

CFC News

Saving Living Space for Living Things

A conservation newsletter published by Citizens for Conservation, Inc.

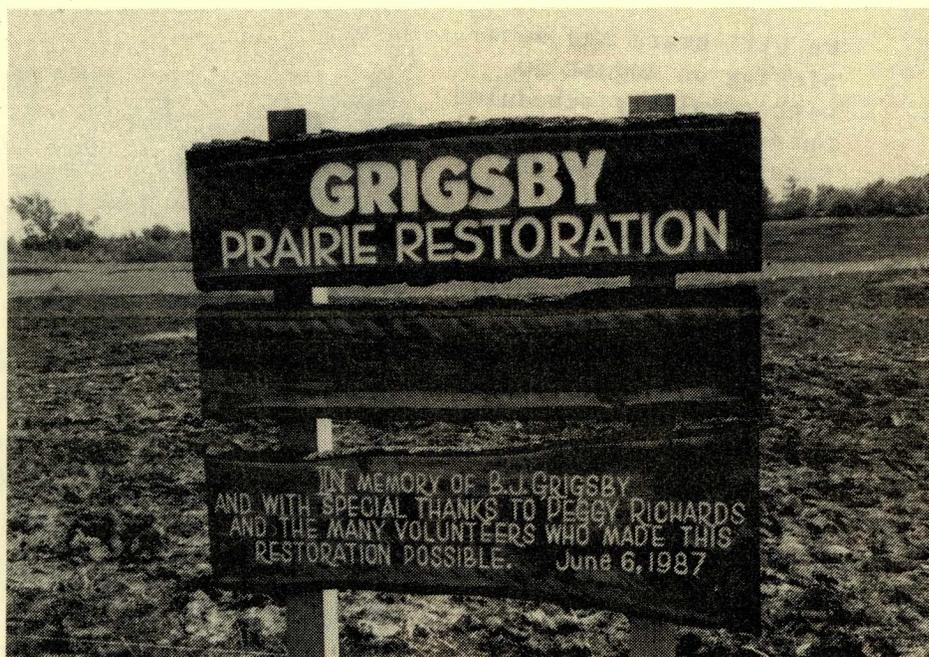
Barrington, Illinois Vol. 4, No. 2 Summer 1987

GRIGSBY PRAIRIE SOWN AND DEDICATED

Daria Sapp

There wasn't a cloud in the azure sky over the rolling plain as green and white balloons sailed above the treetops, proclaiming a CFC triumph: the meadow at the corner of Oak Knoll and Buckley Roads was officially dedicated as the Grigsby Prairie.

CFC members, volunteers, friends and guests met at 1 p.m. on June 6 for the casual outdoor ceremony. President Paul Hoffman introduced Mrs. Peggy Richards who donated the rolling meadow to CFC in honor of her father, B. J. Grigsby. She spoke of her father's dedication to the land and of her vision of a prairie protected for native plants and wildlife. Barrington Hills Trustees Alex MacArthur and Lorraine Briggs welcomed the prairie restoration into the community. Tom Vanderpoel, consultant and by far the most dedicated prairie volunteer, gave a synopsis of the future plans for maintaining and expanding the prairie.



The sign commemorating Mr. Grigsby and thanking Mrs. Richards and the volunteers was unveiled by Mrs. Richards, Tom Vanderpoel, and Sam Oliver. Designed and constructed by Henry Gron, the sign is a fitting sentinel to the prairie entrance. Until the entrance is completed, the sign will be stored.

The ceremony ended with refreshments and camaraderie of friends and guests who have shared the vision of seeing the prairie come to life. Special thanks to Jeanette Muench who organized the event and to Sam Oliver who made sure everything ran smoothly.

In the week preceding the dedication, activity at the prairie site had moved into high gear. On Wednesday, volunteers armed with flappers, rakes, and water pumps burned the meadow to help eliminate alien plants and to remove thatch that would inhibit germination of prairie seeds. On the day before the dedication, tractors were dodging raindrops in a final attempt to loosen the soil for the seeds.

But the most exhilarating phase took place very early on June 6. Over fifty volunteers, shaded with hats from the searing sun, shouldered recycled ice cream buckets filled with native seed mixtures. The site had been cordoned off into planting zones marked by brightly colored ribbons and each team proceeded with buckets color-coordinated to planting zones.

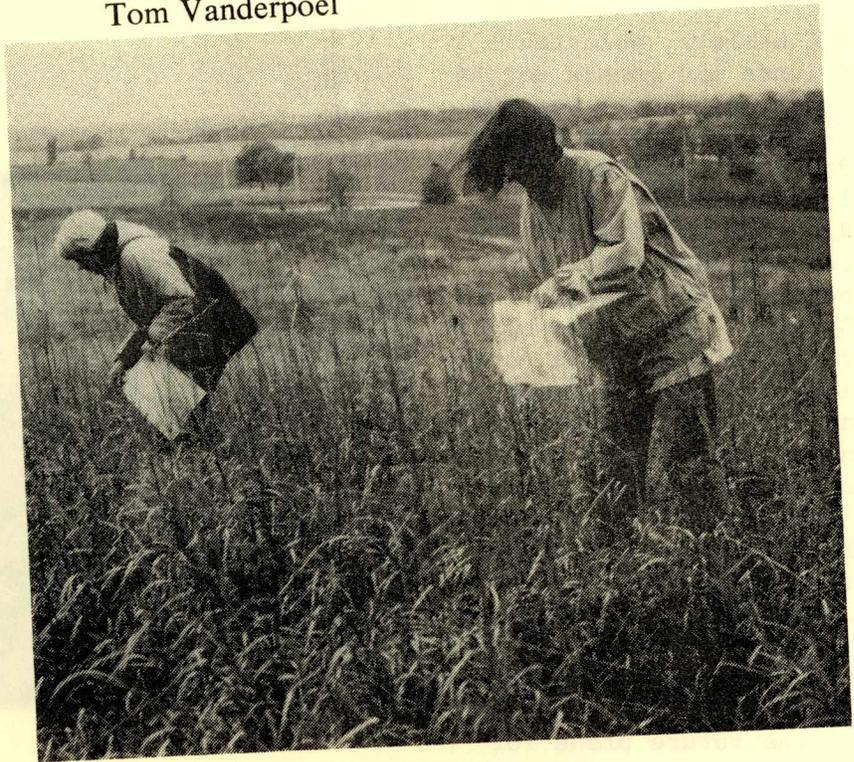
Although the prairie did not look any different two hours later, a good deal of magic had been performed. Now, with cooperation from the weather, the grassland will gain a new aspect and character over the next several years.

The loyal volunteers deserve our sincere gratitude for working to give the community a living museum that can be enjoyed and treasured in the coming years.

PRAIRIE SEED-COLLECTION AND SOWING

Tom Vanderpoel

We will start the seed-picking on August 20, with regularly scheduled outings on Thursday and Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. At first the volume will be relatively light and will increase with the season. We did a spectacular job last year and would like to continue the effort. It would be a great help to telephone callers if volunteers let them know when they intend to participate. You can also call the office at 382-SAVE to let us know when you plan to help.



Starting August 20th

Thursdays 9 a.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m.

Sundays 3:30 p.m.

no meeting September 5 and 6

Wednesdays 6:45 p.m. (4 weeks only)

Meet in Ace parking lot

Meet in high school circle lot

Meet in high school circle lot

Meet in high school circle lot

We also plan to try a late fall planting of prairie seeds, probably in November. I hope this technique will increase germination. I'm looking forward to another year's work with all of you.

Chicago Tribune

FOUNDED June 10, 1847

STANTON R. COOK, *Publisher* CHARLES T. BRUMBACK, *President*

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22 Section 1

Friday, July 17, 1987

A preserve that needs preserving

The Cook County Forest Preserve District is spending \$25,000 to study whether to create a demonstration farm in the Spring Creek Valley Forest Preserve near Barrington Hills. Here's some advice that won't cost anything: Forget the idea.

The district exists to preserve and protect the flora and fauna in its care, and does a pretty good job of it. Its ring of preserves around Chicago and the outlying parcels like Spring Creek Valley provide welcome, green relief from urban pressures and density. They're great places to picnic, see birds and other wildlife, hike and bike, fish or just hide out for a while.

The district does not exist to mow down or plow up its holdings, or chase away the creatures that live there. It's not supposed to be in the theme park business. But that's what's brewing in the demonstration farm idea, patterned after the Living History Farms in Des Moines—600 acres that depict farms from five different eras with 39 crop demonstration plots.

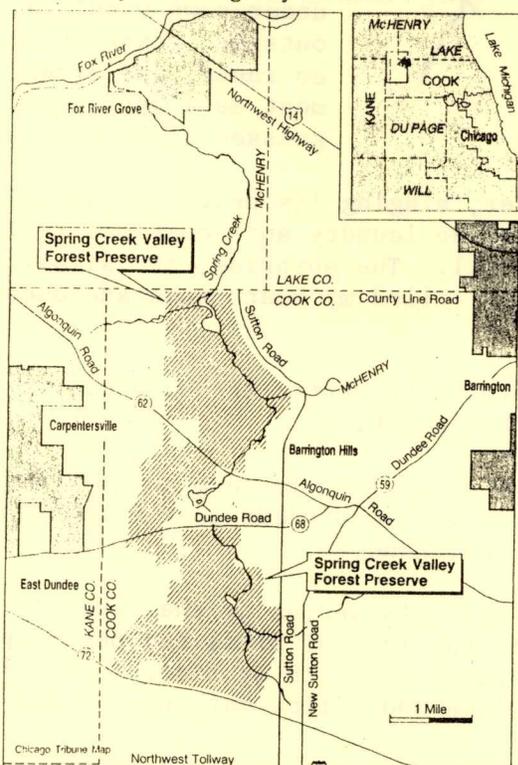
There's nothing inherently wrong with that concept; it just doesn't particularly belong on forest preserve property. Most particularly, it doesn't belong at Spring Creek Valley. Though many of the district's holdings are family and group-oriented, Spring Creek Valley is dramatically something very different.

It is about as choice and pristine as nature gets in the state's most populous county—4,000 acres of rolling grassland and forest, bisected by a few trails and fewer roads, nurtured by the sparkling course of Spring Creek, harbor to an abundance of birds and animals. To tamper with a resource that rare would be cockeyed, and a very odd interpretation of the district's mission. It should be protected for what it is—nature on its own terms—not be remodeled for show-and-tell entertainment.

If people want to see farms, let them go to Iowa. Better yet, let them go to one of the demonstration farms already in the area—two in Du Page County and one in Kane County.

If the district has money to spend—the tab for the farm project could be \$7.2 million—it should spend it doing a better job of what it does now, what it was created to do: keeping the existing preserves clean, safe and useful.

Nothing really has to be done with Spring Creek Valley except to let the trees grow and the water flow and the tall grass wave. No one can duplicate that and no one can improve on it. Nor should they even try.



CFC FAMILY BIRD WALK

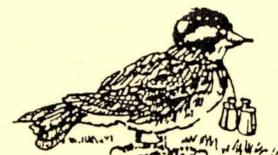
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3

MEET AT

CRABTREE NATURE CENTER PARKING LOT

8 A.M., FOR ONE TO TWO HOURS

BRING BINOCULARS AND FIELD GUIDE,
IF YOU HAVE THEM.



© Laura Zerzan From "ECONEWS"



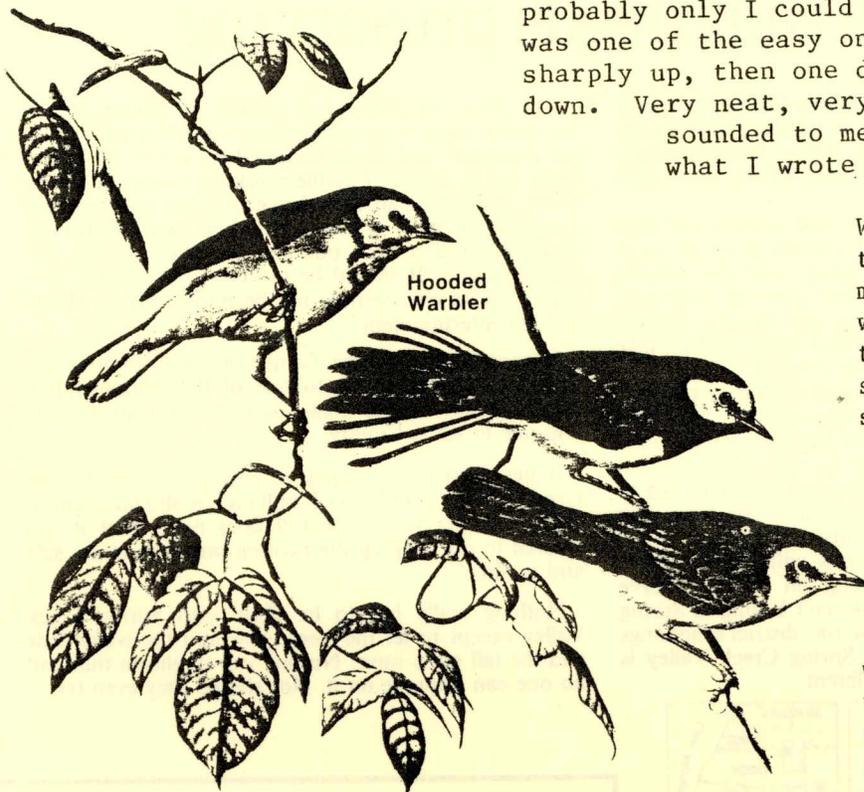
CFC
News

A SONG FROM THE WOODS

Wendy Paulson

As I recall, the only time I'd seen and heard a hooded warbler was in the Pocomoke Swamp near Ocean City, Maryland, on a memorable walk with Chandler Robbins. Robbins rattled off identifications left and right, ahead, behind, faster than I could visualize the birds, much less look them up in a field guide.

But it wasn't from that walk that I remembered the hooded warbler's song. It was from the hours of listening to our warbler record -- a compilation of songs and variations of eastern wood warblers. I played the record during mealtimes and for long stretches in the afternoon while our infant son slept. I made notations on the songs that I could carry with me and that probably only I could interpret. The hooded warbler was one of the easy ones: three curves sliding sharply up, then one dropping even more sharply down. Very neat, very circumscribed. The song sounded to me like a bugle call and that's what I wrote beside the squiggles.



We moved shortly afterward to northern Illinois and I mentally crossed the hooded warbler off my most-likely-to-hear-or-see list. I considered it a bird of southern swamps and river bottoms.

But at 5 a.m. one May morning four years ago, I sat bolt upright in bed. There it was -- the bugle call, just yards from the bedroom window that opens into an undergrown woodland. I shot outside, grabbing my binoculars en route, and arresting movement as I approached what I guessed to be its song perch.

The bird sang. I found it. A hooded warbler, singing its heart out not fifty feet from where I wash dishes and pack lunches and do laundry and sometimes reflect on incidents of the sublime. It wasn't shy at all. The surprise, the simplicity, and the sheer loveliness of the encounter at dawn filled my heart then and does still whenever I think back on it.

By the time I called Chuck Westcott that morning to report the warbler, it had left. How grateful I was for those hours at the phonograph.

The following May, a hooded warbler awakened me again. It sang an hour or two, then left. And a year later, too. I confessed to fellow birders that I fancied it was the same one, just stopping off to renew acquaintance.

So I wasn't surprised when I woke Mother's Day this spring to the reveille of a hooded warbler. The date was somewhat early but lots of birds had been reported ahead of schedule. I paid my annual respects to him with my binoculars -- inwardly gasping, as I always do, at his exquisite black and yellow markings -- and wished him safe and productive migration.



I was startled when I heard the hooded again, in the late afternoon. The next day it sang. And the next. For two weeks I woke to the bugle serenade. Then it stopped. I held my breath -- for four days. Late on the fourth afternoon, its song erupted.

For three months now, I've kept close aural company with the bird. I've only seen it half a dozen times because the foliage makes forest bird-finding next to impossible and because its song amply confirms its presence. Sometimes I've wondered how someone else, someone not so keen on birds, might have received the warbler. Its song is piercing and incessant. I think it might have driven some people crazy. I'm glad it came here.

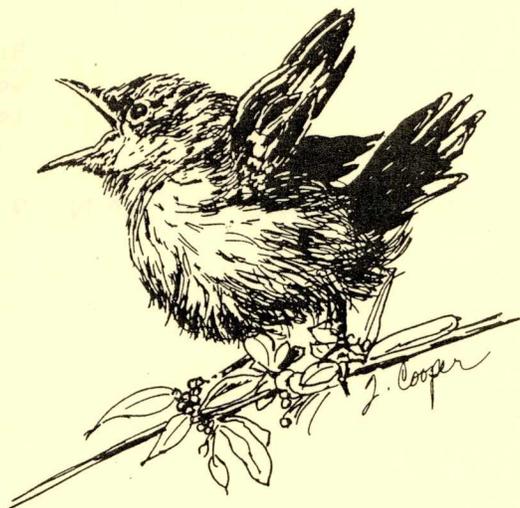
I wonder, too, if it found a mate. I presume it was looking for one during the days of silence. If it did, I wonder if they fledged a family. I haven't searched for a nest. I wanted the bird to make this place his home without interference from a human neighbor. I know the area where the male has sung; it's fairly small and I will search it after he has left. My bird books tell me that hooded warblers leave for Mexico and Central America in late July. I'll look for a small nest, three inches in diameter, two to three feet off the ground.

I may not find the answers to my queries. I don't think it really matters. I suppose I'll be glad if I do find a nest and can at least hope that a brood emerged from it. But the spring and summer have been made so rich by the hooded warbler's song, that I am simply, deeply grateful for his sojourn and I hope he'll come again.

NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Beginning this summer, some of the CFC nature study classes are being held at the Stillman Audubon Center in South Barrington. Alexander Stillman bequeathed his 1,000-acre estate to Chicago Audubon, to be used as a nature education center. Currently the center is managed by a board composed of representatives from local conservation and civic groups, including CFC.

The estate includes fields, woods, pine grove, marsh, and a lake. The extensive gardens, including cold frames, are badly overgrown. The education committee would like to revive the gardens, cut trails, and build a modest lakeside platform. Anyone interested?



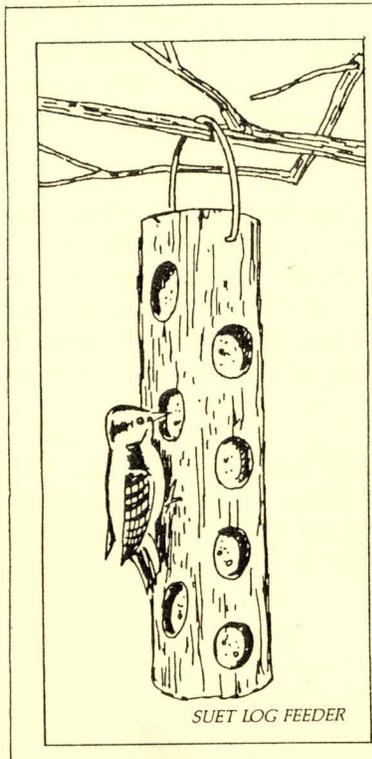
BUY SUNFLOWER SEED AND FEED THE BIRDS



The Natural History Society of Barrington will conduct their annual sunflower seed sale in September, with seed pick-up scheduled for early October. If you would like to order seed, always at a bargain price, and are not on the NHS mailing list, call 381-6317, 381-5541, 381-2210, or 382-5933 to place an order. Proceeds from the sale support a variety of conservation projects and organizations.

CRABTREE WALKS AND WORKSHOPS

The Cook County Forest Preserve District staff at Crabtree Nature Center has scheduled several events for the fall and winter to which the public is invited. All events are free.



Guided Bird Walks, October 17, 18, 24, 25. These walks will take place from 8 to 10 in the morning and will begin at the parking lot. No registration required.

Weekday Guided Bird Walks, September and October. The walks will take place on Wednesdays, at 3:30 p.m. in September and 8:30 a.m. in October. Meet in the parking lot. Bring binoculars and field guide. Sponsored by Natural History Society of Barrington.

Bird Feeders and Bird Feeding, November 7. This workshop will take place in the nature center building from 10 a.m. to noon. Pre-registration is required by calling 381-6592. All ages welcome.

Kids' Nature Workshop, December 28-31. A four-day holiday activity designed for children aged 10 to 12. Will take place at the center from 10 a.m. to noon. Pre-registration required, 381-6592.

Winter Ecology, January 16. A winter workshop for all ages, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the center. Dress for the weather. Pre-registration required.

Bird House Workshop, February 13. An indoor building session for all ages, from 10 a.m. to noon. Pre-registration required.

BAKER'S LAKE SAVANNA RESTORATION

Representatives from CFC and the Illinois Chapter of the Nature Conservancy met in early June with trustees from the Village of Barrington to propose restoring the campground at Baker's Lake to its original savanna character. Reception of the idea has been cautious but positive. A steering committee, composed of representatives from CFC, the Natural History Society of Barrington, and the Barrington Area Historical Society, is formulating an overall plan and schedule.

Tom Vanderpoel will head up the project. As with the prairie restoration, the project will depend heavily on volunteers. Seed-picking for savanna plants comes earlier than that for many prairie plants; it runs from early summer to early fall. Volunteers already have gathered some seed this year. Sowing will always take place in the fall. The ground will not be cultivated; the seeds simply will be scratched in.

If you'd like to help in the savanna restoration and learn about native plants in the process, call the office at 382-SAVE. At their regular fall meeting November 12, the Natural History Society will offer a program on the restoration which will include a slide presentation, discussion of the project, and a history of the site.



BLUEBIRDS IN BARRINGTON

Tom Vanderpoel is convinced that the bluebirds were attracted by the plants in his prairie restoration. He has always kept a house on the hillside waiting for them. So many years have passed without even a bluebird sighting that he never even noticed their coming. But by early June, Tom realized bluebirds were, in fact, nesting in the prairie hillside box.



Sialia sialis, the eastern bluebird, was once a common Barrington summer resident. In his volume on the ornithology of Illinois, published in 1889, Robert Ridgway wrote that "so well known are the habits of the common, familiar Bluebird, that little need be said here on the subject." It is described as a "common summer resident"; though even then "the English Sparrows attack and chase away the Bluebirds and many that nested in the city have gone into the suburbs and now nest in hollow trees or holes in fence posts."

At Crabtree Nature Center, bluebird sightings were reported early last spring and again at mid-summer, but no pairs have stayed to nest. In fact, there are no records of breeding bluebirds since the 1970's and sometimes no records of even a sighting in a given year.

Chuck Westcott, Director of Crabtree Nature Center, attributes the decline of the bluebird to loss of habitat, fierce competition for nest sites, and migration during hazardous weather. The birds nest in cavities in grazed woodlots, savannas, and orchards.

Besides the Vanderpoel bluebirds, a nesting pair has been reported on Shoe Factory Road. If you have additional sightings or nesting records to report, call Jeanette Muench, CFC's bluebird trail coordinator, at 381-2369.

FAMILY NIGHT HIKE

Explore the after-dark world the night before Halloween. Mark Spreyer, one of CFC's directors and research coordinator at the Chicago Academy of Science, will lead a special night hike for families. The hike will take place at Stillman Audubon Center on Penny Road, on Friday, October 30, at 7:30 p.m. Be prepared to sharpen your senses, listen for owls and other night sounds. Dress for the weather and do not bring a flashlight! Registration is limited; call 382-SAVE to sign up.

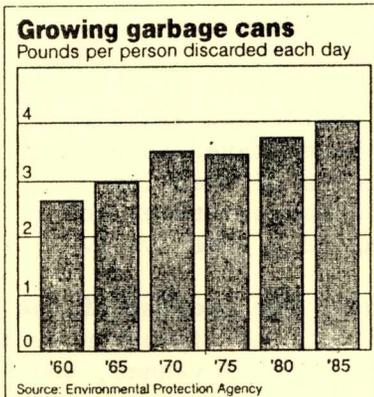
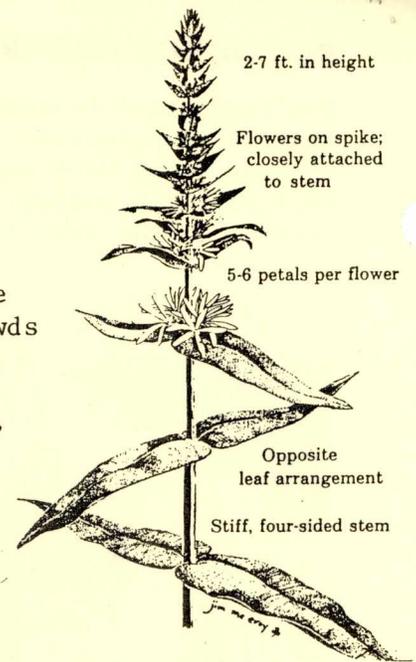


Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.

JOHN MILTON

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE ALERT

Becky Luehring, who has been battling purple loosestrife in the Wagner Fen, reminds us to watch for the aggressive weed and to pull it up when we can. Purple loosestrife is the tall purple flowering plant conspicuous along roadsides, in ditches, in sunny wetlands -- blooming from mid-July to late August. Though visually attractive, purple loosestrife crowds out native plants and degrades moist wildlife habitats. It replaces diverse native marsh vegetation that's valuable to wildlife with a monoculture of weeds that's of little value. Since each plant can produce up to 300,000 seeds, the non-native weed spreads rapidly. More information about identifying and controlling purple loosestrife is available in the CFC office.



WISH LIST

The following items would be gratefully received at the CFC office:

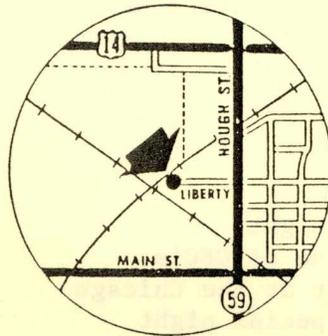
- 1 liter plastic soda containers
- 1' sections of 2-3" diameter logs (for suet feeders)
- Teasel, milkweed pods, pine cones, shells, other interesting objects for Holiday Craft class

Just what is garbage?

Garbage is a term we throw around freely. In this chart, it refers mostly to the stuff that goes into your in Glad bags and the municipal garbage truck. But the chart, and our thinking about garbage, leaves out an awful lot: wastes from mining, agricultural and industrial processing, and demolition and construction, as well as sewage, sludge, junked autos, and obsolete equipment. Also elbowing for disposal space are hazardous chemical wastes and nuclear wastes.

Where does it all go?

- The US produces about 400,000 tons of garbage a day: That's nearly 4 pounds a day for every woman, man, and child in the country. Most of that mess is trucked miles away and dumped into landfills.
- Those dump sites are beginning to bulge at the seams, and by 1992, half the nation's landfills will be used up.
- The price of hauling and dumping garbage is going up, up, up; by the year 2000, the US may spend a whopping \$100 billion on waste management.
- Less than 10 percent of our refuse is disposed of through incineration and recycling, which are the leading alternatives to landfill.
- Almost as significant as the statistics on America's garbage problem is the remarkable *lack* of compiled national statistics. Our researches turned up conflicting and incomplete data from government and private sources. In short, no one seems to know for sure how much the country throws away, and how much it's costing. Says an EPA statistician: 'In five years, we'll know all this.'



Citizens for Conservation
Recycling Center
West end of West Liberty
One block west of Hough

CFC RECYCLING STATISTICS

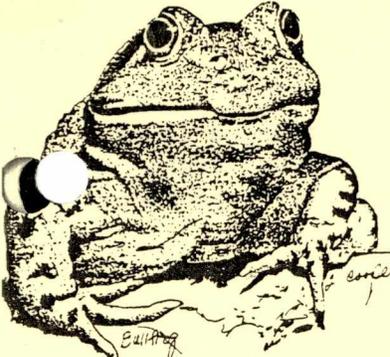
Pounds Recycled

	Newspaper	Glass
May	19,395	17,300 (clear)
June	19,680	

Our center is now accepting aluminum. Please help spread the word.

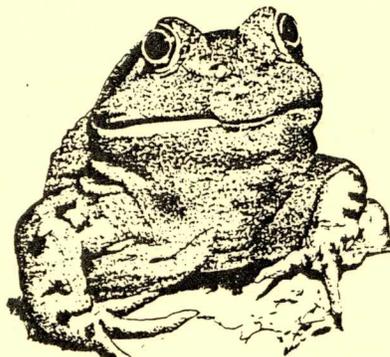
THANKS THANKS THANKS THANKS THANKS

- To all Recyclers
- To those who responded so generously to our last Wish List
- To our several photographers
- To every one involved with CFC's 4th of July parade entry, "The Birth of Grigsby Prairie"

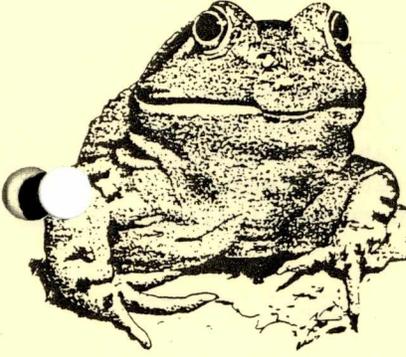


CITIZENS FOR CONSERVATION, INC. SATURDAY SESSIONS 1987-88

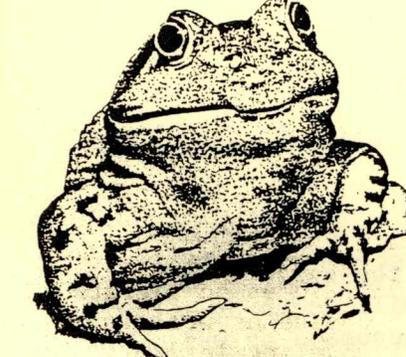
During the school year, Citizens for Conservation, Inc. offers a variety of nature classes. While the classes are geared for children, adults are welcome, too. Parents accompanying children need not pay a registration fee. All classes, unless otherwise indicated, meet in the building at Crabtree Nature Center from 9:30 to 11:30 on Saturday mornings. Registration is limited. For more information or to obtain a registration form, call 382-SAVE.



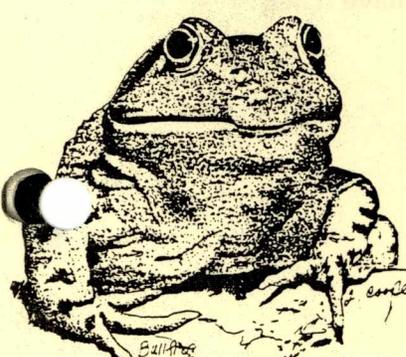
September 19 BIRD BANDING. Mark Spreyer, a licensed bird bander, will show how mist nets are used to intercept migrating songbirds and how he affixes leg bands to aid in scientific research. Class will be held at Stillman Audubon Center on Penny Road (directions will be sent with class confirmation). Dress for the weather. Cancelled if raining hard. Grades 4 and up.



October 17 BIRD FEEDERS. Get ready to welcome winter birds to your home. Learn how to make simple bird feeders from everyday objects. Grades 1 and up.



November 14 BIRD NESTS. How do birds build their nests? What do they use to make them? We'll examine a variety of bird nests, identify them, and see if we can discover their secrets. Then we'll explore fields and woods for abandoned summer nests. At Stillman Audubon Center. Dress for the weather. Grades 1 and up.



December 5 HOLIDAY CRAFTS FROM NATURE. A variety of natural materials will be available for making and inventing holiday decorations and gifts. Bring a box to carry home your projects. Grades 2 and up.

January 9 MAKING RECYCLED PAPER. Did you know that wasps were the original paper recyclers? Learn how they make paper and then make your own from shredded newsprint. A short film on recycling will also be shown. Grades 2 and up.

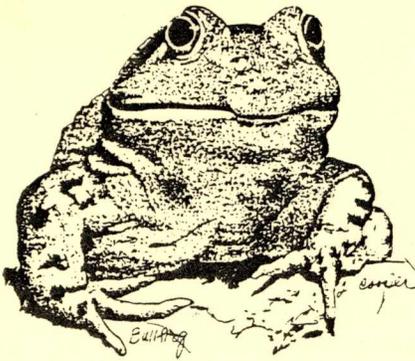
January 23 ANIMAL TRACKS. We'll study track patterns and individual prints inside, then go outside to look for animal tracks and signs. We'll also make plaster casts of wildlife footprints. Dress for the weather. Grades 3 and up.

February 20 OWL PELLETS. What do owls eat? Take apart pellets from various species of owls to find out and try to reconstruct the owl's prey. Grades 3 and up.

March 5 MAKING MAPLE SYRUP. A bus will take you from the CFC office at 132 W. Station Street to the McGraw Wildlife maple grove in West Dundee. There a naturalist will lead the way from sap to syrup. Bus departs 9:15 and returns 11:30. Dress warmly; you'll be outside the whole morning. \$2 extra fee for bus. All ages.

-OVER-





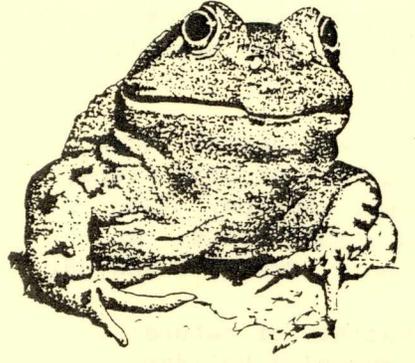
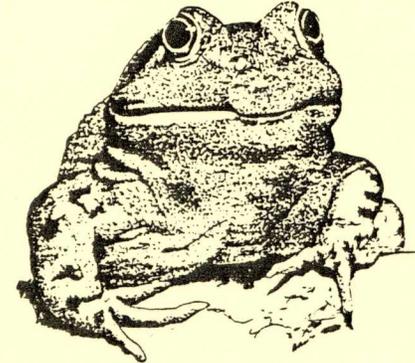
March 12 REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS. Dr. Steve Barton, a local veterinarian, will talk about creatures that slither, creep, hop and crawl and will most likely bring along some live specimens. All ages.

Saturday Session Director: Wendy Paulson
 Instructors: Sue Allman, Margaret Fox-Hawthorne,
 Susan Hargreaves, Wendy Paulson

Cost per session: \$2 CFC members; \$4 non-members

SATURDAY SESSION REGISTRATION

Name _____ Age _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____
 Class(es) _____



The undersigned, a parent or guardian of this/these minor child(ren) hereby assumes all responsibility for injuries which may result from the normal activities of the above program(s) for which child(ren) is(are) enrolled and hereby releases Citizens for Conservation, Inc. from any such responsibilities.

Signature _____ Date _____

Mail check to: Citizens for Conservation, Inc.
 P.O. Box 435
 Barrington, IL 60011

Registration deadlines: two weeks before each class.

FAMILY BIRD WALKS

Two guided walks, one in the fall and one in the spring, will take place at Crabtree Nature Center. They will focus on migrating birds, but will include other seasonal phenomena as well. The walks will begin at 8 a.m. in the Crabtree parking lot. Bring binoculars and field guide if you have have them. No charge, but please register at 382-SAVE.

Fall Family Bird Walk: Saturday, October 3
 Spring Walk: Call 382-SAVE after April 1



SUMMER SESSIONS

Some random commentaries on classes in nature study held this summer:

Patterns in Nature: "At first I was not anxious to go to the nature class, but my Mom encouraged me. Boy, am I glad I went! First we took a hike through the woods and took prints of leaves, bark, etc. with play dough. Then we made sun prints with ink pads (red and green) and limes, mushrooms, walnuts, onions, and acorns. I can't wait until my next class. Cindy Connor, age 9.

Sun Fun: "I liked making the apple and hotdog cookers. It was fun to walk around the nature center, too." David Bobik, age 11. "I liked telling time with a sundial. I also liked reading the thermometers, to find out where it was coolest and hottest. I learned how to tell where south is on my watch, too." Brian Bobik, age 11.



Daily Herald Photo

BOOK BROWSING



Swallowtail Butterflies, by Jane Dallinger and Cynthia Overbeck
Excellent color photos, many of them close-ups, make this book interesting to all ages, though it is aimed at intermediate and advanced young readers. Adults interested in insects will appreciate books in this series probably more than many found in the adult section of the library. (Minneapolis: Lerner Publication Co., 1982, \$8.95, available at Barrington Area Library.)

Never Say Ugh to a Bug, by Norma Farber
From "Out of the Mouths of Spittlebugs" to the "Left-Winged Cricket", this volume is an off-beat collection of rhymes about some of nature's miniscule and oft-maligned creatures. The verses offer good humor and appreciation of the critters' idiosyncrasies. The verses by Jose Aruego are delightful. (N.Y.: Greenwillow Books, 1979, available at Barrington Area Library.)

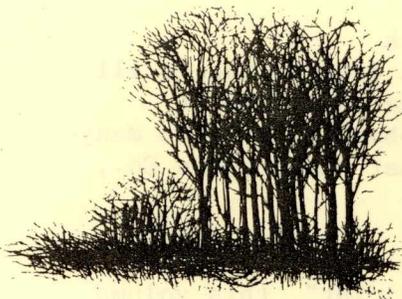
One Day in the Prairie, by Joe Craighead George
This is the latest of Mrs. George's many nature books written for children. A recent review in a state conservation magazine claims the book will appeal to both adults and children "as much for its adventure as for its shared knowledge." The writer "uses an impending tornado as the unifying story line throughout her ecological investigation of a prairie preserve in Oklahoma." (Thomas Y. Crowell Junior Books, \$11.95.)



ALMANAC

- August 29 Tour of Wagner Fen, 9 a.m. Meet at CFC parking lot
- September 3 Weekly bird walks at Crabtree Nature Center begin
- September 10 "Chicago Peregrine Release Project", monthly program of Natural History Society of Barrington, downstairs in Barrington United Methodist Church, corner of Hough and Lincoln, 8 p.m. Public invited
- September 19 CFC Saturday Sessions begin (see enclosed schedule)
- September 19 Cary Prairie Fest (walks, pioneer demonstrations, square dancing -- check local papers)
- September 20 Spring Hill Farm Fen walks (call McHenry County Defenders for details, 815-338-0393)
- October 3 CFC Family Bird Walk, Crabtree Nature Center, 8 a.m.
- October 15 Natural History Society program, 8 p.m. Check local papers
- October 30 CFC Family Night Hike, 7:30.
- November 12 Natural History Society program, 8 p.m., Baker's Lake Savanna Restoration

The CFC Board of Directors meets the last Monday of every month at 8 p.m. in the BACOG office at 132 West Station Street.



Citizens for Conservation, Inc.

Box 435
Barrington, Illinois 60011

OFFICERS

Paul Hoffman, President
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Office: 132 W. Station St.
2nd Floor, BACOG Building
Phone 382-SAVE

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