

The Habitat HERALD

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CSI: Springbrook Prairie

By Mary Cannon

Buckthorn, garlic mustard, purple loosestrife, and teasel are all names abhorrent to people who care about natural areas. But flowering rush? After all, it was found in Cook County back in 1957 and not seen since—until now. Place: Springbrook Prairie, DuPage County Forest Preserve. Time: July, 2009.

Joe Suchecki, volunteer steward at the site, thought to spend a sunny day checking out the new “meander area” at Springbrook Creek. “The DuPage Forest Preserve District (DFPD) had just finished a project to restore natural pools and ripples while creating and re-vegetating a flood plain with native species, so I thought I’d see if any breeding birds had moved in.” What he found were plants about three feet tall with pink flowers—plants he had never seen in his 14 years of weekly observing. “After I couldn’t find them in my books, I e-mailed Cindy Hedges, Natural Resource Management Volunteer Liaison (DFPD), and Scott Kobal, Plant Ecologist (DFPD). Almost immediately Scott replied asking if I could send him a picture.”

Scott identified the plant as one on the New Invaders

It’s a real partnership here.

Watch List* and went to investigate. “It’s a Eurasian that might be planted as an ornamental, but we knew we hadn’t planted it, so we had to search for it in our preserve as well as trace it to its origin. Otherwise, we could be fighting it forever.” Enter Erik Neidy, Manager of Natural Resources, and Herman Jensen, Management Foreman. Herman sent out a crew to herbicide the plants and later reported, “We found flowering rush both in the water and



Thanks to good collaboration between the site steward and District land managers, Springbrook Creek is now free of invasive flowering rush.

on the bank along the creek. Then we found it on the neighboring Naperville Park District Golf Course. So, we conferred with park district officials and provided herbicides to eradicate their infestation.”

Will this be the end? “We don’t know if it’s completely wiped out, but now we’ll be watching for it. Without stewards like Joe, dedicated, curious, asking questions, we might not have known it was there,” says Scott.

Cindy agrees. “We’ve got 25,000 acres in our preserve, and our human resources are limited, so we can’t cover all areas all the time. Volunteer stewards provide eyes and ears and intimate knowledge of the site and help us reach our management goals efficiently,” she says. “They also create a nurturing ethic with their public outreach—making people aware of what’s in their own backyards. We’re really grateful for people like Joe.”

In considering his role, Joe says, “We have a good communication and

response system. For instance, about eight years ago, the DFPD was going to put in some new trails, one of which was scheduled to go through a bird-nesting area. When I told them, they moved the trail.” He adds, “It’s a real partnership here—with my letting them know what I see and their letting me know what plans are in the works. I happened to be in the right place at the right time for spotting this new invasive, and I’m happy to know we’ve saved time and money by getting it early.” Scott adds, “By acting quickly, we’ve also kept this plant from possibly ruining a large portion of our natural area.”

Cooperation Stopping Invaders (CSI) at Springbrook Prairie is definitely a success!

*The New Invaders Watch List website: <http://ctap.inhs.uiuc.edu/newinvaders/aboutus.aspx> is the result of a collaboration among government, non-profit, and volunteer organizations working in the Chicago Wilderness.

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

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 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.

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/ OR WWW.FOTFP.ORG (COOK COUNTY) OR WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG

GRASSROOTS EDUCATION

WWW.HABITATPROJECT.ORG

Plants of Concern Saves Rare Species

By Greg Hitzroth

Every year Barb Wilson organizes fellow Plants Of Concern (POC) monitors to search for endangered plant species at Lake in the Hills Fen Nature Preserve to assess changes in their populations and record any potential threats.

In the summer of 2007, Barb was searching for a delicate, endangered annual that grows in wet areas with standing or shallow water. Along with POC monitors Stan Fix and Carol Howard, Barb found a population of the plant but was never able to find any in bloom. What they did find was cattails, lots of cattails. Although native to wetlands in our region, cattails are considered invasive under certain circumstances. It appeared that the cattails and their litter were too dense for this little plant to be able to flower.

The POC monitors reported their findings to ecologists at the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD), and in the spring of 2008 the cattails and their litter were burned by the Conservation District. In the summer of 2008 Barb looked again for the rare plant population, and found it – this time in bloom.

With 20 years of experience at Lake in the Hills Fen and nine years with POC, Barb Wilson has become an invaluable expert on the site and its inhabitants. Her botanical knowledge of the area is “irreplaceable,” according to MCCD ecologists

like Laurie Boldt. “The sound data that she and her volunteers collect is invaluable in determining population trends in rare plants. These data are used ...to plan for and implement land management activities to ensure that rare plant populations and their surrounding high quality habitat can exist into the future.”



Photo: Al Wilson

Barb Wilson's expertise and hard work helped save a rare wetland plant population at Lake in the Hills Fen.

POC is coordinated through Chicago Botanic Garden and offers multiple workshops in the spring each year to train citizens to monitor rare, endangered, and threatened plants in the Chicago region. See page five for a schedule of upcoming workshops.

To learn more about our program, please visit www.plantsofconcern.org.

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We welcome to our newsletter team new writers, editors, stamp lickers, photographers, graphic artists, staplers, and anyone else who would enjoy getting involved. To learn more, contact Mary Cannon at 847-375-8301 or mjkcannon@hotmail.com

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 JPAPPER@AUDUBON.ORG OR SEND US A NOTE AT 1718 SHERMAN AVE., SUITE 210, EVANSTON IL 60201.



Photo: John Koempfen

A View from a Distance

By Justin Pepper

“The significance of this area far transcends local importance. You’re working on globally irreplaceable resources that are not represented as well anywhere else on earth.”

These words from Doug Ladd kicked off the 2009 Wild Things conference, last year for the first time bringing together more than a thousand people. Ladd, a widely respected author and Science Director for the Missouri Nature Conservancy, reminded us that the richness of rare species and ecosystems in the Chicago region is unmatched anywhere in what is now called “the corn belt.”

Ladd acknowledged the challenge of climate change but pointed out that “global habitat destruction and habitat degradation comprise a more imminent threat than that. We have to sustain the habitats we have, to have a chance to react to climate change.”

Doug also talked about the importance of metropolitan areas to the future of the planet. For both sociological and ecological reasons, he hailed the Chicago region as “a world model.” In all his travels, working on many priority conservation areas throughout “the New World,” he found no other grass roots effort “that has been so successful at creating a unified vision and weaving it into the fabric of society. So what you’re wrestling with here is really the laboratory that’s going to determine the success or failure of conservation over much of the world.”

Doug recommended that we:

1. **Recognize our ignorance**—Stay humble recognizing that we work in an evolving science. We know enough to take action, but still have a lot to learn. Above all else, we need to learn from observation of what is happening on the ground and adapt our ongoing management accordingly.
2. **Avoid getting caught up in ‘Big Picture’ issues**—Organisms are the fundamental unit we are charged with carrying through time and to protect them we need to know the organisms. If we’ve lost the species, we’ve lost nature.
3. **Remember people are a part of our biological systems**—We should fully embrace and celebrate that we are interdependent parts of the ecosystems we aim to protect. They need us, we need them.
4. **Be cognizant of our past**—Being aware of what has happened to the land we conserve provides important insights and the sort of nuanced understanding critical for making management decisions and interpreting their impacts. We cannot recreate pre-settlement conditions, but need to be aware of the range of conditions that sustained healthy nature in order to be good stewards.
5. **Know the enemy**—We often make quick reactions to noncritical factors rather than dispassionately assessing threats to biological systems. Effective conservation action can only be taken once threats have been identified and understood.
6. **Be better at valuing Nature**—Ecosystems provide services (such as water filtration). Showing the ‘cost of not conserving’



Photo: Justin Pepper

Doug Ladd celebrated the rare nature and dedicated people of Chicago Wilderness at his 2009 Wild Things keynote address. He reminded us that prairie remnants such as the HUM Railroad Prairie are irreplaceable and “should be treated as sacred.”

Continued on next page.

- (i.e. the need for additional water treatment facilities) can be persuasive to those unmoved by moral and esthetic arguments alone.
7. **Be vigilant about protecting the remnants we do still have**—Don't be swayed by a compromise that results in the loss of something irreplaceable. Do no harm to existing natural areas—let the organisms by their response tell us how our natural areas are performing. The exceedingly few existing remnants are truly irreplaceable and should be treated as sacred.
 8. **Avoid the false prophets of universal greenery**—It is almost never simple or universal. The media and general public are attracted to simple messages, like “plant trees to combat global warming” even though in this latitude the science suggests trees won't help. We should be skeptical consumers and careful educators.
 9. **Nurture a permanent stewardship ethic**—It is a high privilege to steward our remaining natural areas through time. As long as our natural areas exist they will be bombarded by invasive species and the adverse impacts resulting from the altered conditions. We need to plan for multi-generational commitment to stewardship.
 10. **Grow beyond our borders**—“You are the ray of hope for urban conservation” but we need to be better about sharing lessons (both success and failure) and unifying conservation. This critical mass and ground swell of involvement in reuniting people and nature needs to be exported to the rest of the world.
- Sometimes it takes an outsider to see the bigger picture. Hundreds of people emerged from “Wild Things” with renewed energy to protect wildlife, habitat, and the whole ecosystem.

Plants of Concern

Want to Monitor Endangered and Threatened Native Plants in NE Illinois or SE Wisconsin?

Then please join us for one of our 2010 POC Workshops:

Saturday, April 10th, from 9:30am to 3pm
Cook County Volunteer Resource Center,
Edgebrook (Chicago),
Cook Co., IL

Saturday, April 17th, from 9:30am to 2pm
UW Parkside,
Kenosha Co., WI

Saturday, April 24th, from 9:30am to 3pm
Glacial Park, Ringwood,
McHenry Co., IL

Sunday, May 2nd, from 9:30am to 3pm
Will County FPD Administration Building,
Joliet, IL

Workshops will be held from 9:30am to 3pm except the Kenosha workshop will be from 9:30am to 2pm.

Join this exciting citizen science program and receive training in Plants of Concern monitoring techniques, meet land managers, talk with seasoned monitors, or refresh your skills for the new season. One workshop is required for all new POC monitors and we ask any former monitors who have never been to a workshop to attend. Bring a lunch. Morning refreshments will be served. Registration is required. A confirmation will be sent after registration, and directions will follow shortly before the workshop date. Please visit www.plantsofconcern.org to register, or contact Greg Hitzroth at ghitzroth@chicagobotanic.org; 847-835-6856. Plants of Concern is coordinated through the Chicago Botanic Garden by Susanne Masi.



Cypripedium candidum

Stewards and Birders Join Forces

Poplar Creek Habitat Blitz

By Lee Ramsey & Jenny Vogt

The challenge: Find the birds nesting in Poplar Creek Forest Preserve and determine what habitat blocks they are in. Poplar Creek, in western Cook County, has about 2,700 acres of readily accessible land, only 600 acres or so currently under management. Our goal was to cover as much area as possible, and we covered about 2,000 acres.

First, we had to map out the habitats. Using the BCN classification system, we identified units by their dominant habitat type – forest, shrubland, grassland, aquatic – then subdivided these further into what we called habitat units. In a preliminary survey we identified about 70 habitat units, mostly between 20-60 acres each.

In the blitz, a bird tally would be kept for each individual unit, a concept familiar to those who do point counts. However, these “points” could be 60 acres, or even larger. When you bird by habitat, you get a closer snap shot of the preserve. You may anticipate what you will hear and see – and

be surprised by what you actually find!

With all those units and acres to cover, we needed people, and lots of them! We called in friends and favors! We managed to rally 32 people and formed 10 teams, each with a plant person and at least one good birder. Team territories were established, based on access and acreage, with color maps for each team to help plan routes and navigate unfamiliar areas.

The day before the blitz brought record rainfall, but blitz day arrived with a break in the weather – sunny and pleasant though with flooding along the creek and soggy ground everywhere. Boots on, we started at 7am, one team even earlier. At noon, we volunteers relaxed with lunch donated by the local SuperTarget in steward Sheila Hoyos’ air conditioned home. A quick tally showed we had identified 82 species of birds – not bad for the middle of nesting season.

The teams had surveyed 64 of the units at Poplar Creek. The plant folks reported no difficulties with the preliminary classifications. The birds were a different matter. Indicator

Continued on next page.

We identified about 70 habitat units...
The best news came from prairie, shrubland, and open woodland.



Photo: Jenny Vogt

Poplar Creek FP - Bode Lake Section (D)



	Predominant habitat type	hectares	acres	subtotals
D5	wet floodplain forest (A3b)	15	37	
D6	dry meadow (C3a)	19	47	
D7	upland forest, moist shrubland (A2, B1b)	19	47	
D8	dry shrubland (B1a)	8	20	
D9	dry meadow, lake (C3a, D1)	16	41	
D10	moist meadow, lake (C3b, D1)	30	74	
D11	dry shrubland, UWG (B1a, A5)	12	30	
D12	dry meadow (C3a)	22	54	
D13	dry shrubland (B1a)	39	96	
D14	UWG (A5)	18	45	
D15	marsh with shrubs (D2a)	8	19	206/510
	Section total	254	629	

We identified 70 habitat types at Poplar Creek and mapped them all for each section of the preserve. With maps in hand, monitors were able to record the type of habitat in which each bird was found.

Poplar Creek Blitz - continued from previous page.

species bore out most of the preliminary classifications but suggested reclassification of about ten units.

There were surprises. An American redstart and a black-throated green warbler were unexpected at that time of year, and no one knew that hooded mergansers were using one hidden pond. On the less encouraging side, our ten teams together found only one ovenbird and one wood thrush. Not good news.

The best news came from prairie, shrubland, and open woodland species that were hoped for, often showing up in substantial numbers. Yellow-billed cuckoos were found in eight different units, black-billed cuckoos in five. Scarlet tanagers also showed up in eight units, grasshopper sparrows in six, yellow-throated vireos and orchard orioles in three each.

Clay-colored sparrows had been reported in one area during nesting season. Our team found five of them, including two young. And we knew about the Henslow's sparrows in several places at Poplar Creek, but we hadn't expected 13 in one single unit!

Results of the blitz are posted on the Habitat Project website (www.habitatproject.org). We would be happy to supply other information about organization and conduct of the blitz and also about lessons learned. Just contact one of us.

Thanks to all of those whose work and dedication made this possible. We had a wonderful time and expect the data gathered will support good habitat management in years to come.



Stewards and Restoration Contracts

For brush control of large acreages, sometimes a contractor can do the heavy lifting, so volunteer stewards can concentrate on the details that need a delicate touch.

“Restoration contractors are the best new thing I’ve seen in my history as a steward,” says Joe Neuman. “But it can be a challenge to learn how to work with them.”

Yet that challenge may be one of conservation’s most important opportunities. In 2009, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County included in its budget \$3,500,000 for restoration contracts. Equally important, general superintendent Steve Bylina directed his staff to work with the stewards to assure that the funds were well spent. The program has racked up impressive accomplishments, and an additional \$3,500,000 was appropriated for 2010.

“It’s like I was in the Stone Age,” says Joe. “After years of hand saws and herbicide backpacks lugged in on foot, here come these guys with trucks full of brush mowers, chain saws and supplies. They can do huge areas.”

“The collaboration with stewards has meant a huge step forward for some of our finest woods, prairies and wetlands,” says the FPD’s John Raudenbush. “Not only is the money being spent on our most important sites, but intimate site knowledge and later the follow-up from volunteer stewards is a critical element of success.”

As Joe put it, “They’re unlocking the knowledge of the stewards. But we have to think carefully about what we ask for. They’ll do the heavy lifting. But a lot of the follow-up will fall back on the stewards.”

Spring Creek Prairie steward Tom Vanderpoel speaks about the contractors with passion – and prudence. “The surrounding wall of brush they took out was the main thing that was threatening the prairie. They validated three decades of work. All those years with our back to the wall – to keep it from going under – with brush invading from all sides. Now it’s potentially saved for the ages. But it’s a temporary fix, unless the work is followed up by staff, interns and volunteers.”

Both Tom and Joe emphasize the need to balance what stewards ask for with what they can follow up on. Cautiously, they dream of great potentials. “New horizons open up,” says Vanderpoel. “Prairies finally big enough for all the prairie birds, including sandhill cranes. It takes many years of commitment, in perpetuity really, but that was always our vision, whole healthy ecosystems.” And whole healthy ecosystems will largely take care of themselves, once they’ve been achieved.

Linda Masters has seen the contracting from both sides. Linda is a volunteer steward for Somme Woods in Northbrook where contractors worked last fall. But her “day

Continued on next page.

job” has her supervising millions of dollars of contracts (environmental mitigation funding) with the Corporation for Open Lands. “Contractors want to do a good professional job. But they are not in love with your site,” says Linda. “Don’t send them into places where you’d feel the need to tip-toe around.”

Raudenbush makes the same point differently. “Remember that time is money for these professionals. They want to get in and get out. As stewards and staff, we may want to agonize over details. But everything already has to be decided before we call in the contractors.”

Audubon’s Justin Pepper helped District staff coordinate among interns, stewards, staff and contractors. He believes communication needs to be ongoing. “Don’t just make yourself available, make sure you are in regular communication with either staff or the contracting company. As in any relationship rapport matters.”

The stewards who reviewed drafts of this article helped write the following checklist of how to work with restoration contractors.

1. Make a solid plan first, with clear performance standards. Be sure it’s clear and comprehensible to someone who doesn’t know the site and doesn’t know your way of working on the site.
2. Be prepared to go out with the contractors for at least an hour or two at the beginning of the process, so that you can assure that everyone’s on the same page. Go out to check on the work as often as possible.
3. Reach out and explain the work to the neighbors and preserve users. People are understandably sensitive about major changes to places they love. Restoration is often “radical surgery” – after which the patient looks kind of beat up, weak, and vulnerable for a while. Make sure people know how the process will work, what the goal is, and what the end result will look like.
4. Have just one person “in charge” of supervising the work – and if that’s not you, coordinate well with that person. Talk with the supervisor of the work – not the worker who has to report to the supervisor.
5. Brace yourself for ‘imperfection.’ Don’t end up quibbling about the very work that you requested. It won’t turn out exactly the way you envisioned it. Make sure that you can be happy with what can be done from your plan.
6. Celebrate. Thank people – the contractor, the staff, the FPD Commissioners.

Jennifer Hammer, co-steward of Salt Creek Nature Preserve, summarized her contractor experiences this way: “After a period of detailed planning and coordination, the results are beyond the dreams we had for our site. It’s amazing what you find when you clear 200+ acres of brush, like wetlands you didn’t know were there. Not that there weren’t pitfalls, but stewards just need to go into these projects with their eyes open and their feet on the ground.” Many experienced stewards believe that this challenge is for them; its time has come.

Help us learn about the butterflies at Spring Creek Preserve and Arie Crown Woods

The stewards at Spring Creek Preserve, in northwest Cook County, are hoping to learn which butterfly species of conservation concern exist at that 3,910-acre mosaic of wetlands, prairies, and woodlands -- so that they may incorporate these species into their management plans. If you know butterflies and would like to help find and map significant species, please contact Karen Glennemeier at kglennemeier@audubon.org or 847-256-2608.

At Arie Crown Woods near Hodgkins, the new stewards, Lu Anne and John Dudlo, have begun working with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to restore the woodlands of this site to ecological health.

With Audubon scientists, Lu Anne and John have developed a monitoring program to track the results of the restoration over time. We have a bird monitor but need an experienced butterfly monitor to help us learn about the effects of our work on wildlife.

This is a great opportunity to follow a restoration from the very beginning, and to see how butterflies respond to ecological management. If you would like to be a part of this conservation team, please contact Karen Glennemeier at kglennemeier@audubon.org or 847-256-2608.



*Baltimore checkerspot
Gray Comma*



WANTED: MONITORS



Illustration: Lynda Wells

Frog Monitoring Workshops 2010

These workshops are for both beginning and experienced monitors. We'll teach and review the calls of our 13 species of frogs and toads, help new monitors find survey sites, and discuss the monitoring protocol. Experienced monitors are encouraged to attend, in order to learn any protocol changes, obtain data sheets, review frog calls, and share lessons learned from last year. Please note that you only need attend one workshop.

Cook County:

Saturday, February 6th, 9:00-11:00am

Northwest. Crabtree Nature Center in Barrington. Located one mile west of Barrington Road on Palatine Road. Contact Matt Hokanson, 708-408-2933.

Thursday, February 18th, 7:00-9:00pm

South. Camp Sagawau, 12545 111th St., Lemont. One-hundred yards east of Archer Ave., or four miles west of Swallow Cliff Toboggan Slides on Rt. 83. Contact Joni Marin, 708-906-0014; jmarin@cookcountygov.com

DuPage County:

Thursday, January 21st, 6:30-8:30pm

The Grounds and Resources Complex at 29 W 220 Mack Road in West Chicago, within Blackwell Forest Preserve. From Route 59, travel east on Mack Road for 0.6 miles. Turn north into the complex. Pass through the chain link gate and gas tank area. Park in front of the center building. Follow the signs to the workshop at the rear of this building. Contact Cindy Hedges, 630-876-5929.

Will County:

Saturday, February 20th, 9:00-11:00am

Sugar Creek Administration Center, 17540 West Laraway Road, Joliet. Contact Renee Gauchat, 815-722-7364 or rgauchat@fpdwc.org.

Kane County:

Saturday, February 13th, 9:00am-noon

Pottawatomie Park, St. Charles. Coming west on Route 64 (called Main St. in St. Charles), turn north at 2nd Ave., two blocks before the river. Second Ave. ends at Pottawatomie Park - head west and go to the large building down by the river. Contact Pam Otto, 630-513-4346.

Lake County, IL:

Tuesday, February 23rd, 7:00-9:00pm

Ryerson Conservation Area's Welcome Center at 21950 N. Riverwoods Road, Deerfield. Located about a mile south of Half Day Road, between I-94 and Hwy 45. Head west on Half Day road from I-94, then turn south on Riverwoods Road and look for the entrance on your right. Contact Gary Glowacki, 847-968-3264 or gglowacki@LCFPD.org.

Saturday, February 20th, 10:00am-noon

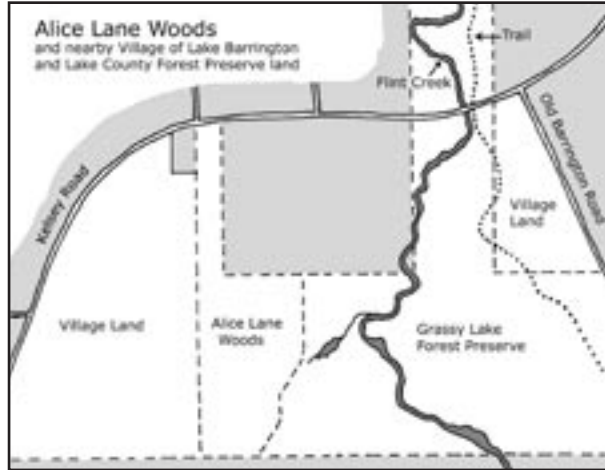
Independence Grove Forest Preserve and Visitors Center near Libertyville. The entrance is located on Buckley Road (Route 137) east of Milwaukee Avenue (Route 21). Contact Tom Smith, 847-968-3329.

McHenry County:

Monday, March 1st, 7:00-9:00pm

Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake. At 2112 Behan Road, just south of Rte 176, between Rte 31 and the Fox River. Heading NE from Crystal Lake on Rte 176, turn right on Behan Rd after passing Valley View Road, take another right at the end of the road. The entrance to PEC is past the curve on the left. Please call 815-479-5779 to pre-register. Contact Sara Denham, 815-728-8307, for more information.

Advocates Rejoice Victory After 22 Years



Conservationists have listed Alice Lane Woods as a top priority since 1987. It's a glacial hill surrounded on three sides by the Flint Creek floodplain – and graced with hundreds of huge old bur and white oaks. It lies directly between forest preserve and village conservation open space in the “Flint Creek Greenway.”

“It was the one piece my Dad was unsuccessful in getting the FPD to buy more than twenty years ago,” said Tom Vanderpoel, referring to his father Waid Vanderpoel who helped build Citizens for Conservation (CFC). “It was probably the best piece, and we have been trying all these years. The FP never gave up and would approach the owner, a developer, every few years but he always led them on a wild goose chase.”

But conservationists kept pushing. It helped when the Village of Lake Barrington passed an ordinance against cutting down heritage trees – with hefty fees if such cutting were to be approved as part of a development plan. Those fees would have taken a bite about of the developer's profits, and perhaps in this economy the project was iffy anyway.

On January 1, 2010 Lake County Forest Preserves acquired the 16.5-acre site for \$1,188,000. That's an impressive \$72,000 per acre, but it's only about half of what the developer had been asking.

Is the saving of this grove after all these years in part a silver lining in the current cloud of economic downturn? Economic ups and downs, after all, are part of why long term persistence pays off. Consider another piece, also in Lake Barrington. The Village finally bought the 31-acre Gibbs property. Once again, a village ordinance and current economics may have helped convince the owner to sell. Because the property included undevelopable wetlands, house lots would have had to be of odd shapes, and thus would have required Village Board approval. The Village indicated that such special approval was highly unlikely for a property that is a conservation priority. The owner, who had been asking \$2.4M for the property, settled for \$1.1M.

These two acquisitions add to a green space corridor totaling 850 acres along Flint Creek. Congratulations to Citizens for Conservation, Village of Lake Barrington, and Lake County Forest Preserves for commitment, persistence, and success.

Help Celebrate Local Heroes

Saturday, February 27th



Please join us for dinner on Saturday, February 27th to recognize current and past recipients of the Habitat Project's Conservation Leadership Awards. This is a time to relax, enjoy each other's company, and hear about the inspiring accomplishments and challenges of some of our conservation community friends and heroes. And it's a fine opportunity during chilly times to come together, celebrate, hope for a good burn season, and dream of Spring!

Since 2002, more than 100 of our friends and colleagues have been recognized with a Leadership Award. Nominated and approved by our community, these awards celebrate great work, honor the people doing this work, and lead to local news articles that raise public awareness of local conservation.

The program includes a social hour, followed by dinner and presentations of awards. We are honored to have U.S. Congressman and award recipient Mike Quigley as a featured (brief) speaker. The heart of the event is the amazing stories of the heroes – and our warm applause for each.


Join us from 5pm to 8pm, Saturday, February 27th, at the Brookfield Zoo Discovery Center. Bring new potential leaders. Bring friends and family. These stories and this event are a powerful way to teach conservation. Please RSVP to Linda Masters at masters2001@comcast.net or 847-509-0431. Cost of dinner is \$24, which includes a regular or vegetarian main course, soup, dessert, and coffee.



Chicago Wilderness Habitat Project

 **Audubon** CHICAGO REGION
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In response to suggestions from last year's Wild Things attendees, the Habitat Project is hosting an interim-year workshop to address in-depth questions on stewardship and monitoring. The workshop will be geared toward experienced stewards, monitors, land managers, and other practitioners.

**We will have two sessions, led by experts in each field.
The format will be group discussion, with guidance by the expert leaders.**

Session 1:

- Prairies & Savannas;
- Woodlands; or
- Wetlands

Session 2:

- Herbicides & Invasives;
- Monitoring;
- Seeding (why, when, and how); or
- Working with People
(officials, neighbors, experts, volunteers, land owners)

The workshop will be Sunday, February 7, from 1:00 to 4:00.
Location to be determined but will be regionally central.
Space is limited, so please RSVP to Karen Glennemeier,
kglennemeier@audubon.org or 847-256-2608.