

# The Habitat HERALD

April 2009

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## A Natural Masterpiece: Bartel Grassland and Tinley Creek Preserve

By Mary Cannon



Illustration: Living Habitats

Grassland birds and wetland birds will soon have 860 contiguous, open acres. Restoration of the initial 375 open acres of Bartel Grassland in the southwestern parcel began in 2001.

Dick Riner, Bartel Grassland steward and volunteer coordinator, has been worrying about his birds. Because of climate changes, many species are moving north, but “the grassland group can’t... because they have no northerly habitat to go to. In Illinois, their numbers are down more than 90% in the past 40 years,” he says. However, Dick is now more optimistic because, with the addition of Tinley Creek Preserve, Bartel is set to expand. “We’ll go from about 635 to 1400 total acres—and from 375 to about 860 contiguous grassland/wetland acres. That’s just tremendous.”

So, how did this expansion happen? Linda Masters is restoration ecologist and project manager for CorLands (Corporation for Open Lands), a non-profit whose mission is to help communities in northeastern Illinois increase the quality and quantity of open space for public enjoyment. She explains, “Because the O’Hare expansion took out some natural areas, Chicago had to do ‘mitigation’ work—replacement of that land somewhere else. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) applied for funding, and the city decided to give the project to us with the idea of restoring wetlands and enhancing grasslands.” She adds, “This endeavor involves a lot of people. Besides the FPDCC, we had to get permits from the

This endeavor involves a lot of people...  
who are vital to the area’s health.

Army Corps of Engineers, who will monitor and eventually sign-off on completion. We’re also working with Heidi Natura, founder of Living Habitats, who oversees day-to-day operations, and Audubon-Chicago Region, who provides expertise on bird habitat issues and support for the volunteers. Of course, Dick Riner advises us because he and the Bartel monitors are so vital to the area’s health.”

# The Habitat Project serves the grassroots of the Chicago Wilderness conservation community:

The future of nature in Chicago Wilderness depends very much on the 995 site monitors and stewards and the thousands of other volunteers and staff who work for the wellness of animals and habitat. To help out at a site – or to adopt one yourself – see the opportunities below.

## Grassroots Opportunities



### **WEEKEND WORKDAYS**

[WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG/RESTORATION PROJECTS](http://WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG/RESTORATION_PROJECTS)  
OR THE **VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP NETWORK WEBSITE:**  
[WWW.NATURE.ORG/WHEREWEWORK/NORTHAMERICA/STATES/ILLINOIS/VOLUNTEER/ART9844.HTML](http://WWW.NATURE.ORG/WHEREWEWORK/NORTHAMERICA/STATES/ILLINOIS/VOLUNTEER/ART9844.HTML)

### **SITE STEWARDS**

TRAIN TO SUPERVISE VOLUNTEER RESTORATION OF A PRAIRIE, WOODLAND OR WETLAND PRESERVE. SEND YOUR NAME AND AREA OF INTEREST TO [KGLENNEMEIER@AUDUBON.ORG](mailto:KGLENNEMEIER@AUDUBON.ORG) OR CONTACT THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR OF YOUR NEARBY COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OR SIMILAR LANDOWNER.

### **ADOPT A PRESERVE**

WATCH FOR MISUSE OR ECOLOGICAL THREATS. REPORT FOUR TIMES A YEAR TO THE HABITAT PROJECT AND THE LANDOWNER. SEND YOUR NAME AND AREA OF INTEREST TO [KGLENNEMEIER@AUDUBON.ORG](mailto:KGLENNEMEIER@AUDUBON.ORG).

### **BIRD CONSERVATION NETWORK**

LEE RAMSEY 847-501-4683

### **BIRD BLITZES TO MONITOR**

#### **GRASSLANDS, WOODLANDS, SHRUBLANDS, OR WETLANDS**

JUDY POLLOCK 847-328-1250

### **CHICAGO WILDERNESS CALLING FROG SURVEY**

KAREN GLENNEMEIER 847-328-1250

### **BUTTERFLY MONITORING**

ILLINOIS BUTTERFLY MONITORING NETWORK, TOM PETERSON 630-443-8604

### **DRAGONFLY MONITORING NETWORK**

CRAIG STETTNER 847-925-6214

### **PLANT COMMUNITY AUDITS OF WOODS, PRAIRIES, OR WETLANDS**

KAREN GLENNEMEIER 847-328-1250

### **PLANTS OF CONCERN RARE PLANT MONITORING**

SUSANNE MASI 847-835-8269

### **ADVOCACY AND POLICY WORK**

[WWW.SIERRACLUB.ORG/IL/](http://WWW.SIERRACLUB.ORG/IL/) OR [WWW.FOTFP.ORG](http://WWW.FOTFP.ORG) (COOK COUNTY) OR [WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG)

### **GRASSROOTS EDUCATION**

[WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG)

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We welcome to our newsletter  
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To learn more, contact Mary  
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[mjkcannon@hotmail.com](mailto:mjkcannon@hotmail.com)

Heidi gives a bit more background. “It’s Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) land, acquired in the 70s. Wetlands were there before it was turned into farms, but they had dried up. We’re now going to return pre-agricultural hydrology to the area.” To that end, Heidi, who assembles and manages project contractors, has a checklist of tasks. Site inventory: done. Clearing degraded tree plantation: done. Disabling of sub-surface drainage tiles: done. “Once we close the drains so the water is retained, we’ll see what develops—and then plan for fall seeding and spring 2010 planting. We’ve got to pair the vegetation with the water levels.” The restoration of the wetlands and the enhancing of the grasslands are expected to take from five to seven years, and then control will go back to FPDCC, which will be responsible for maintenance.

“This is a new beginning—an opportunity to expand the wildly successful Bartel area; and one of the factors for site selection was the strength of the volunteers here. We need the public interest to keep it viable,” she adds. Linda Masters agrees: “This will increase habitat and food supply for both resident grassland and wetland birds as well as provide a lay-over for migrating birds. Volunteers are already training to scout out problem invasives, leading tours of the area, and getting high schools interested in studying grasslands. Without their work, we’d be lost. Personally, I can’t wait to see the waving grasses and hear the bobolinks—and maybe spot a rail or sandhill crane.”

Dick Riner is hoping those cranes might even nest here and is looking forward to sharing what he calls “family frolics” in this grassland “haven/heaven.” He adds, “It’s like we’ve been given a vastly expanded canvas, and all these artists, scientists and volunteers, are working together to create something we can all enjoy—a natural masterpiece.”

*If you would like to join the family of people working to restore this site, please contact Dick Riner at [dickriner@gmail.com](mailto:dickriner@gmail.com); 708-720-5683.*

**Postscript:** On March 8, not even a month after the drains were closed, a whooping crane blessed the Tinley Creek project by spending the night on its way back north. It was joined by the sandhill cranes that Linda Masters had been hoping to see.



Photo: John and Karen Hollingsworth, courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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THE HABITAT HERALD IS PRODUCED BY AUDUBON TO SUPPORT THE GROWING CONSERVATION COMMUNITY. AUDUBON-CHICAGO REGION WORKS EXCLUSIVELY ON LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ISSUES, AND WE RAISE ALL THE FUNDS FOR OUR WORK OURSELVES. DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR FUNDING, AND GIFTS FROM OUR FELLOW MONITORS AND STEWARDS ARE ALWAYS PARTICULARLY TREASURED. (MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY SUPPORTERS.) WITH THESE GIFTS AUDUBON-CHICAGO REGION SUPPORTS LARGE SCALE HABITAT RESTORATION, SITE STEWARDSHIP, REGIONWIDE MONITORING PROJECTS, AND EVENTS SUCH AS THE WILD THINGS CONFERENCE.

IF YOU’D LIKE TO JOIN OUR FAMILY OF CONTRIBUTORS, OR IF YOU’D LIKE TO RECEIVE A COPY OF OUR ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSIDER OUR PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR, PLEASE CONTACT [JPepper@Audubon.org](mailto:JPepper@Audubon.org) OR SEND US A NOTE AT 1718 SHERMAN AVE., SUITE 210, EVANSTON IL 60201.

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# Celebrate Pollinators!

*By Cynthia McDonnell*

Students and researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are looking forward to our second annual celebration of National Pollinator Week, June 22-28. We'll have a week's worth of events that will include nature walks, workshops on gardening for pollinators, identifying bees and using Beespotter, children's discovery programs and more!

We are eager to collaborate with other groups who would like to host their own activities, so please contact us (at [pollinator.network@gmail.com](mailto:pollinator.network@gmail.com)) if you have some ideas for your group.

Our first meeting to plan for National Pollinator Week is Wednesday, March 18 at noon on the U of I campus. If you wish to participate and cannot attend, email [pollinator.network@gmail.com](mailto:pollinator.network@gmail.com) to stay informed about our plans.

We also are continuing our state-wide citizen-science bee monitoring effort, BeeSpotter. To find out more, visit: <http://beespotter.mste.uiuc.edu/> or contact Terry Harrison at [tharriso@illinois.edu](mailto:tharriso@illinois.edu)

Finally, we have just launched a pollinator discovery center on the U of I campus, called the Pollinarium, to which we are inviting any interested groups to visit. Find out more at: <http://www.life.uiuc.edu/pollinarium/> or contact: [uibees@uiuc.edu](mailto:uibees@uiuc.edu).



Photos: Arlene Kozial



# Citizen Scientists Find Surprises

By Greg Rajsky



Photo: Linda Bolek

Landowner Cyndi Hicks (center) gazes up at the ancient oaks on her property, discovered and identified by Oak Keepers Allie Thompson (left) and Susan Tauck (right).



Photo: Linda Bolek

Oak Keeper Susan Tauck finds fallen leaves to help her distinguish between swamp white oaks (left) and bur oaks in winter.

Last summer, volunteer Oak Keepers surveying privately held woodlots under the auspices of *Project Quercus* in McHenry County (see *Habitat Herald*, Sept 2008) made a couple of startling discoveries.

Nine species of oaks occur in the Chicago Wilderness crescent that extends from the southern and southwestern shores of Lake Michigan. But not every species has been chronicled in each county. For example, swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*) had not been documented from McHenry County. At least not until two Oak Keepers surveyed a site near Marengo Ridge Conservation Area last August 20th.

Susan Tauck and Allie Thompson had received training in June from The Land Conservancy of McHenry County, enabling them to conduct site surveys of woodlots identified as remnants of the county's original oak-dominated landscape. This was the first year of the survey, which aims to characterize the state of privately-held, timbered sites that may have escaped prior inventories and assessments. Much of the first season's work was undertaken in the heat of summer.

"Allie and I were being eaten alive by mosquitoes, so we were kind of in a hurry to get out of there," recounts Tauck. They found what they identified as swamp white oaks growing around an apparent vernal pool. "There was a cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) in bloom and lots of sensitive ferns (*Onoclea sensibilis*)... and a fair amount of honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp.*) understory," she reported. The largest *Q. bicolor* they encountered, which measured more than 32 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) proved to be the largest tree they recorded from the site.

Staff from the McHenry County Conservation District, alerted to the possible presence of a new species citation for the county, visited the site and confirmed Tauck's identification.

District staff also visited a site near the Wisconsin state line in February where some extraordinarily large oaks had been identified by Oak Keepers in August. The site contains near-record specimens of white oak (*Q. alba*) at nearly 40 inches diameter at breast height (dbh), scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) at nearly 47 inches dbh, and a giant red oak (*Q. rubra*) at more than 57 and a half inches dbh. The implication is that the site may represent a remnant of a grove that was not systematically logged at the time of European settlement. Such a find, if verified, would be very rare, indeed.

Organizers of the Oak Keepers program are pleased with the first year's results, gratified to know that a well-informed citizenry can contribute meaningfully to our knowledge and understanding of the region.



Photo: Gail Brown, MCCD

Greg Rajsky, Tom Simpson, and Ben Haburthar celebrate the finding of a giant red oak tree (more than 57 inches across) that likely represents a remnant oak stand discovered by the Oak Keepers of McHenry County.

# Chiwaukee Prairie and a blossoming Wisconsin Plants Of Concern chapter

By Rachel Goad

Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Chiwaukee Prairie, located in Kenosha County, WI in the northern part of the Chicago Wilderness, has long been the focus of such a group. Beginning in the 1960s, they formed a committee and began raising money to help preserve this stunning remnant. Today, the Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund (CPPF) continues to acquire and manage this remarkable lakeplain prairie and has made it part of a new Plants of Concern (POC) chapter, intent on monitoring rare plants in SE Wisconsin.

Because Chiwaukee has never been plowed, it retains a more complete, functioning ecosystem than a restored prairie, and at 227 acres, it's a relatively large remnant. Additionally, lakeplain

prairie communities are categorized as globally imperiled.

Lori Artiomow became aware of this uniqueness while, as an environmental technician, she visited the area to calibrate air quality equipment. She explored the prairie on lunch breaks, and gradually her interest in the area and its diverse flora grew.

## We've already found five additional rare plants.

This led her to get a Masters Degree, studying pollination in rare plant populations. A few years later, after hearing about POC, Lori partnered with Pam Holy, president of the CPPF, to bring an extension of POC to Chiwaukee. A group in Walworth County, headed up by Eric Howe, was organizing at the same time, and together they became the Wisconsin POC chapter.

After obtaining grants and training volunteers, the Chiwaukee program was off the ground in 2007. Because the site has long attracted botanists, there was already an extensive plant list in place. Lori says, “I've used this list to identify 33 rare plants that may be here; it's been a discovery process because so few rare species have recently been documented. We've already found five additional rare plants and are scheduled to monitor 15 species during 2009. This project is providing so much more value than either Pam or I could have imagined.” Four botany blitzes are planned for the upcoming year, and interested people are encouraged to visit the website for more information.

Lori, Pam, the CPPF, and other volunteers give their time to Chiwaukee, not because of its size, or the technical status of the ecosystem. Such a place is inspiring because it provides a window to what was and a promise of what could still be.

To get involved or learn more, visit [www.chiwaukee.org](http://www.chiwaukee.org) and [www.plantsofconcern.org](http://www.plantsofconcern.org).



Photo: Rachel Goad

Dani Drekich, Lori Artiomow, and Susanne Masi look for rare plants to add to the long list of species at Chiwaukee Prairie.

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## 2009 Plants of Concern Workshops

If you'd like to Monitor Rare Plants in NE Illinois, SE Wisconsin, or NW Indiana, please join us for one of our 2009 Plants of Concern Workshops:

**Sunday, April 5th – Sand Ridge Nature Center (South Holland, Cook Co., IL)**

*(this class was held before press time)*

**Saturday, April 18th – Ryerson Woods (Riverwoods, Lake Co., IL)**

**Sunday, April 26th – Volo Bog (Ingleside, Lake Co., IL)**

**Saturday, May 2nd – UW Parkside Campus (Kenosha, Kenosha Co., WI)**

**Workshops will be held from 9:30am to 3pm.**

Receive training in Plants of Concern monitoring techniques, talk with seasoned monitors, or refresh your skills for the new season. We ask any monitors who have never been to a workshop to attend. The New Invaders Watch Program (NIWP) will also be presented as an additional option for POC volunteers to combine with their rare plant monitoring. Bring a lunch. Morning refreshments will be served. Registration is required. A confirmation will be sent after registration, and directions will follow shortly before workshop date. Please visit [www.plantsofconcern.org](http://www.plantsofconcern.org) to register, or contact Rachel Goad at [rgoad@chicagobotanic.org](mailto:rgoad@chicagobotanic.org); 847-835-6856.

# Chicago Wilderness' Shrubland Birds

## *Part I of a Two-Part Story*

*By Bob Fisher and Karen Glennemeier*



Photo: Eric Secker

*Willow Flycatchers, a species of conservation concern in Chicago Wilderness, were the second-most abundant bird found in the Shrubland Bird Blitz.*

**T**he three-year Shrubland Bird Blitz (organized by the Bird Conservation Network and the Habitat Project) began in June 2006 and ended last summer. Over these three years, 190 bird monitors inventoried 207 different locations spread across the entire Chicago Wilderness region. The Blitz's goal was to find as many shrubland bird habitat areas as possible, and to get a snapshot of the birds at these locations – both species and numbers. The data are all in, thanks to the bird monitors and to those who labored over hot computer keyboards entering the data.

## The Chicago Wilderness region is important habitat for shrubland bird species of conservation concern.

So what did we learn? And how will this information be used to inform restoration efforts throughout the Chicago Wilderness region?

We learned a lot. One of the more exciting findings: Shrubland habitat suitable for the suite of bird species that use it for breeding is more extensive throughout our region than many of us thought when we began the Blitz. We also learned that at least one shrubland species, the Field Sparrow, is both widespread and abundant throughout the region. BCN census data suggest that the population of this species has

been stable or even increasing in our region over the past ten years. Contrast that with the national situation. The Audubon Society's State of the Birds Report showed that Field Sparrows have declined 72% nationally since 1967. This decline makes it especially important for us to continue protecting Field Sparrows, ensuring that they continue to do well in Chicago Wilderness. The Blitz confirmed the BCN Census trend data, finding Field Sparrows at more than 70% of the sites we blitzed.

The Field Sparrow is not the only species of concern. Five of the other six species we counted most frequently during the Blitz – Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Brown Thrasher and Orchard Oriole – are also species of conservation concern. The Chicago Wilderness region clearly serves as very important habitat for shrubland bird species of national conservation concern.

Excellent shrubland bird species diversity was found at some locations. Thirty of the 207 Blitz sites showed a high level of diversity, with 8-to-12 shrubland species present. Six of those 30 showed both high diversity and good numbers: The Des Plaines Conservation Area and Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Will County, Greene Valley and Springbrook Prairie in DuPage County, and John Duffy and Spring Creek in Cook County. Not all potential sites in the region were blitzed, so it's reasonable to expect that other high quality shrublands exist as well in these and other counties. Such sites will be important places for shrubland habitat management, to learn best management practices and to ensure that we are doing all we can to promote the success of their shrubland birds.

While larger preserves tend to support more diverse bird assemblages, size is not the only criterion that matters. In the six sites listed above, shrubland habitat exists in pockets or patches within each preserve's larger geographic footprint. Many of the smaller sites surveyed during the Blitz had excellent species diversity, suggesting that large contiguous shrublands are not necessary. In contrast, research has shown that for woodlands and grasslands, large, unfragmented tracts are required for a high level of nesting success. Given that shrubland habitat, even in the largest of our region's natural areas, is a "patchwork" within a larger matrix of mixed habitat, perhaps the shrubland birds themselves are simply more capable of dealing with predation and parasitism than their woodland and grassland counterparts. Further research will tell.

In Part 2, we'll discuss land management that improves habitat for shrubland birds and other wildlife.

# Will Work for Food

By Cindy Grau

When Dick Riner, steward of Bartel Grasslands, planned the first “Wild Neighbors Festival” back in 2005 his wife Peggy volunteered to bake cookies for the event. When he said he was expecting 100 community members it didn’t faze Peggy. She baked 10 dozen each of 10 types of cookies and now does it every year. One of her creations looks like an owl with little chocolate chips for the eyes and cashews for the beak. Peggy says that volunteers should “enjoy what they are doing while getting some work done”. Her food certainly provides enjoyment.

## These foodies have used their cooking to create celebrations.

Peggy is one of a group of Chicagoans who are taking the feeding of volunteers to a new level. They combine their involvement with the environment and a love of cooking to make work days and community events truly special events. Often food is used as motivation for volunteers, but these foodies view their cooking as part of a celebration.

Volunteer Joe Walsh saw the hot coals at a brush pile bonfire on a Chicago North Branch worksite and has been bringing his cast iron Dutch oven to workdays ever since. Near the end of the workday he pours some oil in the bottom of the oven. He pricks the brats, covers them with chopped onions and peppers and his secret seasoning blend. The dish cooks on the remains of the fire for 15 minutes. Joe provides one package of brats and buns at each burn and distributes the food like “the fishes and the loaves.” The sandwiches can be divided to feed up to 16 people. The meal brings the group together to enjoy socializing at the end of their work.

Suzanne Koglin, from the Orland Grassland, has been feeding volunteers since their first meeting in her living room in the spring of 2002. Once she baked 13 types of Bundt cakes for an “Orland Grassland Birding Event.” But Suzanne is most known for her gingerbread cookies, which have been described as works of art. She creates them for the annual “Autumn on the Grasslands” event which is open to the public. The cookie serves as a canvas on which she hand paints a different native species each year. Each participant receives an individually-wrapped cookie as a special thank you gift.

Spring Creek Volunteers get a special treat when Jan Nestrud brings her Scotch Eggs. She discovered them while fox hunting in Ireland. The eggs are hard boiled; the sausage is molded around each egg and then coated in breadcrumbs and cooked. They are cut into wedges and served at room temperature with creamy mild horseradish sauce. This hearty fare has developed a devoted following.

Jan’s group takes turns providing food which they share while “replenishing our bodies, admiring our efforts, and planning future goals,” says Jan. Undoubtedly this ritual and others like it are enhanced by the generous and creative contributions of these special cooks.



Photos: Cookies by Suzanne Koglin



Photo: Scotch eggs by Jan Nestrud

People come to restore habitat and to build community. They leave feeling satisfied, happy, and well-fed.

## Local artist helps native plants get statewide recognition

Many of us are familiar with the beautiful drawings of Kathy Garness, who lends her pen to the cause of orchid preservation and all around habitat restoration. Now, gardeners and landscapers statewide will get to appreciate her work as well. Kathy has created a logo that will be used for quick recognition of retail plant species that are native to Illinois. The concept for this logo was initiated and promoted by Janice Coons and Nancy Coutant, both faculty at Eastern Illinois University. A competition to find an appealing logo was introduced by the Illinois Green Industry Association last year.

Kathy’s winning logo will be used by retail nurseries on informational materials such as container stakes. The logo will aid employees and customers who want to promote and use native plant species in their gardens. Use of native species in the garden can reduce the amount of watering, pesticides, and fertilizers needed while at the same time creating habitat for native wildlife such as butterflies and birds. Look for this logo at your local garden center.



Illustration: Kathy Garness



# Staying Safe During Lyme Disease Season

By Mary Lou Mellon



For Midwest nature lovers, the joys of spring and the thrill of bird migration are not diminished by the knowledge that with warmer weather and more time outdoors there is increased potential for picking up unwelcome hitchhikers—specifically ticks.

Lyme disease, caused by the bite of an infected blacklegged (aka deer) tick, is the most prevalent of the diseases that can be transmitted to humans by ticks. In 2007, 149 cases were reported in Illinois, up from 110 in 2006. The symptoms range from a painless rash (sometimes in a distinct circle), fatigue and fever, to making one downright miserable. It can cause permanent disability for the untreated. The good news is that prevention is not difficult.

What should we do to stay safe while enjoying the great outdoors?

Hats, long-sleeved shirts, long trousers, long socks, and boots are the first line of defense in the field, although many of us opt for short sleeves in the hot summer months. Many people tuck their pants legs into their socks to help prevent the ticks from getting inside their clothes. Ticks show up better on light-colored clothes. Exposed skin can be protected with a repellent with at least 20-30 percent DEET. Some people go so far as to wear permethrin-treated field clothes, which can provide the ultimate safety net.

When in tick habitat (tall grass, leaf litter, and wooded or bushy areas), tick checks should be performed regularly. The adult deer tick is reddish-brown and about 1/8-inch long (about 1/2 the size of the more familiar dog tick). The sub-adult, or nymph, which can also transmit the disease, is the size of a poppy seed.

Before you go indoors after an outing, check your clothes for unwanted visitors. Once inside, strip, inspect your body and then shower, washing the skin and scalp carefully. Laundering your field clothes immediately in hot water and drying on high heat for at least one hour should kill any ticks you may have missed.

If you find a not-embedded tick on your body or in your hair, remove it with a tissue or sticky tape and put it in a jar of alcohol or soapy water, or flush it. If a tick is embedded, remove it with fine tweezers, grasping as close to the skin as possible and pulling gently but firmly straight out. Don't attempt to burn the tick or cover it with petroleum jelly or nail polish. These actions could disturb the tick and cause it to regurgitate into the wound, possibly passing on disease bacteria. If the mouthparts break off while you are removing it, don't panic. Once separated from the rest of the tick, the mouthparts can't transmit Lyme disease bacteria. After removal, wash the bite area and your hands, and apply antiseptic to the bite site. If you have any subsequent fever or unexplained illness, report it to your physician.

If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 36 hours, your chance of getting Lyme disease is extremely small. However, Rocky Mountain spotted fever can be transmitted by the dog tick in as little as four hours. April, May, June, and the autumn months are identified as when the Lyme disease ticks are most active, but ticks have been found to be active even in the winter, and good tick prevention practices are always in season.

*Information for this article was obtained from the IL Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, visit [www.idph.state.il.us](http://www.idph.state.il.us) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)*

Photo: Female Deer Tick courtesy of Minnesota Department of Health



Don't let these critters stop you from heading outdoors.

# Learn to monitor butterflies



Photos: Great Spangled Fritillary and Eastern Tailed Blue by Mary Kay Rubey



## Training workshop for beginners: The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago.

**Saturday, May 9, 2009, 10 AM to noon.**

Class taught by Vincent Olivares. For more information, please visit:  
[http://www.bfly.org/training\\_workshops\\_2009\\_beginner.html](http://www.bfly.org/training_workshops_2009_beginner.html)

## Training workshop for intermediate-level monitors: Fermilab in Geneva

**Saturday, May 9, 2009, 10:00 AM to noon.**

Class taught by Tom Peterson. For more information, please visit:  
[http://www.bfly.org/training\\_workshops\\_2009\\_intermediate.html](http://www.bfly.org/training_workshops_2009_intermediate.html)



Photos: Baltimore Checkerspot by Dick Rimer; Gray Comma by Mary Kay Rubey



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## Wild Things Just Keeps Getting Better

- ...1,030 attendees
- ...99 speakers
- ...71 sessions plus 3 keynotes
- ...6 authors
- ...41 exhibitors
- ...92 volunteer organizers

Materials from the speakers are now posted on the website:  
[www.habitatproject.org](http://www.habitatproject.org)

*Congratulations to all who made Wild Things the great day it was!*

### Some thoughts about the conference from people who attended:

“What a day! Such cheerful camaraderie. Such potent presentations. Coming away from the conference, everyone was grinning, everyone was energized. There seemed to be a shared sense of purpose, and the acknowledgement that our work has even deeper meaning than we might have realized. I feel revitalized.” – *Greg Rajsky*

“I thought this was EXCELLENT. I was worried it might be too technical or too geared for insiders but I felt right at home and learned a lot.” – *First-timer*

“Just as Chicago Wilderness is an example to the world on how to save and protect natural areas, we are also an example on how to have a very successful conference. Congratulations to all involved. I talked to more people who felt energized, and wanted to go right out and do some work. I was also pleased to reconnect with friends, to learn from others, and to be inspired by many.” – *Roger Keller, Palos Preserves Steward*

“I felt very energized by so much wonderful commitment to protecting and sharing the wonders of our natural world.” – *Laurie Lawlor*

“It was a great day – I felt very hopeful hearing about all of our successes and filled with new ideas.” – *Anonymous*

“I loved the quality of the presentations - many scholarly and research based.” – *R.L.*

“This is the best group of kindred spirits!” – *Peggy MacNamara*



# Learn to monitor dragonflies and damselflies

If you would like to join our team of budding odonists, please attend one of the following workshops. Contact Craig Stettner for more information, at 847-925-6214 or cstettne@harpercollege.edu.

**April 4, 10:00am – 1:00pm** (*this class was held before press time*)  
Harper College in Palatine. Building Z, Room Z102.

**April 9, 6:00 – 9:00pm**  
Blackwell Forest Preserve, Grounds and Resource Facility,  
in DuPage County.

**April 18, 10:00am – 1:00pm**  
Sugar Creek Administration Center in Joliet, Will County.

**April 24, 1:00 – 4:00pm**  
College of Lake County in Grayslake.

**April 25, 10:00am – 1:00pm**  
Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago.



Photos: Carolyn Fields

## Join Us For the 7th Annual Breeding Bird Blitz – June 2009

This year we'll be doing something a little different - scouring important sites for birds of all habitats, so that we may learn which birds are present and which parts of the site they are using. The information we gather will address important conservation issues at each site. The goal is to count every bird in each of these large preserves. Gather with other blitzers for lunch afterwards to share findings and stories.

### ***Spend a Fun Morning Helping our Birds!***

All are welcome! If you can identify most of the breeding birds in Chicago Wilderness, you can be a team leader; if not, you can join a team. Some of the blitzes will also be mapping invasive plant species, so if you can identify plants you are welcome as well. Come and spend a morning counting birds with a team or on your own.

### **Please contact the coordinator for your county:**

#### **Saturday, June 6**

**Cook County North: Paul Douglas**  
Stan Stec 847 398-2097  
Duane Heaton 847 358-5856

#### **Saturday, June 13**

**DuPage County: Pratt's Wayne**  
Jim Green green9698@sbcglobal.net;  
Jeff Smith mrqmagoo@comcast.net

#### **Saturday, June 13**

**Lake County: Lakewood**  
Jim Dudas 847.540.0484  
jdudas14606@hotmail.com

#### **Saturday, June 13**

**Will County: Plum Creek Nature Center, Plum Creek  
Greenway and Goodenow Grove**  
Al Thomas; 708 957-9847; wooduck\_1999@yahoo.com

#### **Saturday, June 20**

**Cook County North: Poplar Creek**  
Jenny Vogt, 630 837-4649, jmvogt2003@yahoo.com

#### **Saturday, June 20**

**McHenry County: Rush Creek**  
Doug Crane; 815-338-0046; mdcranel024@sbcglobal.net

#### **Date TBA**

**Kane County: Place TBA**  
Roger Hotham 847-697-7484



Photos: Hays Cummins, Miami University



Chicago Wilderness Habitat Project

 **Audubon** CHICAGO REGION  
1718 Sherman Ave. Suite 210  
Evanston, IL 60201

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Illustration: Lynda Wallis

## Froggers come calling in record numbers

This winter's training workshops for aspiring frog monitors drew 273 people, more than in any year in the survey's ten-year history. We are all looking forward to visiting our natural areas in the wet spring evenings to learn which species are present and re-connect with our old friends. It promises to be a terrific year.

Congratulations to all of the leaders who helped make this training season the best yet: Judy Boehmer, Glen Buckner, Sara Denham, Renee Gauchat, Cindy Hedges, Diane Huebner, Diana Krug, Pam Otto, Dick Riner, Tom Smith, Nicky Strahl, and Richard Wachenheim.