



## Two dedications and a celebration!

by Leslie Coolidge

October 9, 2021 was a very special day in Citizens for Conservation’s fifty year history. Given that it was a Saturday, the day of course started with our regular workday, but from there, the day was anything but ordinary.

Late in the morning we gathered at beautiful Barrington Hills Farm to dedicate the Tom Vanderpoel Memorial Preserve. Steve Smith served as moderator and introduced Bob Lee who told the story of how this preserve came to be. Shortly after Tom’s passing, Bob Lee reached out to the owners of Barrington Hills Farm asking if they could discuss an idea to honor Tom. J.R. Davis and his wife Dawn immediately responded “we’re in.” The idea was to pick 300 of their sunflowers for Tom’s memorial service.



*Photo by Bob Lee.*

expertise. Thoughts?” Bob checked with Tom’s wife Gail and CFC – they both responded “We are in!”

Bob next introduced the team and process that resulted in this special place. Along with restoration, a path was laid around the wetland with several spots with sitting stones to stop and reflect. Through months of interviews and research, Lynda Wallis created interpretive signs that capture the story of the Vanderpoels, restoration and nature.

65 species of birds have already been identified at the preserve. As our gathering was concluding, eight sandhill cranes circled overhead which only seemed fitting.

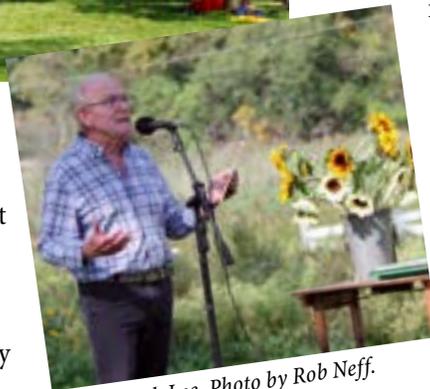
To quote the first sign, “This preserve is for all who wander in and wonder and remember. The hope is that you will find joy from all that grows,

flies, crawls, swims, skitters, wiggles, floats, prances, leaps, soars, walks, and dances through this sanctuary.” Please bring your family and friends to this wonderful preserve on Chapel Rd. in Barrington Hills which is open to all. Just open the gate – parking is available inside.



*Steve Smith welcomes the attendees. Photo by Rob Neff.*

Two weeks after Tom’s service, J.R. wrote Bob: “I was thinking last night about an idea...Would it be a fitting tribute to Tom to name our wetland on Chapel Rd. in his honor? I’m thinking we could plant the butterfly wetland mix, construct a nice spot of respectful reflection. This was the project for which I was in pursuit of his



*Bob Lee. Photo by Rob Neff.*



*Lynda Wallis. Photo by Bob Lee.*

We thank J.R. and Dawn Davis for their generosity and the entire team involved in bringing this project to fruition.

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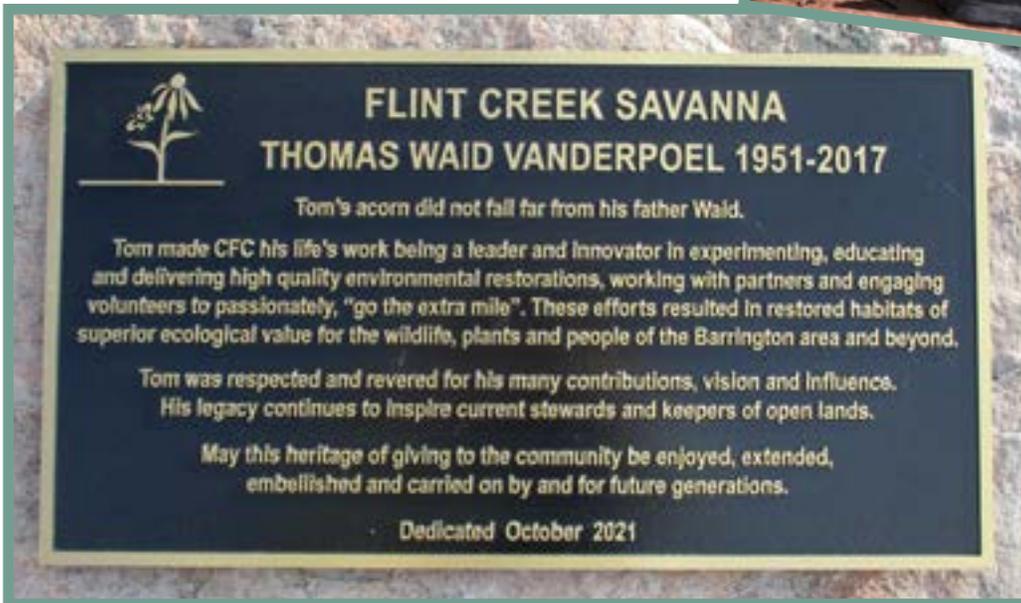
## Two dedications...

Next, we headed back to the farmhouse for our second dedication. In 2002, a plaque was dedicated to Waid R. Vanderpoel. This plaque occupies a rock overlooking Flint Creek and is now accompanied by a similar plaque dedicated to Waid's son Tom. As the plaque notes, "Tom's acorn did not fall far from his father Waid." The Vanderpoel family was out in force for both of the dedications.

At the completion of the "Rock" dedication, everyone crossed Flint Creek Savanna to the Smith Professional Building property and the 50 FEST celebration began in earnest. Kathleen recaps the event in her President's Comments on the back page of this newsletter. The photos below capture the spirit of the day.



*Steve Smith presenting the "Rock".  
Photo by Stephen Barten, DVM.*



*The Vanderpoel Family. Photo by Liesl Helminiak.*

and a celebration!



Photos by Liesl Helminiak and Bob Lee.

### “Be afraid...be very afraid”— the flies

This is one of my all time favorite movie lines. In the 1986 science fiction movie *The Fly*, the mad scientist villain was slowly turning into a monster fly. In one scene, he was making aggressive advances on a young woman and tried to overcome her wariness by saying, “Don’t be afraid.” Just then the mad scientist’s former romantic interest, who knew of his transformation, entered the scene and warned “No, be afraid...be very afraid!” The dialogue was used as the marketing slogan for the film, which was a big hit.



*Golden-legged mydas fly.*  
Photo by Alison Vanderpoel.

The order Diptera includes the annoying housefly, the pesky mosquitoes and the genuinely dangerous tsetse fly, so there really is something to be afraid of with this group. Everyone is well aware of these negative pests. I remember a hilarious conversation among the summer interns during a workday several years ago: One intern asked the group “Which would you choose—a million dollars, or the assurance that you would never be bitten by a mosquito again for the rest of your life?” Most people never give a thought about positive aspects of the vast majority of flies that are essential pollinators and decomposers. Who knew that the main pollinator of cacao, the raw material of chocolate, is a fly in the Ceratopogonidae family of biting midges? People generally love butterflies, and bees are pretty popular too, but flies are generally reviled.

I started changing my entirely negative view of flies when I started learning about the insects that were swarming over the ever-growing fields of prairie wildflowers on CFC’s preserves. I noticed that the buzzing creatures busily bopping from blossom to blossom were as likely to be flies as they were bees, and that pollinating flies were far more common than butterflies. My mixed feelings about flies came to a head as I was walking the trail at Grigsby Prairie; a fly landed on the back of my hand. I was about to swat it when I noticed it was a very pleasant gold color and its eyes were the dazzling color and brilliance of emeralds...I hesitated, I thought I had never seen this species before, what if it is some remnant dependent rarity? Shouldn’t I leave it be as another indicator of the quality of our restoration? What if it’s under consideration for Federal protection under the Endangered Species Act? Then it bit me—imagine seeing a mosquito bite your knuckle as you held something and couldn’t give it a whack—then, multiply the pain and itch tenfold. I cursed myself for not smacking it

when I had the chance as a welt the size of a penny swelled on my hand.

Some flies are just plain cool. Robber flies are ferocious predators. The *Laphria* and *Mallophora* genera are bumblebee mimics—the disguise allows the flies to sneak up on the similar bees and pounce on them before the bees know what hit them. Many times I have seen robber flies of the *Promachus* genus devouring some moth or bee on one of our prairie flowers. Some robber fly larvae prey on the larvae of crop eating beetles so they actually provide some benefit to farmers. One genus of bee flies (the *Exoprosopa*) are so specialized that their larvae eat the larvae of other parasites that were about to eat the larvae of some other insect!

Other flies also mimic bees, but they do it to warn off predators while they pollinate flowers. It is remarkable how specific the mimicry can be: *Chrysotoxum* flower flies mimic yellow jackets; *Systropus* bee flies mimic thread-waisted wasps; *Bombylius* bee flies mimic bumblebees, while *Eristalis* flower flies imitate honey bees. *Chalcosyrphus* flower flies are apparently indistinguishable from blue mud dauber wasps while another flower fly *Spylomyia fusca* is a dead-ringer for the bald-faced hornet. I wonder why so many flies copy the protective markings and behavior of the stinging insects to scare away predators but have not just developed stingers of their own?

As far as conservation measures for flies go, I’ve never heard of anyone taking any action. I did not include any flies on my list of target species in this year’s Spring Newsletter. Our plan for now should be to continue to build more habitat for all wild creatures like the beautiful golden-legged mydas fly pictured with this article (my candidate for the official Illinois state fly) and then learn to appreciate the fun robber flies, bee flies and flower flies and try to avoid all the biting pests. My new slogan regarding the flies is “Be cautious...just be a little cautious.”

If you are interested in learning more about the insect life that surrounds us, I strongly recommend reading my main source for this report, the *Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America*. The field guide strikes the perfect balance between being portable and usable with being comprehensive given there are scores of thousands of species of insects in America.

— Jim Vanderpoel

## Workday volunteers needed

By the time you receive this newsletter, seed collecting season will be over, but regular workdays will continue every Thursday and Saturday from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. If you would like to be added to our email group to receive notification of upcoming workdays, please email [kevin.scheiwiller@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:kevin.scheiwiller@citizensforconservation.org).

## Notes from the Restoration Manager

### An ecosystem recovering

Quick warning! Overly technical droll followed by exciting results below.

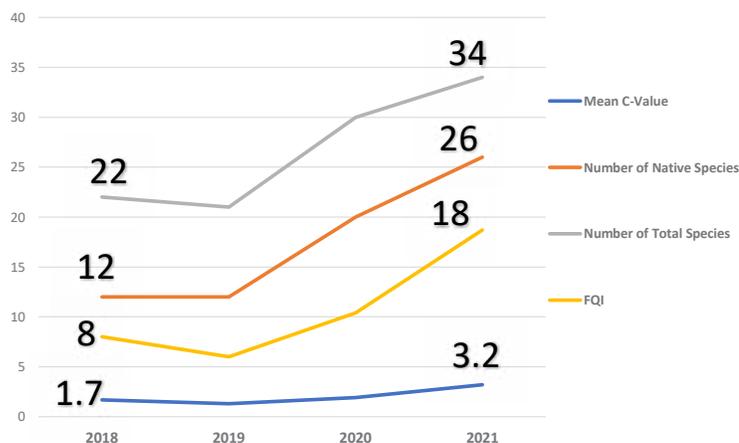
In the last newsletter, Jim Vanderpoel gave a great overview of the “Coefficient of Conservatism” (“C-value”) given to each native plant species. These C-values give us an idea on where one would expect to find a specific species and how it might behave. When one starts to use this data for all the plants in a specific area, you can start to assess the health of the ecosystem.

A great write up on this process can be found in the old version of *Plants of the Chicago Region* (1994). A less than great write up can be found here:

The practitioner establishes a 100 meter transect to be sampled on a regular basis. Every 10 meters, a square meter plot (think hula hoop size) is monitored by identifying every species in the plot and then determining how much of the plot is taken up by each species (50% little bluestem, 25% sky-blue aster, 25% wild quinine, etc.). After this process is repeated 10 times, the data can be entered into a database (or hand calculated if you are a true psychopath) and specific metrics of the site will be spit out.

Two metrics we like to look at are the *mean C-value* ( $\bar{C}$ ) which is an easy calculation (just take the average of the C-values for all the species found while monitoring). The other metric is a bit more complicated and is called the *Floristic Quality Index* (FQI) which takes into account how dominant a certain species is within the ecosystem.

At this point, you are reading this wondering why in the world I am writing about all these nerdy plant metrics. Well, when we started our work at Craftsbury in 2018, we decided to track all these metrics to understand how the ecosystem was recovering in an objective way. We established a transect in the main prairie section on the east side of Hart Road in 2018 and have sampled it each year since.



All across the board we have seen a drastic increase in quality since management began! We can see that the overall number of plant species has increased over the years and the gap between total plants and native plants starts to close as more and more natives express themselves from all the seeding we have done. According to *Plants of the Chicago Region*, “After 5 years [of restoration] one can expect  $\bar{C}$  values between 3.0 and 3.7, with FQI values ranging from 25 to 35.” We are right on track with an almost doubling of the  $\bar{C}$  and a 10 point increase in the Floristic Quality. This is only the beginning and we expect these numbers to continue to increase over the years. The effort of all of you who came out to help cut brush, collect and sow seed, and help out on burns shows not just quantifiably but also pictorially so I will end this here and let you see for yourself, great work everyone!



### Interns

The class of 2021 made it through another summer. Their time here is just never long enough! Bryan, Laila, Lucas, Andreas and Loona were a pleasure to work with and accomplished a lot in their short time here. The interns were crucial in helping with our large floodplain planting, controlling a hellacious amount of buckthorn resprouts at Craftsbury, and winning the Grand Prize at the Barrington Fourth of July Parade. A huge thank you to all of them for enduring a particularly hot summer with great attitudes!

— Kevin Scheiwiller

# Summer intern reflections

Andreas Harris – DePaul University – Environmental Science



Citizens for Conservation's college internship program was an incredible experience for me. As an environmentalist and a student, I greatly value learning and completing work to create measurable change; all of which created a personal goal for this internship, as well as a future career goal, to physically and personally apply my education and work to conserve Earth's natural ecosystems.

This program allowed me to meet and far exceed my goals for this internship. I have gained valuable hands-on experience with many restoration management techniques and within the environmental field in general.

For the duration of the internship and under the leadership of the Restoration Manager, Kevin Scheiwiller, the other interns and I were engaged in a wide range of tasks that were related to restoration management. Just a few of the common tasks were planting plugs, collecting seeds, and removing non-native invasive plant species. A large project that we spent a lot of time with was the restoration of a ~5-acre wetland peninsula. With a little elbow grease and many, many sedge plugs, a lot of great progress was made. But, the work we got done was only able to be accomplished through the help of the volunteers.

The days I looked forward to the most each week were the volunteer days. Every Thursday and Saturday morning, volunteers were welcomed out to help CFC at a particular site. The peninsula was a common volunteer day activity this past summer. The reason that I looked forward to volunteer days was because of the great and welcoming community that CFC has harbored. Between the familiar faces that I got to know well and the people I may only speak to once in passing, each moment spent with the greater CFC community made me feel very fortunate to be engaged in a great community and a great organization.

Bryan Huila – Northern Illinois University – Environmental Science

The summer internship at CFC was a very positive experience for me. I am a senior at Northern Illinois University studying biodiversity and restoration but have not been able to be a part of the restoration world until now. This experience was a lot more informative than I originally had thought, though I was not sure what to expect. Through my experience, I have gained a basic knowledge of native and invasive plants, as well as the relationships that they have within the ecosystems. My favorite



examples would be that of wood betony and how it keeps the plants in an area from growing too tall. This plant was one of the easier ones to spot because there were visible patches that were shorter than the surrounding areas.

Although we managed to fit a lot into the short 10 weeks of the internship, we also managed to have a good time. The summer months were filled with some nasty weather, but it seemed like our crew was always making the most out of the experience. The 10 weeks of the internship was an amazing experience, and I must thank Kevin, the Oberweiler Foundation, the other interns, and the board of CFC. Their combined efforts have brought together an amazing program that I would gladly recommend for anyone looking to get into the restoration business. Thank you to everyone who put together the program and I wish the future interns the best!

Lucas Rot – Louisiana State University – Environmental Science/Biology



This internship has been incredibly productive and educational. Throughout the summer we learned about the various native plants and animals throughout CFC's preserves, as well as about the invasive species that threaten them and how to manage them. Our main accomplishments involved planting the matrix for a five acre sedge meadow at Flint Creek Savanna,

herbiciding buckthorn resprouts at Craftsbury and collecting/sowing seed that ripened over the summer. We also spent time learning important skills to help us grow as professionals including QRA sampling, sedge identification and looking through a management plan. Thanks to the Oberweiler Foundation for funding this great program.

Laila Franklin – St. Olaf College – Environmental Science and Art

I had a great time learning during the CFC internship this summer. I learned a lot about the prairie and myself. This was my first full time job. It was a very welcoming and inclusive workplace which made great consideration for my medical accommodations. I got to catch snakes, frogs and turtles and try to identify them with books and apps. I enjoyed watching the animals' habits.

I liked learning about the different microenvironments and how they are used and restored differently in long term plans. My favorite activity was the plant surveys to indicate the success of a restoration plan. Overall, I discovered that I really enjoy field work and can work in the Illinois summer heat.



Photos by Patty Barten.

# 2022 Community Education programs

Programs will be presented at the Barrington Village Hall and simultaneously via an online webinar. Registration will provide location and sign-in information for webinars. Come at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and exhibits.

## What's In a Name? Demystifying Latin Botanic Names

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Diane Greening, Native Plant Expert | Ellyn Lanz, Latin Interpreter

Is *Boltonia asteroides* from outer space?

What's *Lobelia siphilitica* got do with syphilis? Learn to decipher Latin genus and species names of some popular natives. Expand your knowledge of native plants, their Latin roots, pronunciation and common meanings, as well as quirky ways plants have been identified. Diane Greening is co-chair of CFC's spring Native Plant Sale. She is a former Illinois Master Naturalist. Ellyn Lanz is a retired Latin teacher, a pastel painter of landscapes, and a gardener in her yard near the Chicago Botanic Gardens.



## Add a Little Prairie to Your Garden

Saturday, February 26, 2022, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Cindy Crosby, Author



Include native Illinois prairie plants in your garden and watch the pollinators arrive! Native prairie plants can make a ho-hum garden intriguing and exciting. Learn what Illinois native prairie plants work well in a home garden, and how to choose the best plants for your location. Cindy Crosby is the author, compiler or contributor to more than 20 books. She is a Master Gardener and a steward for the Schulenberg Prairie at The Morton Arboretum and at Nachusa Grasslands.

## Designing Your Native Plant Garden

Saturday, March 12, 2022, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Matt Hokanson, Owner,

Woods to Wetlands

Matt will discuss elements of good garden design and share plant combinations for various settings. Learn about plants that will work in your yard and be ready to order and plant a great garden this spring! Matt is the owner of Woods to Wetlands, an ecological services company that specializes in native landscaping design and installation. He is also experienced in natural area restoration and is a certified burn expert.



## Vanishing Edens: Biodiversity in a Changing World

Saturday, April 23, 2022, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Michael Jeffords, Author, Entomologist



Dr. Michael Jeffords will present a celebration of some of the world's great biodiverse habitats, including Illinois, and comment on the status of each. He will discuss how current pressures are affecting the biodiversity of plants, pollinators and other insects that are

interdependent and on which we depend. Dr. Jeffords is an entomologist and retired education/outreach director for the Prairie Research Institute, Illinois Natural History Survey at the University of Illinois. He and his spouse, Susan Post, have authored six books about the natural world.

RSVP 847-382-SAVE (7283) or to [communityed@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:communityed@citizensforconservation.org). Please provide your name, email, phone number and program name.

*Photos provided by speakers.*

## Fall friends

by Julia Martinez

This is the time of year that you and the children in your life may notice more spiders around. Of course, they've always been there by our side, tidying up errant insects that enter our homes. It may be surprising to learn that many of the spiders we see walking about are male spiders in search of a more sedentary female. While many people are startled at the sight of a large spider milling about, having so many spiders offers us a chance to build a healthy sense of wonder and appreciation in children.

Inside the home, we can be neighborly to spiders by keeping a cup and a card handy so that we can safely escort them out of the house. One suggestion to help children see spiders as friends is to have the child name the spider before putting it outside. Children can get really creative with this, coming up with names like "Boo," because the spider was startling to see.

Another easy way to appreciate spiders but maintain a comfortable distance is to watch a video about spiders. Animal Fact Files has an excellent and short video about jumping spiders, one of the most endearing spiders to be found in the Barrington area. At the computer, you can also share a joke; What text emojis do spiders use when they're happy? ::::D

The season for more conspicuous spiders indoors also hosts large, visible spiders outdoors. This is a great time of year to explore the yard or local natural areas in search of spiders. Grass spiders are abundant in hedgerows. Garden spiders find great habitat in prairies. The Illinois Department of Public Health has a good overview of spiders that can be found both indoors and outdoors.

Autumn is the perfect time for children to connect with nature and appreciate the nature around us. Guiding children to see the world through a different lens can be an eye opening experience, all eight of them.



Grass spider. Photo by Julia Martinez.

## Donor appreciation luncheon and Craftsbury Preserve dedication

by Peggy Simonsen

One of CFC's 50th anniversary events was a luncheon in August to thank our major donors whose contributions have helped CFC acquire the property that became



Ribbon cutting. Photo by Patty Barten.

Preserve. The luncheon was held at the Onion Pub in Lake Barrington with a welcome by Kathleen Leitner, our president, and a slide show by Kevin Scheiwiller, our restoration manager, of the before and on-going restoration of the Craftsbury property. Following the luncheon, we bused attendees to Craftsbury Preserve for the dedication. They were able to see the restoration work in progress, which was showing off with late summer prairie blooms. Some dedicated volunteers who are responsible for much of the work cut the ribbon with loppers, and Kathleen read a commendation from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, whose grant helped fund the purchase. Each attendee received a potted prairie plant, donations from Midwest Groundcovers' Natural Garden Natives. We thank all our donors and CFC's generous sponsor for the event, Northern Trust.



Photo by Patty Barten.

## Notes from the Nursery

### A season with swamp betony

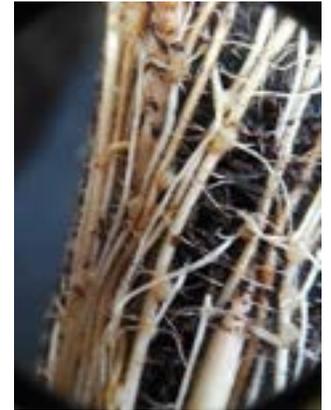
One of my goals at the Lake County Forest Preserves District nursery this year was to start trials with propagating hemiparasitic plants, and swamp betony (*Pedicularis lanceolata*) seemed like a great candidate to begin this journey with. Swamp betony loves to grow where it can have its feet wet or moist all year, full sun, and prefers calcareous or lime-based soils that are typical for our region. It can be found in marshes, fens, sedge meadows, and wet prairies. As summer transitions to fall, you can spot the pale-yellow, snapdragon-like flowers on spikes growing in these habitats. As I've mentioned before, swamp betony is partially parasitic to many species of plants associated with it in wetland ecosystems. While these plants are slowly increasing in our restorations, populations still are localized. Production of swamp betony in a nursery setting can help by directly planting into restorations or creating planting beds for seed collection. But before I started growing swamp betony from seed, I needed to find a good host plant species.

Hemiparasitic plants can drain a lot of energy from their host plants. They also have the capability to attach their roots to neighboring plants of many different species. From my observations, they tend to go after grasses, sedges, and members of the composite family such as asters and goldenrods. I needed a fairly aggressive and vigorous host species to keep up with the demands of the betony. Luckily, I had seeds of common lake sedge (*Carex lacustris*) and hairy-leaved lake sedge (*Carex atherodes*) to fulfill these requirements. Both sedge species are part of our “Warrior Sedges” that we use in our restorations, and their growth habits were what I needed for this propagation. I started germinating the sedge seeds about a month prior to sowing the betony seeds. Once the sedge seedlings were at a decent size, I sowed betony seed—one with each sedge. They germinated in about two weeks. As the weeks progressed, the swamp betony seedlings continued to grow, and their sedge hosts were starting to slow down in growth. I would check the root systems in the plugs constantly, and nodules formed where the haustoria, or specialized root structures of the swamp betony, had attached to the sedge host. Once the betony plants were mature, they were planted in the wild with the help of our diligent volunteers. I was very surprised and excited to see that many of the plants flowered their first season once they were planted in the wild! This information has helped me greatly to not only find ways of potentially growing other hemiparasitic species, but also offers new approaches to restore these plants in the wild and secure the preservation of different populations to help them survive in a changing landscape.

— Luke Dahlberg



Swamp betony seedling growing with its sedge host.



The swollen areas on the roots are where the swamp betony has attached to the sedge host.



Swamp betony in July. Notice how much the growth of the sedge has been stunted compared to a normal sedge plug (both were cut back).



Swamp betony blooming its first growing season!

Photos by Luke Dahlberg.

## Volunteer Newsletter Editor needed

Do you have ideas for changes you'd like to see made to *CFC News*? Here's your chance. Our current editor plans to step down next spring and CFC will need a new editor for *CFC News*. For each quarterly newsletter, the position requires:

- determining the content
- recruiting writers for each article and following up to obtain their submissions
- gathering photographs or other illustrations
- editing the content and submitting it to our printer for layout (or if you're graphically inclined, you could do the layout yourself)
- overseeing the mailing of the final product

If you are interested or would like to learn more, please contact Leslie Coolidge at [leslie.coolidge@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:leslie.coolidge@citizensforconservation.org) or 312-659-1325.

## News from Habitat Corridors

Volunteers of the Habitat Corridors program visited 20 properties this growing season. There may be as many as 10 more visits scheduled before the deep freeze hits our area. It's very exciting to meet homeowners interested in converting lawn to native habitat. Some are just learning to identify woody invasives like buckthorn and honeysuckle. Some have already cleared the invasives and planted native species that like the sun exposure and soil moisture of the different parts of their yards. Whether you have a small plot of black-eyed Susans or an acre of restored prairie, these changes are valuable to wildlife and the ecosystem. Visits resume in April or when the plants wake up from their winter naps. Thank you to everyone who has contacted the Habitat Corridors program to learn how to save living space for living things, one yard at a time! For questions or site visit requests please contact [info@habitatcorridors.org](mailto:info@habitatcorridors.org).



information on building bird houses and creating habitat to attract birds to your yard as well as bird identification. Alicia Timm's knowledge of native plantings and the Habitat Corridors program was of interest to many attendees. Tom and Edith Auchter's solar telescope was popular as always as was our sandhill crane mascot. Thanks to our volunteers and to all the Barrington Hills residents who stopped by.



CFC volunteers and display. Photo by Bob Lee.

## Exciting bee survey results

by Kevin Scheiwiller

Over the summer, the Lake County Forest Preserves hired Alma Schrage to conduct surveys for the federally endangered rusty patched bumblebee across BGI sites. All of us were going to be excited for even just one spotting of the endangered bee this summer as it would have solidified the sighting at Flint Creek South from 2018.



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

Little did we know that Alma would have multiple sightings across many of the CFC properties! Three CFC restorations host these bumblebees with one site having an "unusual density of individuals." Alma reached out to the United States Geological Survey due to this density of bees so that a genetic sample can be taken and shared with the greater scientific community as we all continue to learn more about this species in decline. It is rewarding to see the hard work of decades of volunteer restoration pay off for all critters that call Barrington home, from humans to bees!

## CFC at The Hills Are Alive

by Leslie Coolidge

CFC volunteers were out in force on September 19 for Barrington Hills annual fall festival The Hills Are Alive. Our bluebird monitoring team of Laura Simpson, Barb Laughlin-Karon and Karen Rosene shared



Tom Auchter sharing his solar telescope. Photo by Bob Lee.



Exploring a bird house. Photo by Bob Lee.

## Autumn's rewards

by Meredith Tucker

It always seems that fall is the season of yellow. Natural habitats glow with warm, buttery colors of many goldenrod species and various native sunflowers. More understated, being white, but just as beautiful, is turtlehead, another fall-blooming native.

*Plants of the Chicago Region* (Floyd Swink's bible for restoration people and native plant enthusiasts) classifies it as OBL, meaning obligate. That designates it as obliged to grow in wet habitats, "almost always in wetlands under natural conditions >99% probability." I planted turtlehead in my rain garden in an area that usually stays moist. Nonetheless, it is doing its own thing and has very gradually spread to the low berm that surrounds the rain garden.



*Turtlehead. Photo by Meredith Tucker.*

My point in giving this long habitat description is that I believe any gardener with full to partial sun and a moist to wet area can grow this fascinating plant. It seems to grow even in a modestly moist area. We have had a terribly dry year in 2021, but my turtlehead has done well in a rain garden that is slightly moist and then only occasionally.

Turtlehead blooms from mid-summer through early fall. Its stems are sufficiently stiff that they do not need staking, growing about three feet tall. Its flower somewhat resembles the head of a turtle—especially if one has a little imagination. Apparently it slowly spreads by rhizomes, but this has not been the case in my yard. It may do so in its natural habitat.

One of the truly intriguing things about turtlehead is its relationship with bees, a relationship that depends on the shape of the flower and location of the nectar and pollen. The turtlehead flower might best be described as resembling a snapdragon. It is a closed blossom with the pollen and nectar at its base. A honeybee cannot pollinate it. However, bumblebees are strong enough to push open the petals and make their way to the interior of the flower. There bees are rewarded with nectar and pick up pollen on their furry bodies to take to the next flower. Thus pollination occurs.

If you have any suitable habitat in your yard, please give turtlehead a try. It is an attractive addition to any moist native garden, a fascinating plant to watch and provides nourishment for bumblebees.

## Make change with spare change

What if simply rounding up your purchases to the nearest dollar could make a difference? RoundUp App allows you to connect one or multiple debit cards, credit cards or even Venmo to donate your spare change to a nonprofit. From there your "roundups" are donated monthly, which for many users is between \$15-25. You can also decide on a minimum amount to donate each month or even a maximum. Our volunteer-based, community organization puts in thousands of service hours out in the fields, in the barn and in front of computers to increase our protection and restoration efforts for more than 3,500 acres. These hours keep us going strong along with our amazing members and donors who provide financial support. As we work through our strategic planning for the next five years, we have focus areas we wish to expand to further our environmental impact in the Barrington area. Financial support will help aid these efforts which we are excited to share with our CFC community in 2022.

To use the RoundUp App you can visit [www.roundupapp.com](http://www.roundupapp.com) or download the app.



## Help eradicate teasel

A citizen effort is being made to create a Barrington Area "Think Tank" to plan, educate, and implement the eradication of teasel and other invasives that have taken over the parkways, highways, and railroad right of ways of our entire area.

Are you interested in brainstorming the what/when/how/who of this effort from a socially distanced chair in our vicinity? We are seeking like-minded people to meet beginning late this year, who may be residents, visitors, captains of industry, churches, businesses and business owners, members of local organizations and clubs, property owners, students, educators, young and old, volunteers. We need your ideas, whether you have expertise or none.



*Teasel. Photo by Patty Barten.*

There are EPA-approved safe ways to do this eradication in 2022, but the Think Tank needs to happen first to get logistics and volunteers determined. Won't you join this endeavor to make a real difference to our environment? Please say yes and contact P Denise Israel at 847-381-9487 or [pdenisei@hotmail.com](mailto:pdenisei@hotmail.com).

# Bird monitoring season comes to a close

by Laura Simpson and Barb Laughlin-Karon

The CFC Eastern Bluebird and Purple Martin Monitoring Programs of 2021 drew to a close in August, revealing results that were consistent with other monitoring groups in the region. In spite of some setbacks, we had another productive year and were particularly delighted by the success of our purple martin colonies.



*Bluebird on house.*  
Photo by Barb Laughlin-Karon.

There had been early spring discussion among birding groups that Eastern bluebirds had not returned to the area in the same numbers as previous years, corroborated by our monitors, and leading to speculation as to why this had happened. Jack Nowak, Eastern Bluebird Volunteer Coordinator for the Lake County Forest Preserve District, suggested that unusual “freezing and snowy weather in their southern wintering grounds” led to a winter kill, along with our dry spring making food supply unavailable until later in the season. It is also possible that weather patterns during migration led the bluebirds to areas west and east of our location. In addition, our trails experienced raccoon predation this year, which indicates we will need to protect more boxes with predator guards for the next breeding season. Any gently used or new predator guard donations would be greatly appreciated.

Tree swallows and house wrens across the region enjoyed greater success, and our numbers show that to be true as well. Perhaps the number of nest boxes left vacant by the missing Eastern bluebirds gave them more opportunity to nest and reproduce.

In 2021, we fledged 45 Eastern bluebirds, which is down from 59 in 2020, consistent with reports from around northern Illinois. Tree swallows fledged 101 babies, up from 50 in 2020. House wrens fledged 32 birds, up from 17 in 2020. Our fledging numbers continue to remain strong particularly when compared to our first year of monitoring in 2019 which fledged 23 Eastern bluebirds. After hearing about some of the issues facing Eastern bluebirds this year, we consider this to be a successful year and look forward to another successful season in 2022.

Purple martins did extremely well in 2021, and we were thrilled to see a second colony establish successful nests in the new house that was erected at the end of last season. Between

the two houses, we fledged 69 purple martins, which is up from 49 in 2020. We also consider it a great success that through our monitoring efforts we were able to keep both houses clear of the invasive and destructive house sparrow. We hope to add at least one more house next spring so we can attract even more of these “colonial nesters.”

As always, we are grateful to our volunteer monitors who get out on the trails each week to count birds and keep the nest boxes in good condition. We could not keep all these records without their tireless reporting! Our data gets reported to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology NestWatch program, the Lake County Forest Preserve District, and the Purple Martin Conservation Association.



*Purple martin hatchlings.*  
Photo by Laura Simpson.

## Volunteer Portrait

### John Crossin – BHS Student Liaison

Fall brings cooler weather, shorter days, seed collecting and a new Barrington High School (BHS) Student Liaison, John Crossin. But John isn't new to CFC. When he was a middle schooler, he was featured in a photograph in Quintessential Barrington collecting seed at Galloping Hill. John has always been interested in nature and plants



*Photo provided by John Crossin.*

in particular. He first discovered CFC through the native plant sale when he was in Eighth grade and soon after began volunteering. He describes seed collecting as a game to collect different species, but his favorite activity is cutting buckthorn with the attendant bonfires in the winter.

John describes himself as a driven person and that's clearly the case as, while working for Home Depot, he secured a \$1,000 donation for tools for CFC and another \$1,000 for BHS for soil and planting trays for the school greenhouse.

John is a senior at BHS and plans to study plant biology and conservation in college. He has applied to Cornell early decision.

As liaison, he hopes to increase awareness of conservation among BHS students. He'd like to organize a field trip to a workday where students could meet with Kevin Scheiwiller and Luke Dahlberg and learn about the role CFC plays in providing seeds throughout the area.

John welcomes hearing from potential student volunteers and is reachable at [johncrossin201@gmail.com](mailto:johncrossin201@gmail.com) or 224-655-9181.

Kevin Scheiwiller says "John has been a great joy to work with and has injected a lot of energy into the workdays. We are so happy to have him on our team!" We agree.

— Leslie Coolidge



## Conserving Beauty

### *A CFC Celebration of the Arts*

This art show, the last event of Citizens for Conservation's 50th anniversary year celebrations, will showcase the accomplished photography and artistic work of CFC volunteers and members. Twenty artists will share their love of nature across various media. Also, juried District 220 student creations from recycled materials will be on display harking back to CFC's beginnings as a recycling center in the Barrington area.

December 16, 2021 6pm – 8pm  
This is a free event | Cash bar  
Register at: <https://www.barringtonwhitehouse.com/event/citizensfor-conservation-celebrates-50-years/>  
Barrington's White House  
145 West Main Street

## Another successful sale

by Matt Hokanson

The 2021 Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale was another smashing success. There were an incredible number of sales. A total of 503 native trees and shrubs were sold and between the spring and fall sales this year, over 1,000 new native trees and shrubs were planted into our landscapes throughout the region.

A tremendous thank you to all who helped as these native plant sales would otherwise not be possible. Sarah Hoban and Patty Barten worked hard to promote the sale. Dave Underwood worked his usual magic with the website. The online pre-order system makes the whole sale possible and operates like a well-oiled machine.

The almost overwhelming number of trees and shrubs that had been delivered were unloaded and sorted with wonderful efficiency. Melissa and Larry Washow, Laura Mandell, Danielle and Chandler Coupe, Pete Landwehr, Bill Reid, Jeanette Burger, Jim Vanderpoel, Sandra Washburn, Wanda Supanich, Linda Mowbray, Colleen Pagnotta, Virginia Black, Erin Hokanson, Allegra Atkinson, Linda Kuna, and David DeHart worked extremely hard with the delivery and were amazing. Also, a big thank you to Jim Voris and Barb Overbey for making the usual trip to the nurseries to pick up some of the orders so we can save on delivery costs. Catherine McCord was a wonderful help as she watered and watched over the plants between the delivery and the customer pickup. The customer pickup was staffed by myself, Charlie Keppel, Laura Held, Linda Krauss, Sarah Voska, Amanda Moeller, and Allegra Atkinson. Thank you for your patience and help with getting the plants into people's hands. Everything went very smoothly.

Looking forward to the 2022 plant sales and the hope that we are just as successful and break more records!



Plant sale volunteers. Photo by Patty Barten.

# Fourth Graders on the Prairie, back to the real field study!

by Edith Auchter

Late in the spring, Barrington School District 220 advised CFC they were planning field trips for the next school year. Hooray! While Restoration Manager Kevin Scheiwiller and I did have some fun last year creating videos, the prairie immersion is an incomparable experience. We were thrilled to return to something normal in this 13th year of our award-winning program.



*Volunteers Diane Bodkin and Tom Auchter instruct students on identifying and collecting seed. Photo by Jim Bodkin.*

As many know, this field study requires MANY volunteers. So, I sent my usual recruitment email to previous volunteers, Board members, and Nature Ladies while Patty Barten, Sarah Hoban, and Amanda Moller supported my efforts by posting requests for volunteers on Facebook and Instagram, in the CFC e-news update, and on the Barrington Area Volunteer Connection website (<https://thebavc.org/>). None of us knew what to expect post-COVID. Responses started arriving and I made numerous phone calls resulting in recruitment of 38 volunteers who contributed an amazing 425.5 hours to the program. The school district greatly appreciates the support of all our volunteers, as does Citizens for Conservation.

In-class orientation sessions were challenging as students are required to maintain a three-foot separation and wear masks while indoors. Most of us presented in a gym or cafeteria which is not necessarily designed for this purpose. Students were quite attentive and focused and many recalled plants they saw with Nature Ladies at Grigsby Prairie as second graders. For many, it was their most recent field trip as much of the past couple of years has been virtual for them!

The time we spent at Flint Creek Savanna and Galloping Hill was spectacular. Weather held and all eight schools (575 students) participated as scheduled. As teachers prepared for the trip, they had an overwhelming response from parents requesting to volunteer as chaperones. Many of the chaperones had attended previously and most were engaged

during the entire two-hour field study. We were able to accommodate a special needs student by assigning a volunteer so his experience closely matched that of his classmates.

Our photographers did an excellent job of taking both candid and class photos. During the summary prior to students boarding the bus back to school, it was so rewarding to hear students' comments. "This was utterly satisfying." "This was even better than recess." "It's even bigger and better. So beautiful."



*A student works diligently drawing a bottle gentian plant. Photo by Tom Auchter.*

Several teachers emailed after the field study. "Our students had such an amazing time! Thank you so much for having us." "We enjoyed being there! Such a great experience for the kids all around! Thank you!"



*Volunteer Steve Smith shows students milkweed bugs during their discovery walk. Photo by Bob Lee.*

And, from Becky Gill, Ed.D., Director of Elementary Curriculum & Instruction:

"Thank you for the amazing prairie preservation studies for our fourth graders again this year! The teachers and students were so grateful to return to working with the CFC volunteers. I think it presented a sense of normalcy again for our teachers. The students' exit slips show some deep insight and reflection."

And, from our volunteers:

“Everyone working together makes this organization such a successful one. So many great helpers.”

“This program is so rewarding for the students and the volunteers.”

There is an envelope in the CFC office with illustrated thank you notes from students. Here is a sample:

“Thank you for helping recover a lot of the habitats destroyed by us humans.”

“I enjoyed going to the prairie cause it relaxed me a lot, and I will never forget the seed picking, I’m very thankful for helping us. With much appreciation.”

“Thank you Citizens for Conservation. You guys are an awesome team. We are grateful for the prairie and you guys.”

As you can see, our team of 38 volunteers reached the hearts of many. Heartfelt thanks again to all who participated and contributed to the success of this year’s program! Please send me an email ([edith.auchter@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:edith.auchter@citizensforconservation.org)) if you are interested in volunteering next year.



*Students collected many seeds which will be cleaned and mixed to sow in prairies. Photo by Tom Auchter.*

## Meet Jeff Weiss, new Flint Creek/ Spring Creek Coordinator

by Faye Sinnott

Flint Creek/Spring Creek Watersheds Partnership has a new Coordinator! Jeff Weiss (long “i” in Weiss) has long been a member of CFC, working with Habitat Corridors and other volunteer environmental organizations such as Buffalo Grove Prairie Steward and Families in Nature. He was the founder of the Buffalo Creek Clean Water Partnership.

Jeff is the first to admit he’s a “plant person”. He left corporate America in 2008 to pursue his passion, getting a MS in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from University of Illinois, and a Natural Areas Management Certificate from College of Lake County (CLC). He’s run his own ecological

restoration and native plant landscaping services, as well as written grants, taught, developed burn manuals, and been an instructor with CLC, Oakton Community College and, most recently, the Morton Arboretum, developing curriculum offered through the Associated Colleges of the Chicago Area.

Teaching is a passion, especially for young people! Jeff has seven grandchildren (expecting an eighth), is a Boy Scouts Merit Badge Counselor for Environmental Science

and Soil and Water Conservation, and jumped in with both feet to help with CFC’s Fourth Graders on the Prairie. This summer he volunteered with the Spring Creek Stewards and Baker’s Lake Stewards.

Jeff is the fifth Coordinator for the Watersheds Partnership. Organized initially in 2006 with just Flint Creek, it was founded by the Village of Barrington, Barrington Area Development Council (BADC), Barrington Area Council of Governments (BACOG) and CFC with support from Lake County Stormwater Management. Patsy Mortimer was the first Coordinator and oversaw the development of the first Flint Creek Watershed Plan in 2007. In 2011, Nancy Schumm oversaw the development of the Spring Creek Watershed Plan (2012), which was initially headed by Kurt Thomsen (who also created the analytics for the BACOG groundwater recharge map, and the baseline water quality testing for both watersheds in 2016). Patsy moved to Michigan in 2013, and Thomsen took over, merging the two watersheds into the Flint Creek/Spring Creek Watersheds Partnership. Membership had swelled to all the BACOG communities plus Lake Zurich plus CFC, BADC, Barrington Area Conservation Trust and the Fox Point Homeowners Association. Nancy Schumm had to step back in due to Thomsen’s health. Nancy moved to the East Coast in late 2017, and I was tapped to update the Flint Creek Watershed Plan (required every 10 years). Now I’m putting the Watersheds in Jeff’s very capable hands.

The Partnership’s mission is to educate citizens while building partnerships for projects to improve water quality, maintain water supply, preserve ecosystems and restore wetlands, prairies and other natural features for current and future generations.

For more information, please see the website: <https://flintcreekspringcreekwatersheds.org/>.



*Jeff Weiss volunteering at Fourth Graders on the Prairie. Photo by Tom Auchter.*

## President's Comments

How fortunate we are that 50 years ago a number of Barrington area citizens saw the need to start an organization that became Citizens for Conservation. And we hope you will agree that CFC has made significant progress in delivering on our promise of saving living space for living things.



Kathleen with Dr. and Mrs. Smith.  
Photo by Mark Leitner.

This year, we were excited to celebrate CFC's successes with you and the Barrington community at CFC's 50 FEST celebrated October 9 on the property of the Smith Professional Building, graciously made available by Dr. Richard and Barbara Smith and the doctors of the Illinois Bone and Joint Institute. This beautiful property is surrounded on three sides by our Flint Creek Savanna.

We had a perfect weather day with music from the band Redhorse, and food supplied by the food trucks Stix and Noodles, Mario's Cart and Tropical Chill. Mark Spreyer from Stillman Nature Center treated us with a visit from several of their resident owls and one of their hawks. We offered a trail walk through the Savanna, pumpkins to decorate, lots of terrific raffle prizes, and plenty of merchandise for sale. All in

all, we had a great day enjoyed by so many of our friends and supporters.

A special thanks to all of our sponsors: Dr. Richard and Barbara Smith; the doctors of the Illinois Bone and Joint Institute; Tom and Debbie Podgorski; Gene and Jane Dawson; Candy Quinn – Prairie Basket Floral Design; Midwest Groundcovers, Natural Garden Natives; Barrington Area Community Foundation; Steve and Chris Smith; Northern Trust; Mike Rolfs - Hamilton Partners; Christopher B Burke Engineering; Barbara Putta; Jerry Adelman – Openlands; BMO Harris Bank; Woods to Wetlands, Ecological Services; Tallgrass Restorations, Inc.; Bluestem Ecological Services; Karen Daulton Lange; Kim Richmond; and Bill and Karen Hunter. Thank you all for helping to make such a nice celebration.

And lastly, my thanks to the all of the board members, staff and volunteers who made this day come together—we couldn't have done it without you!

As we look ahead to the next 50 years, that mission is even more critical, suggesting that we need to devote even more resources so that we can re-double our conservation efforts in the hope that our kids, grandkids—and their kids—can continue to enjoy the Barrington area native landscape while contributing to the health of our environment. We look forward to collaborating with all of you on that effort. Here's to 50 more years!

— Kathleen Leitner

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Citizens for Conservation  
459 West Hwy. 22  
Barrington, IL 60010

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