegetation. Bird habitats can look natural or landscaped; birds don't care as long as there are layers providing both shelter and food. This healthy diversity doesn't happen in the presence of insect killing chemicals! Shaw related that a chickadee will eat thousands of caterpillars each year. Don't poison caterpillars — let the birds eat them.

Native plants are beautiful naturally; they can survive the variances of our weather; they grow deep roots, and they have developed in cooperation with the insects, caterpillars, worms, birds, and bees. Poisoning any component of that circle of organisms starves the natural habitat and destroys the necessary circle of life. By providing food and shelter with native plants in our gardens we can sustain local and migrating birds and pollinators.

## President's Comments

### Bidding farewell

CFC is fortunate to have many exceptionally committed volunteers. In the ten years I have been involved, I have seen the organization grow and strengthen because of the quality and dedication of many who have served on the Board of Directors. We also know that on occasion we will have some of the members who have made such a difference leave their board positions. In the last few months three such committed volunteers have retired from the board.



Tom Crosh served on the board for eight years and was coordinator of our summer intern program. Each year Tom wrote the grant application to Oberweiler Foundation which funds the interns. He recruited, interviewed and hired four or five enthusiastic college students and was on site many days to orient them to their work in restoration. His background in finance provided a valuable contribution to CFC's fiscal management.

Always willing to step in to help, Tom will once again lead the team creating CFC's 4th of July parade entry and will continue to be an active restoration volunteer, out in all seasons to help maintain our award-winning preserves. Thank you, Tom, for all you have done for CFC, and thank you for continuing to be an active volunteer even though you are leaving the Board of Directors.

Julie Zuidema served on the CFC board for eight years, including two years as chair of the Volunteer Committee and all eight years as chair of our Special Events Committee. Under Julie's leadership we improved the appeal and scope of our annual meetings and celebrated many special occasions. Julie provided spectacular refreshments for our 25th Anniversary celebration of Grigsby Prairie and annually planned events to thank all our volunteers.

Julie willingly organized refreshments for many Community Education programs and other occasions. We are sorry to see Julie leave the board but know that we will continue to benefit from her cheerful demeanor and quiet competence as she leads some of the Flint Creek Savanna prairie walks this summer. Don't go far, Julie, we will be calling on you!

Our other retiring board member is long-serving Karen Hunter. Her leadership and contributions for many years are so extensive that Meredith has highlighted them in a separate article in this issue. Karen, we are all sorry you have left the board, but as with the others who move on, we know we can still call on your extensive organizational knowledge and expertise.

While it is sad to lose the vast commitment of these three wonderful volunteers, we know that CFC is far better off because of their leadership over so many years. Thank you Tom, Julie and Karen!

— Peggy Simonsen

## Welcome, new members of CFC!

Laura Alter	Kathy Nuzzo
Lisa Appleby	Tamara & Michael
Pasquale Bernardi	Oberholtzer
Pat Copp	Quinn Owens-Hendrikson
Bill Denk	Michael Padula
Phil Doyle	Jim & Jan Pitsch
Jennifer Drecoll	Diane Powell
John Dyble	Carol Ramsdale
Paul Efrosinis	Russell Rankin
Linda Goldman	Charles Rucks
Arlene Gomoll	Pam Sandbulte
Mary Gorman	Robert Schiewe, Jr.
Jason Griffin	Diane Shirzadi
Sue Harney	Jacquie Skurla
Tom & Sharon Haverstock	Evan Smith
Brook Herman	Kort & Marie Spicuzza
Sheila Horst	Gustafson
Denise Bezick Hume	Laurie Stogin
Alan Jaremus	Dave & Kathy Tabak
Tony Johansson	Beth Teschner
K J Kane	Van Fossan Family
June Kramer	Will Wagner
Angela Krzysko	Rick Wanner
Robin Labancz	Kate Weber
Randall & Kelly Madison	Jeff Weiss
Marilyn McAlester	Ken & Arlene Werner
Lauren McEwen	Aaron Winn
Beth Meyer	Katherine Zook

### Thanks to ...

The Village of Barrington for allowing Community Education to use its beautiful board room for four winter programs and for making the process easy and seamless for us.

David Underwood for the monumental amount of time and talent he expended creating the CFC Plant Sale website which helped make this an extremely successful venture.

### Thanks from ...

A Face Book friend, "To the Citizens for Conservation team i wanted to say a big thank you ... i came to your plant sale yesterday and bought the most amazing plants ... to anyone considering going to this event i would say go ... the plants were so beautiful and at such an amazing price ... i am just full of excitement planting them in my garden today ... the only regret i have is that i didn't take my time and buy more ..."

## Home visits — inspirational!

Habitat Corridors hit the ground running! In its first month, volunteer native plant enthusiasts visited more than twenty homes with additional visits scheduled. It has been wonderful meeting people with the passion to help save the environment starting at home. I will share highlights from three of those visits, but there were many more.

One of my first visits was to a home in Barrington Hills that had lots of property, most of it natural. That does not mean naturally full of buckthorn and garlic mustard; these long-time CFC supporters have been clearing invasive species for a long time, and the honeysuckle and buckthorn exist only as occasional plants and are probably doomed individuals. We walked the old oak woods, inspected sedges installed in earlier years (from CFC plant sales), and considered additional species to help stop erosion caused by sheets of water running through the woods from nearby development. It was truly a great experience to feel the crunch of oak leaves underfoot, to see rotting logs creating habitat, and to know that there are properties like this one welcoming wildlife while its owners make berry preserves from the wild native bushes. I awarded a well-deserved Habitat Corridors sign to this homeowner.

A second experience was on a small property in the center of the Village of Barrington. An enthusiastic mother told me about her nine-year old son who loves birds and who advocated for preserving the large arborvitae on their



*Mourning cloak butterfly. Photo by Mary Anne Borge.  
<http://www.the-natural-web.org/>*

property as habitat for mourning doves. Mom was hoping to create a little bird sanctuary outside his bedroom window. I suggested plants for that sanctuary with the centerpiece being a bur oak in the center of their front yard where it will be watched and nurtured. She ordered it. What a lucky tree!

A third terrific experience was at the home of a couple in North Barrington. We stood on a bridge above a small creek and discussed the area below us, mostly lawn, but which they hope to naturalize with natives, a continuation of the wooded slope behind the creek. There was a beautiful, newly planted river birch. I mentioned the exfoliating bark of that tree and of shagbark hickory which they have elsewhere on the property; it provides shelter for the mourning cloak butterfly that spends the long winter as an adult under the bark of such trees. We talked a little further and saw a black floating creature soaring below us to land on the moist soil. A mourning cloak. I'm not sure who was more excited, the homeowners or me!

Join CFC and Habitat Corridors to make your own property more environmentally friendly. We will schedule home visits throughout the growing season and look forward to meeting more very nice people who want to save this world one yard at a time. Please email [info@habitatcorridors.org](mailto:info@habitatcorridors.org). You may also leave your name and contact information at 847-382-SAVE.

— Meredith Tucker



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