

Why is finding an endangered species so exciting? Federally endangered rusty patched bumble bee sighted at CFC restoration site

by Larry Anglada

A “buzz” is in the air at CFC – sorry just couldn’t resist. It is true though that there are a lot of people who are excited about this finding. The sighting was made on one of our Saturday restoration workdays by our college interns. Ben Davies was able to take a couple of nice photos during the course of two visits and our local expert, Rich Tepper, was able to send out the photos to various colleagues and the Xerces Society for confirmation. It isn’t every day that we find an endangered species and many people asked why it is important. The listing of a plant or animal as endangered signifies that there has been a dramatic reduction in population levels that could lead to extinction. Most are aware that every organism contains genetics that make them uniquely suited to a specific environment and their loss is like losing a chapter out of an important book. The “book” on prairies is already thin due to the loss of such large amounts of its historical range. The rusty patched bumble bee was listed as a federally endangered species on March 21, 2017. As a species of the tall grass prairies, it is understandable that it would be less common today, but its population has declined 87% in the last 20 years making its conservation critical today.

Why are people so interested in this humble insect which was once common in the Midwest? Many people might sigh and claim that it is “just an insect,” but ecologists see this observation differently. Our CFC restorations of native prairies that have been ongoing for the last 40 years look successful because we have a smorgasbord of plants, in many cases exceeding 200 different species. The true test of ecological restoration, however, is not just a color palette of pretty flowers. What CFC’s restoration volunteers hope to see is the restoration of a complete ecosystem as close to the original as possible. Insects represent a critical and important part of these “systems,” and are a significant level of proof that this restoration indeed is functioning as it should. While we’d love to see buffalo roaming in our prairies, we are more likely to look to these smaller animals as an indicator of our success. With

this discovery and our choice as a release site for the locally endangered smooth green snake, CFC continues to demonstrate that our restoration process is successful in bringing back the Midwest habitats that have all but disappeared.

Going forward we will continue to manage the prairie location where we found the rusty patched bumble bee with care and an eye towards conservation, and, of course, these little victories encourage us to continue our careful expansion on our own lands. The Barrington Greenway Initiative is also allowing CFC to influence a much larger area and this coordination will hopefully lead to many more successes in the sustaining of endangered plants and animals.

If you would like to hear more about this intriguing insect, please join us for CFC’s Community Education program with Aurelia Nichols on January 26 at the Barrington Village Hall.



Bombus affinis on Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*).
Photo by Ben Davies.

Restoration Report

2018 in review

This year saw momentous changes in our restoration efforts at CFC. For the first time, CFC has hired a full-time Restoration Project Manager, Kevin Scheiwiller. Kevin led most of the workdays, which became more frequent than ever. CFC conducted 130 workdays in 2018; until three years ago, we had never conducted more than 100 workdays. These workdays were attended by 343 volunteers! We collected the seed of 264 species, which far exceeds last year's record total of 215. In all, CFC made progress on every front in restoration: cutting brush, controlling invasive species, prescribed burning, over seeding and seed collection.

Our Barrington Greenway Initiative shaped our strategy this year. We participated in a joint workday in each of the twelve months of 2018. The March BGI brush cutting day at Grassy Lake Forest Preserve attracted more than fifty volunteers. CFC and Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) jointly funded the hiring of an additional resource for the LCFPD native plant nursery. Those nursery plants were a prime source of the additional species we added to our seed mix. BGI cooperation and funding led to our preserve being chosen as the first privately owned reintroduction site of the smooth green snake.

As we evaluate the facts and numbers that illustrate the success of CFC restoration activities and the BGI, it's also important to note the subtle improvements in biodiversity and habitat that we observed as the year progressed. We spotted a rusty patched bumble bee (CFC's first federally endangered insect) at one of our preserves. The variegated fritillary, an uncommon butterfly of dry grasslands, was sighted at Grigsby Prairie for the first time. In August, we saw a hen blue-winged teal with a young duckling. Each year we expect to see blue-winged teal as a migrant, but this was the first time we had confirmation that this species—the iconic prairie duck—had successfully nested. The subtle improvement is not limited to attracting new wildlife. As an illustration that restoration is a gradual but steady process, consider the purple milkweed. All of our seed from this rare savanna denizen came from one specimen surviving in the former EG&E right of way adjacent to the Cathedral Grove of Cuba Marsh Forest Preserve. We have a small planting of purple milkweed in our seed beds and we used that seed source to establish a tiny colony of a couple of specimens at our best savanna called the Peninsula. This year we counted ten specimens spreading up and down the Peninsula, and, for the first time, we found a purple milkweed blooming at Grigsby Prairie.

We had another rare milkweed success this summer when we found, for the first time, monarch caterpillars feeding on prairie milkweed. This could be very important in the long run because the weedy common milkweed (the typical local food source for monarchs) gradually fades out of a maturing restoration while prairie milkweed is a conservative increaser that becomes a major component of a diverse prairie. This

adoption of its ancestral host ensures the ultimate chance for success of our prairies as habitat for Illinois' state butterfly.

— Jim Vanderpoel



Purple milkweed. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

Thank you Silbrico Corporation

Once again in 2018, Silbrico generously donated 50 plus bags of KRUM Horticulture Perlite to CFC for our annual seed mixing event. The perlite is an essential component for success as it helps bond with the tiny seeds for even distribution in the mixing. It also serves as an extender, helping volunteers see where the seed mix has been sown for better coverage during hand sowing. Thank you to Silbrico for supporting nature by sharing your high performance, environmentally friendly perlite with us.



Collected seeds awaiting mixing. Photo by Rob Neff.

Welcome New Members!

Justin Benjamin
John Biagioni
Katherine and Andrew
Gabelman
Patricia Johns
Vincent Kennedy
Debbie Kreischer
Marilyn Lawlor

The Lucas Family
Brian McCarthy
Aileen Riermaier
John Switzer
Robert and Grace
Wodzinski
Tina Wonders

Notes from the Restoration Manager

We asked you all to show up and help us collect seed, and boy did you ever! It has been another record breaking year here at CFC for seed collection. Through all your efforts, we were able to collect 264 species of prairie, savanna and woodland seeds. 13 different mixes were created from all these species ranging from sedge meadow to dry prairie and even a custom blend for our new efforts at Craftsbury. These mixes were spread at nine different CFC properties, three Lake County Forest Preserve sites, four Cook County Forest Preserve sites, and at the Lake Barrington Village Hall. Slowly, but surely, we are building out the Barrington Greenway Initiative and returning the Barrington area to its pre-settlement vegetation.



Kevin Scheiwiller. Photo by Ralph Tarquino.

To date, we have been able to get in two prescribed burns this fall; another CFC first! Fall burns are less intense than spring burns both on the volunteers and the wildlife. Higher humidity allows large swaths of vegetation to go unburned in the unit creating more refuge for the insects that overwinter in the stems. These low intensity burns keep buckthorn seedlings at bay while also providing cover for all of our critters.

Brush clearing season has officially kicked off and we will be out in the preserves cutting and burning buckthorn all winter long. Come join us some morning to get out and enjoy the fresh air!

— Kevin Scheiwiller

Save the date: CFC Annual Meeting

CFC's 2019 annual meeting, "Growing a Collaborative Conservation Community," will feature Dwayne Estes, executive director of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative. He will present an overview of the latest collaborative initiatives in land preservation and restoration.

The meeting will be Wednesday, March 6, at the Onion Pub & Brewery, 22221 N. Pepper Road, Lake Barrington. A reception featuring the Onion's craft brews will begin at 6 p.m.; the meeting will begin at 7 p.m. Registration will open February 1.

Virginia Balsamo: watershed forerunner

by Sam Oliver



Virginia Balsamo. Photo courtesy of Thomas Balsamo.

In 1967, Virginia Balsamo and her husband brought their young family to live on a lake in the Barrington area. As her son Thomas says, "We wanted to swim in the lake, but the water was filled with suds and other oily substances." Virginia wanted her children to have clean water to swim in, so she found and mobilized a like-minded group of community leaders to work on water issues.

She spent years attending and organizing symposiums. She had a large office and extensive lakes library in the lower level of her home, all dedicated to assembling information and putting the right people together for constructive, clean water-related action.

One of her lake neighbors remembers, "Virginia was always involved with our neighborhood in trying to find ways to improve our lake. She and I worked together to deliver water testing jars to neighbors back in the 70's and I was impressed with her hard work. She was one of those people who worked quietly behind the scenes. She was extremely intelligent, a deep thinker, and was always concerned about the environment."

Virginia's lakes library was eventually brought to Citizens for Conservation's headquarters for study and safekeeping. Patsy Mortimer, who served as Flint Creek Watershed Partnership Coordinator from 2005-2013 and who sorted through the materials for historical significance, said, "Virginia was a forerunner of the watershed work going on now. She worked on her own, gathering information and putting on symposiums. I remember studying her materials and realizing that the problems we're having now are the same problems as those back when Virginia was working on them. Change is a slow process."

This watershed pioneer passed away recently. Her family remembers her passion and her working tirelessly for clean water in her neighborhood and in the broader region. She has been their inspiration for exemplary community involvement.

Sunny Hill at Galloping Hill

Editor's Note: In its tenth year, we thought readers would enjoy this perspective of the prairie field study from a fourth grade teacher at Sunny Hill School. District 220 and Citizens for Conservation again hosted fourth graders in the fall at Grigsby Prairie, Flint Creek Savanna and Galloping Hill at Spring Creek Forest Preserve. The CFC coordinator of the field study, Edith Auchter, was thrilled to recruit, schedule, and train 19 volunteers this year. This revised program was piloted by three schools very successfully. Next year, all eight elementary schools will participate, so there will be a greater need for volunteers. Plan to join the fun!

by Diana Kuester (Fourth grade teacher at Sunny Hill Elementary)

On Wednesday, September 26, over 50 fourth graders from Sunny Hill Elementary in Carpentersville went to Galloping Hill on a mission to discover more and learn how to preserve the prairie. Along with their teachers and chaperones, they loaded up on buses and drove to a place that is near our school and yet unknown to most of the students.

While some of them had visited another prairie in the area when they were in third grade, this was a new exploration with a new focus.



Identifying plants. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

Mrs. Wendy Paulson came in a few days before our visit to prepare us for the excursion. The students were very excited to not only recognize some of the plants, but to learn about the complexity of the root system in a prairie. Along with some classroom activities prepared by Citizens for Conservation and Barrington 220, the students were prepared not only to physically see the plants they were studying, but also to preserve the prairie through seed collection. This was one of their favorite things to do. Fourth grader Susy said, "It was awesome! I loved the prairie, especially when we collected the Indian grass." All students were excited to see the wildlife in its natural habitat. Some of the animals seen were an eagle, a turkey vulture, a coyote, a caterpillar, spiders, hawks and sandhill cranes. Lindsay said, "I loved the prairie because we collected seeds and saw animals."

After coming back from the prairie, the students wrote their reflections on what they saw and what they enjoyed learning. The most effective factor enjoyed by all the teachers was how well planned the activities were from the pre-visit activities to the reflection of the trip. Students had a better understanding of the structure and function of different plants, and how rain affects those plants and animals that live in the prairie.

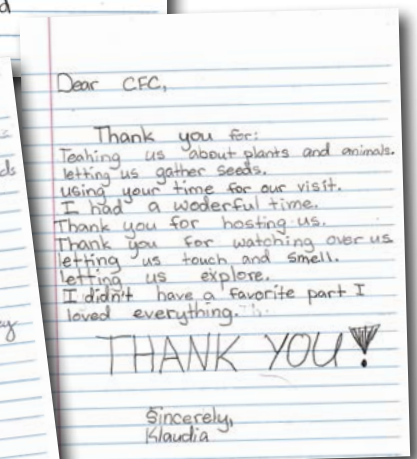
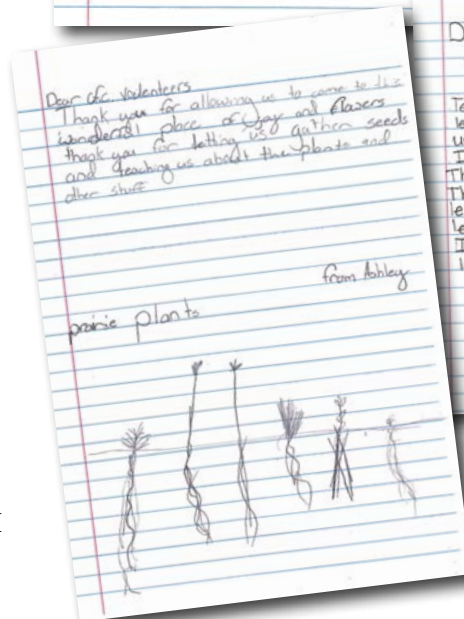
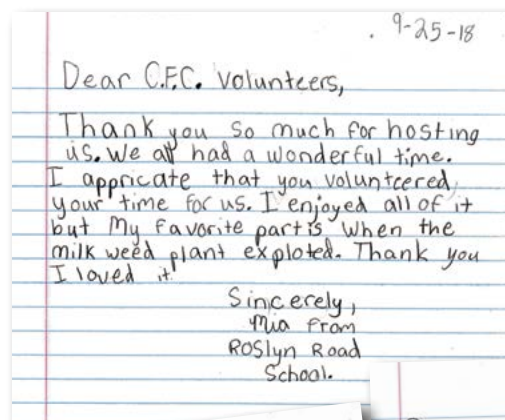


Measuring. Photo by Tom Benjamin.



Sunny Hill students. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

As a result of their experience, students have been able to generalize this understanding to recognize structures and functions of not only plants but also animals. Students that day left the prairie with a better appreciation and understanding of why it is so important to continue taking care of our prairies. No other experience serves the purpose of expanding a student's curiosity like field studies. This trip to Galloping Hill will have a lasting impact for students as they become the future caretakers of our planet. Thank you, Citizens for Conservation, for providing this excellent experience.



Help for native plant gardeners

by Annamarie Lukes

What happens when the tags fall off the items you purchased at our native plant sale? If no one asks you what the plants are and if you never have the urge to buy more of the same species, you are home free. If you have good plant identification skills, you are also spared any trouble. For the rest of us, CFC now has web pages with photos and descriptions of local native plants. The new web pages are live year-round, not just during the plant sale. You can look at the photos to find matches for plants you are trying to identify. One of our Habitat Corridors volunteers spent her summer visiting various local yards and natural areas to get photos of the tree and shrub leaves on the web pages. Identifying a tree by its leaves is easier than looking at a picture of a full-size tree.

By next spring, we hope to have listed plant associates for each species on the website. If you have a plant that is thriving in your yard, you will be able to go to our web site, find your existing plant and then see many of the plants that thrive in the same conditions. If you have suggestions for other information you would like to see for individual plants on the site, send an email to info@habitatcorridors.org. To view the site go to NativePlants.CitizensForConservation.org or go to CFC's home page and read the announcement about our local native plant web pages.



Ostrya virginiana (ironwood) leaf from new web pages. Photo by Alicia Timm.

Upcoming Events

Community Education Programs

All programs are held at the Barrington Village Hall on Saturday mornings, starting at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation; presentations begin at 10:00 a.m.

January 26 – Creating Healthy Habitat for *Bombus affinis*, the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee

February 16 – Habitat Makeover: Adding Value to Your Landscape

March 9 – Favorite Native Plants: Trees, Flowers and Grasses

April 13 – A Morning with Rachel Carson

Youth Education

February 16 – Great Backyard Bird Count. Check CFC website for information.

Annual Meeting

March 6 – Featuring “Growing a Collaborative Conservation Community” with Dwayne Estes, executive director of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative. 6:00 p.m. at the Onion Pub & Brewery, 22221 N. Pepper Road, Lake Barrington.

Annual Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale

May 3-5 – Preordering opens March 1 and closes April 14. Pickup for preorders on Friday, May 3, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., open to all members and those who have preordered. Plant sale open to all on May 4 and 5 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CFC's annual plant sale will be held at the Good Shepherd Hospital barn area across Highway 22 from CFC Headquarters.

Barrington Greenway Initiative Explore and Restore Series

February 9, 9–11 a.m., Grassy Lake Brushcutting

March 9, 9-11 a.m., Cuba Marsh Brushcutting

See CFC website (www.citizensforconservation.org) for details.

New study links native plants to bird conservation

by Laura Mandell

There are lots of good reasons to shop at CFC's 2019 Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale (mark your calendar for May 3–5) and a new study gives you one more: chickadees!

As reported by the Smithsonian (October 22, 2018), the study is the first to directly link the decline of a common resident bird species, Carolina chickadees, to a lack of insect prey resulting from the use of non-native plants in landscaping. The non-native plants are poor hosts for the high-calorie, high-protein caterpillars and spiders that chickadees depend on during the breeding season to feed their young.

Yards that were able to sustain a stable population of chickadees were those with a plant composition made up of more than 70 percent native plants.

“It turns out that a lot of those insects [homeowners] see as pests are actually critical food resources for our breeding birds. For landowners who want to make a difference, our study shows that a simple change they make in their yards can be profoundly helpful for bird conservation,” said Desirée Narango, a graduate student researcher at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and first author of the study published October 22, 2018 in *PNAS*, a publication of the National Academy of Sciences.

The Smithsonian article pointed out that “native plants are also likely critical for other resident birds as well as endangered species and migratory species – and not just in backyards on the East Coast.”

The study was conducted in partnership with the University of Delaware and funded by the National Science Foundation. It relied on data collected by landowners participating in the Smithsonian's Neighborhood Nestwatch program, a citizen-science program that engages communities in monitoring the annual survival and reproductive success of specific bird species.

CFC's Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale makes it easy to improve your home garden and make your yard more welcoming to our feathered friends. Start planning now!

- Online ordering begins March 1st
- Orders are due by April 14th.

In the meantime, check out these resources:

- Attend the Wild Things Conference on Saturday, February 23rd at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont. CFC hopes to be one of many exhibitors at this biannual conference hosted by Wild Things, a community of people in our area dedicated to enjoying and protecting Chicago area wild lands and wildlife. Learn more at wildthingscommunity.org.
- Learn from expert naturalist Meredith Tucker about plants that grow successfully in various conditions in our area, Saturday, March 9, 2019, 10 a.m. at the Barrington Village Hall.
- Read about native plants online at CitizensForConservation.org



Original artwork by Margaret Hudson.

Join us for the Great Backyard Bird Count

by Julia Martinez

On February 16, 2019, CFC's Youth Education will participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. This annual event was created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in 1998. This event was created to get real time data of the distribution and abundance of birds all over the world. Each year, over 160,000 citizen scientists submit their data to this effort. Anyone anywhere can join. We invite participants of all ages and experience levels to join us and help submit our data. Birds are one of the most conspicuous members of our natural communities. We invite you to take a moment to understand and appreciate these adaptable creatures. We also learn more about birds common to our area and other citizen science opportunities. Keep an eye on the CFC website for registration information.

News from Habitat Corridors

CFC's Habitat Corridors has had another successful year. Several other volunteers and I visited some fifty homes during the growing season. Besides having the satisfaction of educating homeowners about nature-friendly planting, I also enjoyed meeting the many people interested in helping build habitat and supporting wildlife, especially birds. I hope I also convinced some homeowners that insects are a vital component of our ecosystem.

Our negative effects on the natural environment especially impact birds. Too often we have taken away the fields, forests and natural water features that they rely on for food, homes and shelter. However, this is one area where homeowners can help. Their assistance is especially helpful during the winter.

There are “naysayers” who believe we should never help the birds, that they can take care of themselves and thrive. That was probably true before we cut down the woodlands, plowed under fields for homes and lawns, and polluted much of the available water supply. Now, however, please consider some of these suggestions to help birds survive winter in suburbia.

The most obvious and easiest way we can help is by providing food for the fruit and seed eaters. (Most of the insect eaters have migrated south by now.) Most species love “oilers,” black oil sunflower seeds. These provide nutrition and stoke the fires that keep tiny systems warm during cold winter nights. Chickadees, cardinals, many species of woodpecker, and both white-breasted and red-breasted nuthatches love them.

Please try feeding niger, also known as thistle seed. (Don't worry about spreading thistles throughout your yard. The seed is irradiated and will not germinate.) This is a favorite food of goldfinches, house finches and purple finches. Pine siskins and red polls also love it.

For niger you will need a special thistle feeder, but some of these are merely net bags and very reasonably priced. Here is one caution: if the birds aren't eating the seed, it may be rancid. Unless it is very fresh and properly stored in a cool, dry place, niger deteriorates. Other seed becomes rancid as well, but not as quickly as niger.

Please also try white millet (not red millet or milo, nasty fillers that no birds like to eat). I toss some millet on the cement and grass near my back door so that I can stand inside and watch the birds at close range. I'm careful to stop spreading the seed during the afternoon so that none is left to attract mice overnight. I have seen loads of fox sparrows, a couple of song sparrows, and five dark-eyed juncos (also called snow birds) eating the white millet together. They clean it up in a flash. Doves and cardinals sometimes join them.

Seeds are not the only winter food at my house. I have five female winterberry bushes, and they were crowded with robins, cedar waxwings, sparrows, and cardinals last week. (One must have both male and female winterberry shrubs, but only the females will have berries. I have two males to provide for my five females.)



Hairy woodpecker. Photo by Steve Barten, DVM.

It is important to provide a heated bird bath during the winter. It is as essential as the food. I use one of my big cement baths set in a metal ring to keep it off the ground. I fill it with water and put a tank heater (for horse troughs) in it. These heaters, available online and in feed stores, last for years, unlike the expensive heated bird baths meant especially for birds.

Whatever you decide to try, the birds and little critters love the water. If there is snow, they can eat it to procure moisture, but that lowers their body temperature. A heated bird bath is much preferable.

Finally, I hope you have lots of dormant native plants standing to provide shelter and safety for the birds. One can only hope you also have a few dead trees with holes for the few lucky birds that will fit in them on cold winter nights. (Some bird species roost together if there is room and if it is very cold.)

If you can't provide that final bit of help, think about leaving dead trees standing in the future if they pose no danger. Then in the spring, buy some native shrubs, trees and flowers at the CFC Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale. Use these cold months to plan your purchases, and be sure to contact info@habitatcorridors.org in the spring to schedule a home visit. We can help you plan purchases for every season!

— Meredith Tucker

Winter 2019 Community Education programs

by Peggy Simonsen

Please plan to join us for four enlightening programs this winter. All programs are on Saturday mornings from 9:30-11:00 a.m. at the Barrington Village Hall. Programs are free for members and \$10 for non-members. Make reservations at Citizensforconservation.org.

January 26, 2019

Creating Healthy Habitat for *Bombus affinis*, the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee

Aurelia Nichols

In 2017, *Bombus affinis*, the rusty patched bumble bee, became the first bumble bee to be listed as federally endangered. How can we help them?

Learn what ecosystems *B. affinis* inhabits, the stages of its life cycle, its habitat needs, and which specific plants native to our area offer healthy bumble bee nutrition. By supporting the recovery of *B. affinis*, we can help safeguard other pollinators.

Aurelia's prime interest is in the relationship between plants and their pollinators and how healthy habitat establishment through landscape design can support their survival. Her research focus includes *Bombus affinis*, the rusty patched bumble bee. She holds a BA from the University of Chicago and an MBA from Northwestern University. Currently, she's working on a degree in Horticulture.

February 16, 2019

Habitat Makeover: Adding Value to Your Landscape

Andy Stahr

Hear a unique perspective on successfully integrating natural areas into home landscapes. Stahr will introduce a wildlife value rating tool that one can use to evaluate a landscape's current wildlife value as well as a plan for increasing its value through adaptive gardening.

Andy has more than a decade of award-winning experience as a design professional in both the public and private sectors as well as in the ecological restoration contracting industry. When it comes to the creation or restoration of aesthetically positive natural areas and sustainable landscapes, Andy provides field-tested insight as to what works — both on paper and in the field. Andy serves as the Principal Landscape Architect and Ecologist for ecology + vision, LLC. He holds a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Illinois.

March 9, 2019

Favorite Native Plants: Trees, Flowers and Grasses

Meredith Tucker

Our favorite presenter will share some favorite native plants that are popular with her Habitat Corridors clients. These are plants that grow successfully in various conditions in our area, are aesthetically pleasing in our home landscapes, provide valuable habitat and are available at the CFC Spring Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale. Come get some ideas for your yard and be ready to order for planting this spring.



Rusty patched bumble bee. Photo by Joan Sayre.

Meredith is a naturalist who shares her enthusiasm for using native plants to create healthy habitat for all the valuable critters we want in our yards — the birds, butterflies and other insects. Native plants nourish these native bugs and birds and provide beautiful and useful habitat on homeowners' properties. She is a former board member and president of CFC and founder and director of Habitat Corridors which

provides site visits to homeowners for advice on improving habitat in their yards.

April 13, 2019

A Morning with Rachel Carson

Leslie Goddard

A portrayal of an influential and important woman from the past, this presentation has significant meaning for the environmental issues of today. Imagine having a conversation with Rachel Carson, scientist and author of *Silent Spring*, about what led her to write this seminal wakeup call about the dangers of the pesticide DDT and the process to get Congress to ban it. This program is entertaining as well as informative.

Leslie is an award-winning actress and scholar who has been performing historical characters for over 10 years. She holds a PhD from Northwestern University in American Studies and US History as well as a Masters degree in theater.

Articles welcome

Do you have an idea for an article for *CFC News*? We welcome submissions on topics of interest to CFC members. If you'd like to submit an article, please direct your idea to our editor Leslie Coolidge at cfc@citizensforconservation.org.

Mourning a conservation leader

The CFC community was saddened to learn of the passing of Craig Stettner. Craig, a full-time faculty member in the biology department at Harper College, passed away on a trip to Costa Rica over the holidays, just before he was to begin a rain forest field research study program with a group of students. Craig was a dedicated member of the Spring Creek Stewards and served as site steward for Penny Road Pond.

Craig's dedicated support of conservation inspired both students and volunteers in many local groups. In 2013, he received CFC's William H. Miller Conservation Award - our highest honor in recognition of outstanding contributions toward conservation. The Daily Herald noted that "Stettner was honored...for the many years he led Harper students in volunteering for local environmental organizations to cut brush, pull weeds and restore spaces to benefit nature." "My goal every year is to expose my Harper students to real ecological work in the hope that it inspires them to learn even more about biology, the environment and ecology and our role in all of it," he said after receiving the honor. "They're able to help a good cause while learning, and that to me is the real reward."

We asked those who knew him to share their thoughts about Craig:

Stephen Packard: I remember Craig Stettner as a smart, dedicated educator and conservationist who added greatly to many communities. Even at the distant Somme Preserves, we regularly have generous volunteers pointed in our direction by Craig. He inspired citizen-science monitors to record more data about dragonflies, birds, frogs, plants and all. Craig was a young professional building a life in the low-pay, high-results world of college teaching and volunteerism. He was a bright spirit who worked hard and well. I hope his dedication will inspire many students and friends. I know he inspired me.

Wendy Paulson: I knew Craig, but mostly from a distance, and had great admiration for the work he did with students in restoration at Penny Road, as well as the bird monitoring.

Ginger Underwood: Craig took students out to Spring Creek to do restoration work for years every single Saturday morning. They have made a huge dent in a beautiful wooded area that we Stewards call "Craig's Site". Craig's dedication to his students and the environment was amazing. He will be greatly missed by many. His legacy: "He left a team of eco-warriors."

Jim Voris: As a "science guy", and deep down an "aquatics guy", Craig certainly knew about ripples on the water. The ripples of knowledge about, and positive attitudes toward, our natural world that he generated as an educator will travel well into the future. The hopes of throwing those stones thus starting those small waves that effect one's students' lives is an aspiration of all great teachers. That those ripples on the water might indirectly inspire far future generations of learners is that teacher's dream. Craig Stettner is certainly realizing his dream. We will long experience the enduring effects of the

stones thoughtfully launched by this artful teacher's hand, and the world will be far the better for it.

Debbie Antlitz: So sad and sudden, beloved by birders, Craig had a genuine enthusiasm for the dragonflies, the stewardship work, and for his students. He also had the amazing ability to spark that enthusiasm in others, stewards and students alike.

His leadership will be sorely missed.



Craig Stettner receives 2013 William H. Miller Conservation Award from Jim Vanderpoel. Photo by Les Spinner.

Seeking summer interns

by Larry Anglada

There's snow on the ground, but CFC is already thinking summer. Internships, that is. Our summer internships offer high school and college students the chance to get hands-on experience in land restoration and stewardship activities. The high school program runs June 3-7; college students participate in a 10-week program that starts in late May. For more information, visit citizensforconservation.org/education/internships.



2018 summer interns. Photo by Larry Anglada.

President's Comments

November 3, 2018 was volunteer day, a celebration of all the terrific work CFC's volunteers do day-in and day-out, 365 days a year. I counted 41 volunteers who turned out to enjoy a bountiful and delicious lunch, which was a good thing since first we needed to get to work mixing seed! As has been reported elsewhere, we collected a record number of different species of seed which had been cleaned and sorted and now needed to be mixed as appropriate by site. That work was done in record time due to the number of wonderful CFC volunteers present. Subsequent weeks proved favorable for spreading seed (if you count snow and rain days as being favorable!) and, once again, CFC volunteers came through. I can't wait to see our properties next spring!



Kathleen Leitner mixing seed. Photo by Patty Barten.

Speaking of next spring, the snowstorm on November 24th completely killed the smoke bushes at my back patio—I mean,

down to the ground smashed. So I have the opportunity to do some new planting and now is the perfect time to start planning for spring planting with native species. And, of course, CFC's annual Native Plant, Shrub and Tree Sale in May provides the perfect opportunity to select, with expert guidance, the right plants for your site. There will be plants for butterfly gardens, shore-line buffer gardens, woodland gardens, rain gardens and more. We can go a long way toward helping water conservation and even global warming by planting gardens using native species, so plan to stop by!

And please mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting, set for Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at the Onion Pub & Brewery. Opening reception starts at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. Our guest speaker will be Dwayne Estes of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative. You may remember that Dwayne came to visit CFC properties a few years ago after hearing about our collaborative conservation community, and came away a convert to our way of doing things!

— Kathleen Leitner

Volunteers needed

Volunteers are the lifeblood of CFC. To achieve our ambitious restoration goals, we need to recruit additional volunteers. Regular workdays are scheduled every Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Our Restoration Manager, Kevin Scheiwiller, adds additional dates as conditions permit. If you would like to be added to our email group to receive notification of upcoming workdays, please email kevin.scheiwiller@citizensforconservation.org.

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