



CFC News

Saving Living Room for Living Things

A conservation newsletter published by Citizens for Conservation, Inc.

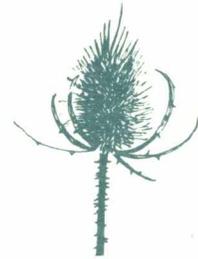
Barrington, Illinois

Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1986

SATURDAY SESSIONS

NATURE CRAFTS by Bryant Gillett

On November 23, 1985, about 20 children went to Crabtree to make holiday decorations, yet not ordinary decorations. They were made from plants. There were four sections to work at: vine mini-wreaths, teasel mice, straw stars, and the make-your-own creation. I stayed to the end along with everyone and I did not see anyone leave with a frown or without a decoration.



Teasel Family / Dipsacaceae

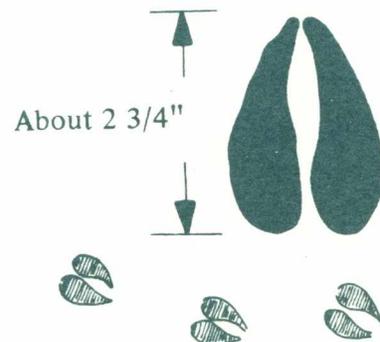
ANIMAL TRACKS by Alice Delcourt

I went to Crabtree Nature Center for a class on how to look for animal tracks in the snow. The first thing we did was talk about the animal tracks and how to identify them -- the pattern, print, size, shape, how many toes does it have, does it have claws? Mrs. Paulson even got down on all fours to show us how the animals walked. It helped everybody understand, especially my Mom! Next we watched some slides of footprints in the snow and Mrs. Paulson asked us which animals had been there. Some of them were easy to identify but some were really hard. We learned the rules of tracking: NEVER STEP ON THE ANIMAL FOOTPRINTS; WALK QUIETLY.

After slides, I made molds of animal footprints. We had rubber feet of different kinds of animals to choose from -- mink, mouse, bird, raccoon, fox, deer, porcupine. We switched places with the group outside and looked for tracks. Luckily, the night before the class there was a light sheet of snow that had frozen so you could see the prints very clearly. I found a deer track and lots of opossum tracks, raccoon tracks and hundreds of bird prints under the bird feeder. My Dad saw a real opossum. On the lake there were hundreds of Canada geese and we were lucky enough to see a goldeneye. I had a fun time... even though I was freezing!



WHITE-TAILED DEER



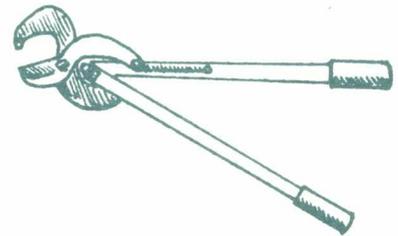
ANNUAL MEETING

It was the first annual meeting in years for which the temperature rose above 0°. More than 100 members and friends of CFC attended the meeting which included committee reports, election of Directors, presentation of the William H. Miller Conservation Award, and a splendid slide presentation, "Prairie Watching", by Mary and Lloyd McCarthy. A summary of the committee reports follows.

STEWARDSHIP - Net Mullen

Our group is responsible for the management of the CFC properties. Each property has different requirements, ranging from simple surveillance to brush removal and burnings.

Activity in the past few years has centered on the Wagner Fen, under the supervision of George and Becky Luehring. Extensive brush removal and periodic burns have resulted in visible multiplication of grasses and flowers, and the discovery of the showy lady's slipper, Canada mayflower, and the small Canada St. Johnswort. Only ongoing work will keep and extend the progress made.



A similar program is scheduled for the recently acquired Barrington Bog. Other properties require regular surveillance. We need more committee members -- for brush cutting, or helping with a burn, or monitoring a property, or sharing expertise in any of these areas. If you're interested, please call the office (382-SAVE) and leave your name and number.

REAL ESTATE - Walt Dalitsch

The Real Estate Committee identifies potential land acquisitions, deals with real estate agencies, land donors, and municipal governments, and manages the orderly procurement of properties. Land acquisitions this past year include:



- the balance of the Barrington Bog, donated by Countryside Builders of Barrington, John Tracy president, and Norman Samelson, attorney and managing partner. This ecologically important property lies on the east side of Route 59, north of North Barrington School, directly across from the entrance to Lake Barrington Shores.
- an addition to the Richards property, former prairie savanna near the corner of Buckley and Oak Knoll Roads, donated by Mrs. Peggy Richards.
- two lots on Eton Drive in North Barrington, donated by Dr. Julian Steyermark, via the Nature Conservancy. They are part of a mesic wooded ravine that contains important wildflower communities.

We also have arranged for the transfer of a small parcel of land in Barrington Hills to the Barrington Hills Park District; have spoken before the Barrington Area Council of Governments and the Barrington Hills Planning Commission; and will make a presentation to the Barrington Rotary Club soon. We remain vigilant for "For Sale" signs and ready to explain the benefit to sellers, buyers, and the public of CFC involvement in transfers of ecologically sensitive areas. We wish to commission each member to be a scout for site protection and help us to provide "Living Room for Living Things".

PRAIRIE - Ray Kath

At its January meeting, the CFC Board of Directors voted to begin work to recreate native prairie. It is our hope that it will someday be a thing of beauty to the eyes of all who behold it and that it will in some way bring calm and peace to those who quietly walk its paths.

Activity during the next growing season will center on seed collecting. We will need help from June through October and welcome all volunteers. Collectors of prairie seeds learn a lot, are treated to special observations of the natural world, and enjoy good company.

It is our purpose, in recreating a prairie, to provide a place where people can learn to recognize and appreciate our native Illinois landscape, respect its ecology, and admire its beauty.

SHOOTING STAR



RECYCLING - Frank Spreyer

We added a new paper bin this year and enlarged another, giving us three bins in all. By increasing the holding capacity, we hope that there will always be room for your papers, even when the snows are heavy and the salvage truck breaks down. It would help, too, if you would heave, fling, or throw your paper toward the back of the bin. Remember to bring only newspapers to the paper bins.

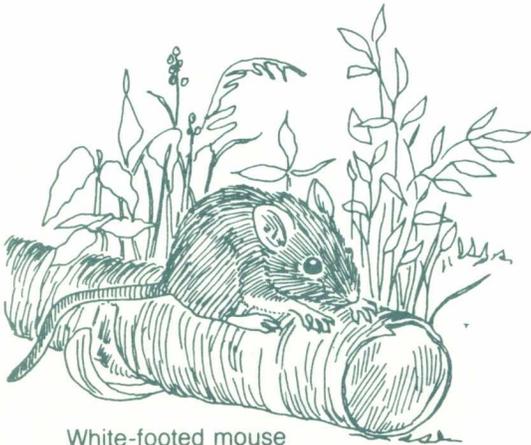
Paper collection in 1985 dropped 20% to just over 209 tons. However, we can take some satisfaction in the facts that we saved: the equivalent of over 3500 trees (according to the formula that 1 ton of recycled paper = 17 trees); electricity at the rate of 4,210 KW per ton; half the amount of water required to make paper from fresh pulp; and water pollution estimated at the rate of 35% per ton. But perhaps most importantly for us living in an area in which the local landfill has been closed, recycling saves landfill space. In the past five years, paper recycling alone has saved 3,784 cubic yards of landfill space.

Over 160,000 pounds of glass was recycled in 1985, 788,000 lbs. in the past five years. A bin for recyclable aluminum cans was also added, but has been out of service due to a truck breakdown. We hope to have it back soon for your discarded cans - aluminum only.

EDUCATION - Wendy Paulson

The committee focused on three areas since the last annual meeting: the newsletter, classes, and presentations to civic groups.

Publishing the newsletter goes more smoothly with each issue, thanks to the help of the staff at Kwik Kopy, Sam Oliver's indefatigable footwork and a crew of volunteer assemblers. We continue to welcome ideas and contributions (book reviews, conservation articles, relevant news items, etc.) for the newsletter.



White-footed mouse

Though our classes have been geared for children, we've been delighted at the large number of parents attending each class. Most of the Saturday Sessions and Summer Sessions have been held at Crabtree Nature Center. Plans are underway for a new series of summer classes.

In cooperation with The Natural History Society of Barrington, we invited geologist Ron Riepe to make an evening slide presentation and conduct a Saturday morning "Geological Heritage Tour" of northern McHenry and Lake counties. Several individuals have asked for more adult class offerings; if you agree, let us know.

Slide presentations were made to nine groups during the past twelve months.

We welcome any member who would like to help **plan classes **research fact sheets for homeowners (planting wildflowers; how not to kill trees when you build, etc.) **develop booklet on local natural areas **plan field trips **assemble newsletter **speak to local civic groups.

WILLIAM H. MILLER CONSERVATION AWARD

This award is given "in recognition of outstanding contribution to conservation in the Barrington area." This year it was awarded to Dr. Shirley Peterson, a local pediatrician for thirty years. In presenting the award, Net Mullen told how Dr. Peterson's "caring for children carries over to caring for wildlife and sharing her knowledge and love of nature with others." A lifelong conservationist, Dr. Peterson has been an active member of The Natural History Society of Barrington for many years, frequently serving as an officer. She helped initiate the annual sale of sunflower seed which raises money for conservation organizations. She has been a long-time advocate of Baker's Lake and has worked for the preservation of the lake, the heron island, and the bordering landscape. Dr. Peterson maintains a farm in southern Wisconsin where she nurtures populations of native plants and welcomes wildlife. She is also an avid wildflower photographer.



CFC
News

Citizens for Conservation, Inc.

OFFICERS - OLD AND NEW

Waid Vanderpoel is stepping down from the president's position that he has filled so ably for the past two years. Under Waid's leadership, CFC hired a staff director and established an office, began publishing a regular newsletter, began a series of nature study classes, undertook major stewardship activities, initiated a prairie restoration project. Though not without its challenges, it has been a period of vigorous growth.

The Board has elected the following slate of officers for the coming year: Paul Hoffman, President; Walt Dalitsch, Vice President; Betsy Petersen, Secretary; Dave Kullander, Treasurer.

New Directors elected at the annual meeting are Susan Gorman, Lee Hall and Jeanette Muench.

THANK YOU

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- to Mrs. Alice Roth and Country Squire/Century 21 Real Estate Company for a comprehensive evaluation of one of our properties at no cost to CFC.
- to Mr. Charles Mionske of Mionske Surveyors and Engineers, Crystal Lake, for donating a portion of the cost of a land survey for CFC.
- to Mary Carlton for helping to assemble the newsletter.
- to Vicky Allard, Ruth Moor, and Betsy Petersen for painstakingly revising the By-Laws.
- to Diana Stacey for teaching how to make teasel mice at the nature crafts Saturday Session.
- to Chuck Westcott for making the Crabtree classrooms available for Saturday Sessions.

GIVE A GIFT TO WILDLIFE - Check Line 11b

If wildlife enriched your life in 1985 how about returning the favor by checking off line 11b on the back of your Illinois-1040 tax return. A checkmark will automatically earmark \$10 of your return for nongame wildlife projects; a \$20 option is available on joint returns. Taxpayers not expecting a refund may also contribute by making a check, for any amount, payable to the Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund and sending it to:

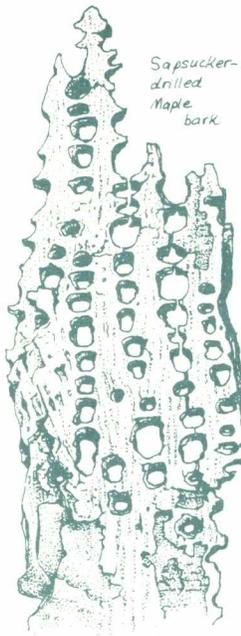
Illinois Department of Conservation
524 S. Second Street
Springfield, IL 62706



You can look forward to at least two local benefits from the wildlife fund. Plans are proceeding to build artificial nest structures around the island in Baker's Lake for returning egrets, black-crowned night herons and great blue herons. Also, a series of workshops on the eastern bluebird will be held in early March: March 3, 7 p.m., at the Gail Borden Library in Elgin, 741-8000 to register; March 5, 7:30 p.m., at the Crystal Lake Nature Center, 815-675-2385 to register; March 6, 7 p.m., at the Ryerson Woods Conservation Area, 948-7750 to register. The free, 2-hour workshops will include slides and discussion of the life history and management of this species that has declined from loss of nesting habitat.

For further information on these and other non-game wildlife fund projects, contact Randy Heidorn at 815-675-2385.

BOOK BROWSING



Wild Habitats, by Aleta Karstad

This book offers a guided tour through twenty-five habitats typical of the northern U.S. and Canada. The information and descriptions are concise but detailed. Along with the careful drawings by the author, they document the interpretations of a sensitive naturalist. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1979, \$12.95, available at Barrington Library.)

Nightwatch: the Natural World from Dusk to Dawn

Several authors contributed to make this book about the nocturnal world and new discoveries about nighttime animals. Text is accompanied by stunning photographs. (Facts on File, Inc., New York, 1983, \$24.95, available also at Barrington Library.)

Whose Footprints?, by Masayuki Yabuuchi

A book for the very youngest trackers (2-5 years). Full-page illustration of track with simple question about it is followed by full-page color drawing of animal who made the track. (Philomel Books, New York, 1985, \$8.95, available at Barrington Library.)

Tiger Lilies and Other Beastly Plants, by Elizabeth Ring

Illustrated by Barbara Bash, daughter of Phil and Flo Bash of Barrington, this book focuses on plants with animals in their popular names, e.g., skunk cabbage, elephant's ear, moth mullein. Full-page, color illustrations and lively text combine to offer highly appealing bridges between the fancy of these plant names and the facts about them. (Walker & Co., New York, 1984, \$9.95, available at Barrington Library.)

EXPERIENCE THE MIDWEST'S NATURAL HERITAGE

The Chicago Academy of Sciences is recreating the splendor of the presettlement prairie with "Wild Prairies," an exhibit that will run through 1986. Over a hundred years ago the Midwest's prairies were seas of grasses and wildflowers, teeming with insects, birds, mammals, and reptiles. The "Wild Prairies" exhibit explores the wonders of life below, within, and above these vibrant expanses as they were before the pioneers arrived.

Located at 2001 N. Clark Street in Lincoln Park, the Chicago Academy of Sciences is open daily from 10 AM to 5 PM except Christmas. Admission is free on Mondays and is \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for senior citizens and students the rest of the week. The Academy can be reached by CTA buses 22, 36, 73, 151, and 156.



What event likely to occur in the 1980s will our descendants most regret, even those living a thousand years from now?...The one process ongoing in the 1980s that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly our descendants are least likely to forgive us.

E.O. Wilson
"Resolutions for the '80s,"
Harvard Magazine

SETTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL STAGE by Mark Spreyer

"The world's a theatre, the earth a stage which God and Nature do with actors fill."

-Thomas Heywood (1612)

With apologies to Mr. Heywood, I would like to reword this thought in the following manner:

"The environment's a theatre, the habitat a stage which God and Nature do with niches fill."

Words like "environment," "habitat," and "niche" are, to some people, interchangeable terms used by environmentalists to stop progress. To biologists, these words have specific and differing meanings. Let's take a look at all three terms with a spotlight on the second word, "habitat."

Simply put, "habitat" is the place where an organism usually lives. The stage is composed of distinct surroundings and the set is usually characterized by vegetation. As with a Shakespearean actor on the Elizabethan stage or movie actor on a back lot, an upland sandpiper on a prairie or a great blue heron along a lakeshore is adapted to a certain habitat.

On each stage, there are different roles to play. Similarly, within each habitat there are different niches to fill. As mentioned earlier, the great blue heron is adapted to shoreline life. During the day it can be found spearing fish while it wades through shallow water. It builds a huge stick nest high in a tree near water.

The barred owl is another bird that is often found along the water's edge. It flies at night hunting the forest and shoreline for rodents, birds, frogs, and a variety of other prey. It nests earlier in the year than does the heron, choosing tree cavities in which to lay its eggs. Each bird plays a different role, fills a different niche on the wetland stage.



Whether organisms live in a prairie or a swamp, they are subject to external physical conditions such as rainfall, temperature, and soil type. These extrinsic factors combine to define the environment, the theater which houses a variety of stages, each with an ongoing production.

Regrettably, however, animals' lives are not like characters in a play; they cannot be rewritten to conform to a stage's limitations. So when man encroaches on just part of a habitat, for instance a mountain range in California, he cannot understand why the California condor can't adjust. After all, there are other roadless, unlogged mountainsides to settle on. Perhaps so, for a smaller actor with a less demanding role like the mountain bluebird. Unfortunately, the condor will never play on the altered mountain range.

Size is only one aspect of an animals' habitat. The age of a forest, for instance, can exclude or include a particular species. The Kirtland's warbler lives only in young jack pine forests while the spotted owl requires mature stands of Douglas fir. Even well-meaning people who set aside land cannot be assured of preserving habitat unless they accommodate all of an organism's life script.

The lives of humans and those of wild animals are being played on the same stage. In this situation, success in creating human habitat is often reflected by a failure to sustain wild-life habitat. I recently talked with a researcher who had worked for the government in Oregon to help identify suitable spotted owl habitat. Besides providing owl habitat, Douglas fir trees also provide valuable construction material. The researcher later learned that the owl sites he had identified were quickly scheduled to be logged before the spotted owl and its habitat had earned protected status.

We are losing the parts played by the California condor, the spotted owl, and other endangered species because we continue to be unaware of the importance of habitat. Soon it will no longer be just threatened species but more common species, maybe even humans, that are exiting the stage. Perhaps the following familiar lines from Shakespeare best describe the impact of unchecked habitat destruction.

"And all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more..."

Macbeth, Act V, Sc. 3, Line 19.

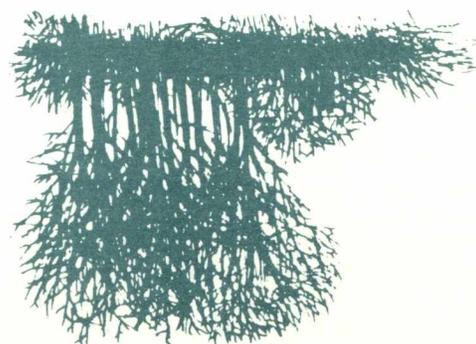
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CFC NEWS ALMANAC

- March 8 CFC Saturday Session: Making Maple Syrup bus trip. To register, call 382-SAVE.
- March 3, 5, 6 Eastern bluebird workshops. To register, see "Give a Gift to Wild Life" article inside.
- March 13 Natural History Society of Barrington (downstairs, Barrington United Methodist Church, corner Lincoln & Hough Streets). 8:00 P.M.
Speaker: Andrea Kane of McHenry Co. Wildlife Rehabilitation Project.
- April 10 Natural History Society of Barrington, 8:00 P.M.
Program: Ron Vasile, collection coordinator, Chicago Academy of Sciences speaking on museum collections: "Doing it by the Numbers."
- April 15 Give a Gift to Wildlife - check line 11b, back of Illinois-1040 tax return.

Chicago Academy of Sciences "Wild Prairies" exhibit runs through 1986. Brochure with details of CAS prairie field trips and lectures available at Citizens for Conservation, upstairs in BACOG office, 132 W. Station St., Barrington.



Citizens for Conservation, Inc.
Box 435
Barrington, Illinois 60011

OFFICERS

Paul Hoffman, President

Walt Dalitsch, Vice President

David Kullander, Treasurer

Betsy Petersen, Secretary

STAFF DIRECTOR

Sam Oliver

EDITOR

Wendy Paulson

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