



CITIZENS  
FOR  
CONSERVATION

# CFC NEWS

*Saving Living Space for Living Things*

Vol. 34, No. 1, Winter 2015

## Flint Creek greenway grows with new CFC acquisitions

by Steve Smith

This October brilliant gold and amber foliage dominated the site of CFC's latest land acquisition, a peaceful ravine carved through the north Biltmore area by the north branch of Flint Creek, formerly known as Indian Creek.

Thanks to this generous donation from the Holbrook Trust, CFC's adjacent Steyermark property doubled in size. CFC will continue restoring this larger property, and we thank Dorothy Holbrook for the kind donation.

Additionally this fall, CFC expanded its holdings with the addition of two and one-half acres of wetland next to the far northwest corner of its Flint Creek Savanna preserve. It is near the Lake Barrington Field House on Northpointe Parkway.



Both of these acquisitions help CFC meet its goal of adding select small- to medium-size parcels to its footprint of undeveloped land in the Barrington area — a greenbelt centered primarily along Flint Creek. This greenway complements our partners' properties which include, among others, large pieces of undeveloped land belonging to organizations like the forest preserve districts in Lake and Cook Counties. This greenbelt also includes the grassroots efforts of homeowners who participate by providing eco-friendly yards as a part of CFC's Habitat Corridors program.

The more contiguous lands we have in this patchwork of greenbelt parcels, the better will be the health of the natural ecosystems and the people and creatures residing there.

*New CFC land adjacent to our Steyermark Woods preserve. Photo by Diane Bodkin.*

# Nature Ladies reveal wonders of Grigsby Prairie to third graders

by Susan Lenz

The air tingled with excitement as students, teachers, and chaperones arrived at Grigsby Prairie for their annual introduction to the prairie as part of Barrington District 220's third-grade science curriculum. Grigsby Prairie in Barrington Hills, with over forty-five acres meticulously restored and maintained by Citizen for Conservation (CFC) volunteers, is nature's outdoor classroom. This year, over 570 third-grade students from all eight elementary schools in District 220 attended the walks led by volunteer Nature Ladies.

The Nature Lady Program has volunteers in each grade school who provide supplemental environmental education through class presentations on animals indigenous to the Barrington area as well as outdoor experiences, including the prairie trip. The Nature Ladies are truly in their element on the visits to the prairie as stewards to the outdoors for their students. They have been taking the third-grade students to visit local prairies since 1990. The program is made possible through the support of many organizations which include the Garden Club of Barrington and the Little Garden Club of Barrington as well as Citizens for Conservation and District 220.

In 2011, District 220 collaborated with the Nature Lady Program as well as CFC to develop curriculum integrating the prairie experience into the third- and fourth-grade science curricula. During the third-grade prairie visits, students learn about and interact with a restored Illinois prairie similar to pre-settlement landscapes. The experience is a wonderful precursor to the fourth-grade prairie program.

There are two parts to the third-grade field experience. In the scavenger hunt, students find four of six plants and scientifically draw and label each drawing. They utilize knowledge provided in the classroom by the teachers and Nature Ladies' previous in-class presentations. Students also try to find a plant with a fruit. They need to think of a plant with a seed pod such as milkweed or wild indigo.



Third-grade student at Grigsby Prairie. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

The second task includes a sensory prairie walk and plant identification. Students use all senses, excluding taste, to fully experience the prairie. Volunteers stake forbs and grasses along the path with numbers as well as pictures of the plants in their prime. Leaders give chaperones a list of the plants so that they can guide their groups along the path to observe and discuss the characteristics and uses of each plant. This year the prairie walk was in all its glory with gorgeous forbs and very tall grasses. The number of fringed gentians and the height of the big bluestem were awesome. The excursion is a truly wonderful hands-on introduction to the prairie which many of our students and parents had never before experienced.

Third grader quotes from the eyes of a child:

- "The forbs are so pretty!" Niyati
- "There are so many plants!" Aashna
- "The plants are kind of scratchy." Danny
- "The big bluestem is bigger than I thought." Alina
- "That compass plant is so tall!" Joey.



Fourth graders observe and study on the prairie. Photo by Tom Auchter.

## Exciting sightings enhance fourth graders' prairie field trip

by Edith Auchter

Splendid September weather characterized this year's prairie field trips for District 220 fourth graders as part of their science curriculum. We needed no rain days as the students headed to Citizens for Conservation's Grigsby Prairie, CFC's Flint Creek Savanna, or Galloping Hill in Cook County's Spring Creek Forest Preserve.

Twenty-six volunteers from CFC, led by Edith Auchter, Michele Gillett, and Wendy Paulson, guided students, teachers, and accompanying parents through three activities: discovery hike, seed collecting, and measuring/drawing of prairie plants. As often happens on the outings, there were plenty of unexpected sightings, including coyote, sandhill cranes, praying mantises, leopard frogs, monarch and great spangled fritillary butterflies. Several students confided to volunteers that "this is the best field trip ever!"

CFC welcomes individuals who would like to volunteer for these annual September outings for whatever commitment they can make. Call 847-382-SAVE.

## Restoration Report

### 2014: year in review

by Jim Vanderpoel

In 2014, CFC continued its restoration progress. We spent most of our time on three main techniques: brush cutting and invasive species control; prescribed burning; and seed collection, cleaning and sowing.

For the fourth straight year we conducted over 100 volunteer workdays; and, for only the third time, more than 300 volunteers attended our workdays. With four workdays to go in 2014, we have already welcomed 313 volunteers, crushing last year's record of 306. CFC's class of four interns was very strong. The total volume of seed we collected was down at 308 pounds, and the number of species was 189.

We continued heavy-duty brush cutting at our new Flint Creek South preserve. We have also begun clearing brush along the road at the Kelsey Road Prairie. Despite the bitter cold last winter, we had several great brush-cutting workdays at Wagner Fen, Ela Road and Baker's Lake. Once again we did some brush removal fine-tuning at Grigsby Prairie.

On our own lands we conducted two spring burns at Flint Creek Savanna, the most extensive one ever at Grigsby, and one at the Conservation Easement. We had another successful burn at Baker's Lake in cooperation with our partner the Village of Barrington. We also burned the remnant railroad prairie with Paganica Homeowner's Association.



Purple prairie clover at Grigsby Prairie. Photo by Jim Bodkin.

As the summer progressed, we proclaimed 2014 the year of the legume! In late May we noticed that American vetch (the first legume to bloom) had more than normal flowering, which made us happy because this plant is very pretty and underused in restorations. At the beginning of July, we watched in awe as leadplant, tick trefoils and prairie clovers put on their greatest ever display. Late summer saw a record bloom of

round-headed bush clover. Seeds set very well, and we had record seed harvests from all of these important plants.

How was it that an entire plant family could do so well in a given year? It was not the habitat because both the tick trefoils and hog peanut of the woodland and full sun-loving white prairie clover excelled. It was not moisture levels because both marsh vetchling and dry prairie Illinois tick trefoil were outstanding. Normally the legumes suffer severely from deer browsing, but this year the deer seemed to do less damage. Did the long, cold, snowy winter knock down the deer population?

Legumes are also bothered by Japanese beetles, and the annual infestation of this pest was minimal. Again, was it the harsh winter? We do not know, but we intend to take advantage of the bounty by conducting our most extensive legume seed scratch-ins next spring. We hope to share the good results with restoration partners like Spring Creek Stewards and Friends of Deer Grove East.

Oddly enough the composites had miserable seed production this year. The total volume of seed we collected was down because we had pathetic harvests of prairie dock, compass plant, prairie coreopsis and wild quinine. Why would the fortunes of the two most important flower families be so dramatically different? It is humbling to think that as much as we have learned over the years, there is still so much that we do not know.

We saw other rewarding successes. Last year I reported that we were delighted by the painstakingly slow increase of hoary puccoon over the last twenty-five years from the original population of about thirty plants in the late 1980s to over 300 in 2013. This year we counted 800 plants!

Another encouraging improvement was the swale at Grigsby. A wonderful mix of northern bedstraw, prairie Indian plantain and purple meadow rue, three plants that seem to come in only as token populations in the second stage of restoration, exploded into an extensive display at the end of June. Finally, the great population of wild golden glow in the wet savanna border at Hospital Grove joined the dazzling blue spikes of American campanula and the yellow of sneezeweed. We hope this oncoming habitat will permanently protect the woods from invasion by reed canary grass from the stream bank.

We had several positive animal sightings. At Flint Creek Savanna we added two new birds to our list: the rusty blackbird and the wild turkey. These birds are each exciting for different reasons. The rusty blackbird is declining throughout its range, and no one is sure why. It is heartening to see this bird, which is quite conservative to its preferred habitat of wet woods even in migration, use our preserves as a



Northern bedstraw. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

rest stop. It may be that providing good migratory habitat is as important to some species as protecting breeding habitat.

The wild turkey is one of the great American birds. It was extirpated in northern Illinois and has been reintroduced at the extensive open space on McHenry County Conservation District land. Was the specimen running across the East Side Marsh and onto the neighbor's lawn from that expanding population? We hope so.

We saw a tiger salamander in the same spot this fall. We had seen this animal before, but it is always good to know that conservative herptiles are surviving at our preserves. For the same reason we were glad to hear that a neighbor spotted a fox snake at Grigsby.

We'll keep restoring living space for living things. It appears to be working!



*Common sneezeweed. Photo by Diane Bodkin.*



*Bur oak leaves in October. Photo by Meredith Tucker.*

## Superior effort equals superior results for Tree and Shrub Sale

by Meredith Tucker

Our Annual Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale was a rousing success. CFC more than doubled the number of woody plants we usually sell. We offered twenty-four species of native trees and twenty-six species of native shrubs. In all we sold 242 woody plants.

The plant sale chairs were concerned about the size of the plants after our very rough winter; however, the wet and cool spring and summer helped plants recover so that we could offer above-average specimens.

Several of our nurseries indicated that their seeds are collected locally to insure viability. As our restoration people will confirm, it's always best to plant local ecotype, and that's what we provided.

Thanks for this success go to Barbara Overbey and Linda Krauss. These two new CFC volunteers put in a massive number of hours creating paper order forms, working with the online order form, processing orders, picking up plants from the nurseries, and loading vehicles on the pick-up date. In addition we can thank extensive publicity and CFC's new website for the upsurge in orders.

We surely hope that such increased planting of native woody specimens will continue in the future. CFC loves selling the plants and earning a small profit, but we are thrilled to see these absolutely indispensable natives being installed at properties throughout the area. It may be the most important way in which we can help to save our wildlife, our lovely world, and ourselves.

“Conservation is a state of harmony between man and land.”  
— Aldo Leopold

## 2015 Community Ed programs to focus on homeowner habitats

by Meredith Tucker

As we mail this issue of *CFC News*, Community Education's first winter program is in the offing. Once again our 2015 programs will concentrate on subjects that are important to our Habitat Corridors initiative but will also interest all homeowners and gardeners. Last January we began with a program describing Habitat Corridors and earth-friendly property maintenance. Since then we have assessed some fifty properties and provided advice on maintaining ecologically healthy land along a corridor through the Barrington area and elsewhere.

This year our educational programs will benefit all homeowners with special attention to creating and maintaining healthy landscapes for wildlife and people including particular emphasis on avoiding neonicotinoid and other insecticides. On January 10, the speaker for our first program is Dr. Jeffrey D. Holland, Associate Professor of Entomology at Purdue University. He will address the "Effects of Corridors on Biodiversity," his specialty. Learn how corridors benefit native insects and can provide essential habitat for birds, amphibians, and others. Native plants will be the cornerstone of the presentation as they sustain insect biodiversity.



*An example of the images you will see at the February 7 program. Photo by Joan Sayre.*

On February 7, "Bees, Bugs and Butterflies" concentrates on beautiful slides of these creatures by photographer Joan Sayre of Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society. She is not only a great photographer but is also extremely knowledgeable about protecting species from the deleterious effects of pesticides. The pictures for this program will be knockout!

On March 14, Meredith Tucker presents CFC's own program "Landscaping with Native Plants." Healthy habitat depends on

using native plants, and we will present this program in time for you to plan your purchases from our Annual Native Plant Sale in May. Learn why native plants are important to habitat health, and see a multitude of species in Barrington-area photographs taken by our members. These beautiful plants really do live and flourish here!

Finally, for something a little different and very useful to creating healthy habitat, see our April 11 program "Organic Power Vegetable Gardening." It stresses using native plants to attract pollinators for prolific vegetable patches. Speaker Mark Lyons will discuss site selection, soil preparation, and earth-friendly maintenance of organic gardens.



We present all programs at the Barrington Village Hall, 200 S. Hough Street and greet visitors at 9:30 for coffee, conversation, handouts, and displays with programs beginning promptly at 10:00. CFC members attend without charge as a benefit of membership; admission for non-members is \$10.00. Please join us and be sure to RSVP to [cfc@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:cfc@citizensforconservation.org) or 847-382-SAVE.

## Almost Spring! Attend CFC's 2015 Annual Meeting

by Karen Rosene

Save Thursday, March 19, for Citizens for Conservation's 2015 Annual Meeting. It will be held at the Onion Pub & Brewery located at 22221 N. Pepper Road in Lake Barrington. The reception begins at 6:00 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting includes our president's introduction, financial and development reports, and our exciting keynote speaker. Later we present awards to our hardworking volunteers and, always a highlight, see Tom Vanderpoel's popular "Restoration Year in Review." The meeting ends when the membership elects its new board members.

Our speaker is Doug Taron, PhD whose program is "Butterflies of the American Prairie." He provides beautiful images of butterflies while explaining the intricacies of these insects and their larvae and the native plants on which they depend for food.

Dr. Taron is Curator of Biology and Vice President of Research and Conservation for the Chicago Academy of Sciences and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. He is a founding member and steward with Friends of Bluff Spring Fen, and he is a captivating speaker! His program dovetails perfectly with CFC's Habitat Corridors initiative.

Please join us for food and drink, camaraderie, and our exceptional program.

## Fielding Place

It was my pleasure to visit almost fifty properties in 2014. They were mostly residential, some large and some small. However, there is little doubt that one of the properties having the biggest positive impact on Barrington-area healthy habitats is Fielding Place. The wetland under restoration there is owned by the Fielding Place neighborhood association and is situated between Deer Grove Forest Preserve in Cook County and Cuba Marsh Forest Preserve in Lake County. It is also near Ela Prairie and is strategically located to provide a wildlife corridor between the large preserves.

Fielding Place residents, as well as some neighboring private property owners, are restoring the large wetland using a plan created by Tallgrass Restoration. The company burned the property and did spot herbiciding for them last spring to reduce the amount of hybridized cattails and *Phragmites* (giant reed) in the wetland.



*Newly staked Habitat Corridors sign in front of wetland with sandhill cranes in the background. Photo by Katy Apmann.*

Knowledgeable homeowner and Deer Grove restoration volunteer Tyson Lagoni oversees the project. With his leadership, association members planted over 3,000 plugs of native plants and broadcast a native seed mix that included over fifty species of wetland and wet prairie species. All of the streets in the neighborhood drain into the wetland, so residents understand the importance of having a strong mix of wetland plants to filter the water before it flows northeast out of the site.

Their efforts are paying dividends, proof that the restoration is providing habitat for wildlife. This summer a pair of sandhill cranes frequented the wetland on an almost daily basis. Tyson believes they may have a nest in nearby Deer Grove Forest

Preserve. Residents have also sighted a black-crowned night heron in the wetland while other birds and amphibians use the site extensively.

Tyson and other homeowners continue to pull cattails as they emerge, and the association plans to plant mesic prairie species around the border of the wetland in 2015, providing more healthy habitat to filter water and provide homes and food for wildlife. It goes without saying that I awarded a yard sign to the property. It is a huge undertaking that is bearing fruit while it connects healthy habitats.

— Meredith Tucker

## Silbrico's Perlite donation one key to CFC's restoration efforts

by Meredith Tucker

Once again this year, CFC received a wonderful donation of forty bags of Perlite from Silbrico Corporation. The product is invaluable to our restoration efforts.

Perlite is a volcanic glass and looks like little puffy white pillows. It allows restoration workers to augment the pure seed our volunteers pick on the CFC preserves so that we have excellent seed dispersal. The product is lightweight, facilitating seed mix transport in large barrels. It holds some moisture but doesn't get soggy and heavy. Additionally, being white, it is quite visible on the ground so that volunteers sowing the seed mixes can see where they have sown. Tom Vanderpoel, Chair of CFC's Restoration Committee, says, "Altogether it makes the best filler I know of for this kind of work."

This year our seed mixes will cover some 500 acres in Cook County Forest Preserves, Lake County Forest Preserves, Village of Barrington preserves and CFC property. This includes four of CFC's preserves. More than 170 species of native grasses, sedges, and forbs will be in these mixes.

We send many thanks to Todd Kokes and Steve Garnett at Silbrico for their generous donation. We are also grateful to Bob Wiedenhoefter who drove down from Wisconsin and, with Ginger Underwood, transported the bags to CFC.



*Volunteers mix seed with perlite. Photo by Ralph Tarquino.*

## Seasonal Tip

### This winter get after buckthorn

This fall you may have noticed that as the leaves turned and our Barrington area was bursting with autumn color, there were many shrubs and small trees holding tight to their dark green, shiny leaves. Eventually the oval leaves may have turned yellow or perhaps the green leaves just fell off when the temperature dropped below freezing. This is an easy way to recognize this end-of-season dawdler, the invasive common buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica*.



*Buckthorn leaves and berries. Photo by Robert Cantwell.*

Buckthorn is a deciduous shrub or small tree most often found at woodland edges; and, sadly, it often exists as privacy hedges between properties or along the roads in the Barrington area. Because it tolerates any soil, has a long growing season and is so aggressive, it quickly chokes out native trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses. Add to that its prolific seed production, and you have a major invasive problem. The sooner you act to remove buckthorn, the better.

The best time to strike is when the plants are seedlings, and you can pull them out by hand with ease, removing roots and all. Once the plant has grown large, you will need additional tools. One excellent option is to pull as many trees as possible and then cut the remaining woody stems to the ground. Once they are cut, immediately paint the cut stumps with glyphosate (the active ingredient in Roundup®) to prevent resprouting.

Once you have treated all the stumps, carefully place thick layers of newspaper over the entire area and weight it with heavy stones or mulch. The newspapers will slowly decompose during the winter and help smother any new growth. Leaving the soil bare just invites other weeds and invasive species like garlic mustard to germinate. Instead this simple process creates a healthy spot for planting native species in the spring.

While removing buckthorn can feel overwhelming, it's worth the effort. Buckthorn smothers our beautiful native habitat, killing everything. Since it changes the soil chemically as well as shading native species, it is extremely destructive. Our tender native plants need your help to find sunlight again! Please visit the CFC website for more information about removing buckthorn and to watch a video showing how to do it.

— Sandra Alguire

## “Tackle Teasel” campaign targets alien plant invasion

by P. Denise Israel

Citizens for Conservation and South Barrington Conservancy member Diane Bodkin has joined forces with the Village of Barrington Hills Heritage and Environs Committee to kick off a campaign to eradicate teasel. The non-native invasive species is a scourge in both Barrington Hills and South Barrington along routes 59, 62 and Bartlett Road.



*Teasel. Photo by Meredith Tucker.*

One can find some fifty plants at Horizon Farm, Forest Preserve District of Cook County's newest acquisition. There are more along Route 14 near Baker's Lake. Buckthorn is almost everywhere in the Barrington area where open areas are not mowed. It is along Plum Tree Road, and the Teasel Warriors, more than ever, need additional eyes and hands to help stop this invasion in Spring of 2015.

P. Denise Israel contacted the Canadian National Railroad (CN) to inform them how their trains facilitate the yearly progression of teasel seeds along the rail line. CN replied that in Spring of 2015 they will spray along the Barrington Area tracks to help contain plants on their property.



*P. Denise Israel (center) and her teasel warriors. Photo by Cindy Mjolsness.*

We invite you to join us in stamping out this incursion by a non-native species ASAP. Let's do it now rather than wage a slow, decade-long battle. For more information and to join our forces see: [green@barringtonhills-il.org](mailto:green@barringtonhills-il.org) or call CFC member/HEC Chair P. Denise Israel: 847-381-9487.

### Thanks to ...

Jim Stein for building “Pulling for Preservation,” a beautiful birdhouse he entered in the Crabtree Nature Center birdhouse competition on CFC's behalf. He won the People's Choice Award.

## Volunteer Portrait

# Margaret Hudson

A successful logo provides a visual recognition of an organization, a familiar, constant symbol. One doesn't need the word "McDonalds" when he sees the golden arches.

CFC is fortunate that Margaret Hudson, a talented North Barrington artist, developed our logo circa 1982. A successful logo should have an emotional association. I think of CFC's logo of big bluestem, coneflower and a butterfly as a cheerful logo. CFC includes it on every piece of literature, newsletter, stationery, and envelope it prints. It captures the essence of CFC.

When CFC was incorporated in 1971, our initial goals were to save land and maintain a recycling center. It was not until nearly a decade later, when we acquired Grigsby Prairie through a land donation, that we focused on restoration. CFC's first logo illustrated that early thinking; it was a tree grove dominated by buckthorn!

Margaret Hudson graduated as an art major from Southern Illinois University and moved to Barrington in the late 1970s. She instantly fell in love with the area. Margaret started volunteering with CFC in the early 1980s, helping with prescribed burns and other restoration activities. She has always had a deep appreciation for nature and wildlife.

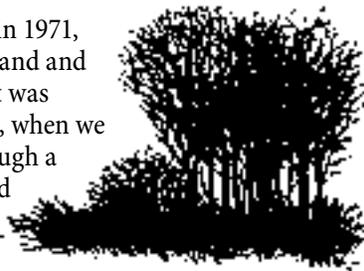
Margaret's career started in the Art Department of Bally Pinball in Chicago where one of the many tasks was to create logos for pinball and video games. After eight years she left the corporate world to freelance and started Hudson Graphics, her own company. She added new clients which gave her the opportunity to illustrate books, design videotape and CD jackets and create cartoon cel (celluloid) animation for educational use. When CFC asked her to create its new logo, she had all the necessary experience. She purposely chose simplified versions of native plants, knowing they would reproduce well in many forms of media — and that they do, from print to paint, even etched in wood.

CFC logo designed by Margaret Hudson.

Margaret also designed our Habitat Corridors logo, and she has drawn fireflies, toads, oaks, herons, mink, flowers and much more for *CFC News* and other CFC purposes as requested.



Margaret Hudson in her rain garden. Photo by Scott Hudson.



Original CFC logo.



When CFC recognized Peggy Richards' generosity and presented her with a plaque, it was Margaret who created the artwork, a bobolink, honoring Peggy's love for grassland birds. The artwork was so admired that CFC printed and sold postcards featuring it. It is currently used for the prestigious Bobolink Award given to CFC volunteers for twenty-five years of service. Margaret enjoys the various projects and says she learns a great deal researching each drawing. Insects are her biggest challenge because of the detail they involve.

A long-time CFC member, Margaret attends many Community Education programs and has used much of what she's learned. Her yard is both an inspiration and a work in progress featuring two rain gardens, a prairie and a variety of native shrubs. She spreads the word to neighbors on the importance of native gardening, particularly planting milkweed for the monarch butterflies.

Margaret lives in the Biltmore neighborhood with her husband Scott and Belle, their yellow lab. You can find Margaret's latest work for CFC, a toad, in "Notable Natives" in this issue. Please take a look!



CFC's Habitat Corridors logo designed by Margaret Hudson.

— Karen Hunter

## Jaydon: emerging naturalist and photographer

by Diane Bodkin

Jaydon Taboada, age ten and a fifth grader in Lake Zurich, joined the CFC Junior Naturalist program two years ago. He was attending a class at CFC a few days before the photo contest deadline for the Flint Creek Savanna 25th Anniversary Photo Contest in 2013. Jaydon took a picture he was proud of and entered it, calling it "Buggy Flower."

The photo didn't win, but it brought young Jaydon to the attention of CFC photographers Jim and Diane Bodkin. They were impressed with his courage and interest in photography, so they gave him a one-on-one learning session a few months ago at Flint Creek Savanna. Jaydon says his favorite subjects are flowers with insects.



Blazing star with bee. Photo by Jaydon Taboada.

He is working on lighting, zoom, and angles that he learned with Bodkin's coaching. The Bodkins want to cultivate a new young generation for the CFC photographers' team. CFC may be adding Jaydon as its first budding, young photographer.

## A Good Read

# The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home

## Garden

Rick Darke and  
Doug Tallamy

This book is a feast for the eyes. It is beautifully illustrated and includes explanations of just about every type of garden in most areas of the country.

In the introduction, the authors make the point that an individual garden may seem like a separate place, a refuge, or an island but that it is part of the larger landscape, and the landscape in turn is made of many layers. Perhaps individuals, like ourselves, feel that we are part of the larger landscape as well and in our lifetimes strive to move and grow with nature.

The book urges gardeners to use layers in every habitat. Plant a ground layer, an understory, small trees, and a canopy layer to provide the greatest benefit to wildlife and the best habitats.

My favorite photograph is of pipevine swallowtails and bees taking nectar and pollen from swamp thistle. The swallowtails seem to be moving in a very slow dance around the exquisite swamp thistle in the middle of the picture. This is only one of many photographs in the book that delights us.

The book is organized in chapters that make it easy to go directly to your particular gardening interest. The Meadows and Grasslands section in Chapter One shows what we in the Midwest might find especially inviting. The bird photos capture the individuals beautifully and clearly.

There are three gorgeous pictures taken at Longwood Gardens that might provide ideas to incorporate into your own garden. The photographs invoke quietness.

Most of the pictures were taken by Rick Darke, a landscape consultant, lecturer and photographer. His work is a result of a lifelong study in field botany and ecology and many years as Longwood Gardens' Curator of Plants. He has won numerous awards, including the Scientific Award of the American Horticultural Society.

Douglas Tallamy, who spoke at a CFC winter Community Education program several years ago, is a Professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the

University of Delaware. Doug is a recipient of the Silver Medal from the Garden Writer's Association for his book *Bringing Nature Home*.

— Edith Maynard

**Editor's Note:** If you haven't read *Bringing Nature Home*, Tallamy's first book, consider reading it first for depth of information and inspiration about using native plants at home. Then try this second book, more beautiful but less informative.

## Inaugural Festival of the Oaks, a CFC success

by Larry Anglada

CFC's first annual Festival of the Oaks was gratifying and successful. Twelve volunteers put in three hours apiece working at the festival while the chair recorded more than fifty hours of preparation time. His labors included planting six oak trees at the Grassy Lake Forest Preserve restoration. Volunteers devoted a total of eighty-six hours to the event.

We collected over sixty pounds of acorns from trees in the Barrington area and received ten applications for seedlings in the spring. Volunteers have planted over 200 acorns in raised garden beds at private locations making it unnecessary for us to use the Lake Barrington garden space which the village had generously offered us.

In addition, another hundred acorns will be sent to Barrington High School this spring to germinate in pots in the horticulture greenhouse program. We delivered the remainder of the acorns to the Glacier Oaks Nursery; we hope to exchange those acorns for a few trees down the road to sell at CFC's twice yearly native tree and plant sales.

CFC thanks the Village of Lake Barrington for helping to make this event a success during its inaugural year. The village and its staff were especially kind in allowing us to hold the festival at their village hall property.



*Festival of the Oaks participants. Photo by Donna Bolzman.*

## Junior Women's Club supports CFC's owl class for children

by Gail Vanderpoel

On October 25, CFC presented a class called "Owls – Raptors of the Night" at Sunny Hill Elementary School. Children and their parents warmly received the program as they watched two education birds from Flint Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation (FCWR). Over 100 people attended.



*Dawn Keller demonstrates owl characteristics. Photo by Diane Bodkin.*

Class participants donated items to help care for injured birds and other animals helped by the rehabilitation center. Children and adults asked many good questions, and parents snapped close-up pictures of the great-horned owl and screech owl Dawn Keller, head of FCWR, used to demonstrate owl characteristics.

CFC especially thanks the Junior Women's Club of Barrington for providing funding for this event, Sunny Hill School Principal Irma Molina Bates for translating for Spanish-speaking audience members, and Dawn Keller for once again giving such a great class.

Students finished the afternoon by dissecting owl pellets to investigate which small mammal bones they could locate. CFC's Youth Ed volunteers provided charts to help them identify the kinds of animal bones in each pellet. There were lots of exclamations throughout the program as students got to see real owls and do hands-on scientific discovery with the owl pellets.



*Rob Carmichael presents at Youth Ed reptile class. Photo by Bob Lee.*

## Snakes and crocs and kids – oh my!



*Australian crocodile. Photo by Bob Lee.*

by Gail Vanderpoel

CFC's Youth Education Committee held its final class of 2014 on November 22 at the Barrington Hills Riding Center. Mr. Rob Carmichael, curator of the Wildlife Discovery Center in Lake Forest, presented a variety of amazing reptiles that shocked and delighted the children.

Carmichael began by discussing characteristics of reptiles and amphibians. Then the show began. First came an alligator snapping turtle named "Jaws." We learned that he uses a wormy appendage to fool fish into swimming into his mouth. Next Rob showed us two different milk snakes, the variety native to Illinois and Nelson's milk snake which is native to Mexico. He treated the group to two different lizards: a giant Argentine tegu named "Chubby Cheekers" and a venomous U.S. lizard, the Gila monster, a.k.a. "Pancho Gila."

As Mr. Carmichael presented the animals, he included fun stories for each. We heard how the late Steve Irwin, the famous crocodile hunter, sent a runt crocodile to Mr. Carmichael. It was packed in a series of large boxes to fool him into thinking it was a huge animal. We met this Australian croc "Maximus" who is now nine-years old. We learned that crocodiles have the most advanced type of heart and can divert blood to their jaws and tail when preparing to attack. Carmichael has an indoor swimming pool, but it's not for humans; it provides a winter habitat for his twenty-nine year old alligator "Cassanova."

The twenty-one children and their parents were amazed by these creatures with their strong jaws, slithery tongues, and sharp claws. The colors, patterns and smooth skin textures were unbelievable. Rob offered us many opportunities to be close to his animals. Although most of the reptiles we viewed were not native to Illinois, Rob's message was the same as CFC's. Through conservation efforts, we need to save every living thing that is losing its habitat.

After asking Mr. Carmichael many questions, children finished the class by making holiday nature crafts: pine cone bird feeders and decorated grapevine wreaths. We appreciated seeing the reptiles and finding out what they require in nature. Many class members plan to visit the rest of the animals at the Wildlife Discovery Center. For more information, visit [www.wildlifediscoverycenter.org](http://www.wildlifediscoverycenter.org).

## From the Staff Director

# Chicago Wilderness Conference for People and Nature

“Thanks for all you do and for allowing me to help!” These words arrived with an annual appeal donation and reminded me that, since its founding in 1971, Citizens for Conservation has welcomed all those who want to be involved in the work of the conservation community here. Apparently this doesn’t happen everywhere in the country, and we want to make certain that the many conservation-minded people who are concerned and committed and want to be involved understand this policy.

The conservation ethic in this area is unique. As far back as 1970, a steering committee committed to creating a non-profit association “to preserve the natural features of the countryside environment ... and to encourage individual property owners to carry out sound conservation practices.” Those CFC founders fostered a rich culture, alive today, of valuing open space and providing for its stewardship.

As Bunny Horne, a CFC founder who lived in the Barrington Area from 1931 to 1991, said when accepting our William H. Miller Conservation Award in 1987, “We have to be careful what we do to the land. The fact is, we don’t really own the land. We’re only here as keepers of it. Our use of the land is but for a moment in time. Yet the alterations we make may affect everything permanently.”

As CFC honors the enduring cultural values of the Barrington area, recognizing the incredible commitment of time, energy and funding that people have given to bring us where we are today, we look also to the future and the broader community.

In the new year, CFC members will participate on three panels at the Wild Things Conference sponsored by Chicago Wilderness. Edith Auchter, Michele Gillett and Wendy Paulson will be presenters of “Prairie Preservation: A Collaborative Effort Between Citizens for Conservation and Barrington 220 Fourth Grade Citizens Scientists”; Sam Oliver will be part of the “How to Reach and Connect With People” session, and Tom Vanderpoel will participate on one of the Restoration panels.

Everyone is welcome to attend this conference which brings together volunteers and professionals who care about nature.

### **Wild Things: A Chicago Wilderness Conference for People and Nature**

Saturday, January 31, 2015: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

University of Illinois at Chicago, Student Center East

**Keynote: How the Bison Came Back** — Stewards and scientists restore human and natural communities at Nachusa Grasslands. Bill Kleiman, Nachusa Grasslands Project Director, The Nature Conservancy.

- More than 80 presentations and workshops explore the latest in natural areas conservation, advocacy, wildlife

protection and monitoring.

- Chicago area prairies, woods, and wetlands from neighborhoods to refuges are showcased.
- Citizen scientists, stewards, and advocates are empowered with information, networking, good ideas, and fun.

Registration and conference information at: [www.habitatproject.org/WildThings2015](http://www.habitatproject.org/WildThings2015).

— Sam Oliver

## Upcoming Events

### **Community Education Programs - Winter, 2015**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Youth Education Classes**

Saturday, February 14 - “Great Backyard Bird Count.” 1:00-3:00 p.m. at Crabtree Nature Center, 3 Stover Road, Barrington. Join us to count birds in a worldwide event.

### **The Natural History Society of Barrington**

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

Thursday, February 19 – “Members’ Night”

- “Orchids: Weeds that Grow in the Trees.” Betsy Buckles will present interesting facts about orchids.
- “From Imagined Ideas to Finished Oil Paintings.” Donn Ziebell will show and discuss his artwork.
- “Birdwatching in Trinidad and Tobago.” Judie and Tom Hermsen will share their trip with us.

Thursday, March 19 – “Jaguars and Other Wildlife of the Pantanal, Brazil.” Steve Barten, D.V.M. toured the Pantanal during the dry season, allowing his close approach and photography of spectacular birds and wildlife in the world’s largest wetland ecosystem.

## Notable Natives

### American Toad

An American toad *Bufo americanus* is a gardener's delight. One toad can consume thousands of pests (such as cutworms and slugs) in a summer. Toads are fun to watch as they hop around and hide under logs or leaves. If you provide shallow water like a birdbath on the ground, you might see a toad return daily to soak in it.



American toad. Illustration by Margaret Hudson.

At this time of year, toads are hibernating deep underground. In spring, they will migrate toward water, typically each toad returning to the same pond edge or shallow stream where it was spawned. You can hear the two-to-three inch-long male calling for a mate with a long, high trill lasting up to thirty seconds. Females, about four inches long, will lay thousands of eggs in long, jelly-covered strings at the water's edge. The jelly feeds the tadpoles for about a week, until they emerge and attach to underwater vegetation. Eventually, they begin wiggling their tails to swim, moving in large schools, foraging for algae, insects, or carrion. Metamorphosis – from tadpole to toad – takes about six weeks. Out of thousands of eggs laid by one female, about a dozen will survive to maturity.

The cricket-sized toadlets move to dry land. They prefer forest edges but can survive in a wide range of habitats as long as they have plenty of invertebrates to eat, a hiding place, and moist ground for burrowing. Toads are most active at night. They can live for five to ten years in the wild. Until they migrate up to one mile for breeding, they don't move from their small home area unless the land is disturbed.

Toads are an important part of the food web. Tadpoles keep excess nutrients from building up in water by consuming algae and plankton. They are themselves food for diving

beetles, dragonfly naiads, and herons. Toads help keep insect populations in balance. Although the bufotoxin secreted from their skin makes toads unpalatable or deadly to many potential predators, other animals including raccoons, herons, and garter snakes will eat them. In this way toads move nutrients from water to land.

The American toad is widespread and common, but individual populations are at risk if the ephemeral ponds where they breed dry up or are paved over. Toads readily absorb chemicals through their skin and are sensitive to fertilizers and pesticides on land and in water.

You can help support toads in your yard by providing a shallow, fish-free pond for breeding from March to July; shelter (flat stones, logs, or toad houses put out early in spring); a yard free from pesticides; dense vegetation that supports an abundance of insects; careful mowing; water for toads to soak in during the summer; and leaf litter to hold moisture in the ground.

Join CFC's Habitat Corridors program to learn how your property can provide amphibian habitat and be part of a pathway that helps American toads and other animals survive habitat loss.

— Sharon Pasch



Volunteers harvest seed. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

## 21 volunteers make a difference

Make a Difference Day, October 25, the largest national day of community service, attracted twenty-one volunteers for our two-hour Saturday morning restoration workday. Volunteers generated forty-two hours of labor for CFC. Most of the activity involved harvesting seed, mainly that of little bluestem grass. "There's always need for little bluestem seed," says CFC restoration director Tom Vanderpoel.

## Welcome new CFC members!

Angela Llerena  
Colleen Mader  
Thomas Mitoraj Family

## President's Comments

### **CFC: building on achievements**

As I near the end of three years as CFC's President and as I look back on the eleven plus years I have been an active volunteer, I am amazed and inspired by the growth and progress in every aspect of the organization.



CFC's finances are in great shape thanks to our generous donors and the accounting improvements made by our Treasurer Edith Auchter. We own 420 acres of property, again thanks to generous donors of land as well as acreage we have purchased. In addition, CFC has helped preserve over 3150 acres of public land in the greater Barrington area.

Thanks to the expert leadership of Restoration Chairman Tom Vanderpoel and his team of volunteers, Grigsby Prairie, Flint Creek Savanna and Bakers Lake are award-winning restorations recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency and Chicago Wilderness. Our preserves have become so prolific that we can donate many pounds of seed to on-going restorations in Spring Creek and Deer Grove East Forest Preserves.

Our Youth Education program provides exciting classes, usually monthly, thanks to years of creative leadership by Pat Winkleman and now by Gail Vanderpoel and Doe Crosh.

Citizens for Conservation's Community Education Committee has expanded enormously, led by Meredith Tucker and Annamarie Lukes. Created in 2005, the Committee began by presenting one program a year; now it offers four informative winter programs annually plus the many outside programs our speakers provide by invitation to community groups. In addition, we have implemented Habitat Corridors, an ambitious program of home visits that encourages earth-friendly yard practices. The Committee has produced a wealth of resources that are available on CFC's website.

Take a look at the [citizensforconservation.org](http://citizensforconservation.org) website, and you will be impressed by the improvements. There is more information, and it is easier to use. Additionally, our annual native plant sale has more than doubled in size, thanks to the energetic leadership of Ginger Underwood and her committed team. One new project is an on-line order form with photos and descriptions of native forbs, grasses, trees and shrubs, thanks to skilled contributions by Diane Greening and Dave Underwood. Our annual fall native tree and shrub sale doubled its sales this year as well.

CFC's membership has grown to 800 with the commitment of Membership Chair Barb Cragan. Members receive our quarterly newsletter *CFC News* which has expanded and

is printed in color, skillfully edited by Meredith Tucker and Annamarie Lukes with contributions by many writers, photographers and artists.

Behind the scenes, administrative work and property management has kept pace with many volunteers and the steady guidance and community relations provided for thirty years by Sam Oliver. Last year 440 individual volunteers handled this impressive workload, clocking 11,485 volunteer hours. In the last ten years CFC has grown and matured in almost every imaginable measure. With the continued support of the Barrington communities and committed volunteers, we will continue this success going forward.

— Peggy Simonsen

### **Volunteers thank Starbucks**

Once a month for the past year, the Starbucks coffee shop at 125 South Hough St., Barrington, has provided coffee for Saturday morning restoration volunteers after their two hours in the field. Thank you to store manager Ryanon Holton and her staff for the contributions. CFC workers much appreciate that hot coffee especially on the cold days of fall and winter.

### **Stock donations**

If you have stock that has appreciated or declined in value, please consider donating it to Citizens for Conservation, a recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Benefits:

- Receive gift credit and an income tax deduction for the fair market value of the stock on date of transfer;
- Pay no capital gains tax on stock you donate;
- Direct your gift to a specific fund or purpose;
- Have the satisfaction of making a significant gift that benefits Citizens for Conservation.

Your broker can electronically transfer stock to CFC's brokerage account. Please call CFC at 847-382-SAVE or email us for further information or instructions. Thank you.

### **Seeking volunteer photographers**

CFC is seeking volunteers to take pictures at our classes, workdays, and other events. Photos need to be high resolution (at least 300 dpi) so cell phone photos probably are not acceptable. We often need the photos within a day or two after the event so that we can review and submit them to online and print media. You will receive photo credit with the picture. If you are interested, please send an e-mail to [cfc-news@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:cfc-news@citizensforconservation.org) or call us at 847-382-7283. Thank you.

# Monarchs: Looks as if we are making a difference!

Late this summer one of CFC's Facebook friends contacted us with the news that she had seen a "flock" of monarch butterflies in a tree near her home in Carol Stream. She grows butterfly-friendly plants like coneflower so that she was tuned in to noticing the monarchs. She saw more and more butterflies arriving and looked up into the tree above her

neighbor's house, then used her telephoto lens to capture the scene in the accompanying photo.

CFC thanks Chris for her photos and message, and we want all of you milkweed purchasers to know that it looks as if we are making a positive difference. Most of us have heard about the large flock of monarchs caught on radar above St. Louis this fall. That was good news.

Our monarchs are migrating again this year, and it looks as though there are more of them than there were last year. Keep up the good work, and look for milkweed at our native plant sale next spring. If homeowners and gardeners keep working together, perhaps we can overcome the awful GMO and chemical roadblocks erected in front of our insects.



Monarchs in Carol Stream this autumn. Photo by Chris Erickson.



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