



Co-Partners of the Volunteer Stewardship Network

Gatherings Online

*A monthly email newsletter of the Volunteer Stewardship Network
published by The Nature Conservancy*

*To unsubscribe to this newsletter or if you would like to contribute articles, stories, or announcements to be published in future newsletters, please send them to Karen Tharp at ktharp@tnc.org by the first day of each month.
The next newsletter deadline is **Tuesday, August 1st**.*

JULY 2006

The work of an individual still remains the spark that moves mankind forward. – Igor Sikorsky

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I. NEWS

VSN Fund Awards 2006

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) are pleased to announce that 35 groups within the VSN will receive funding to help further their stewardship work in 2006-07. This limited funding is available each year from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) to support the work of the volunteer stewardship groups who are working at high quality natural areas across the state. These funds have been used by groups to purchase fire safety equipment, herbicide, tools, or to help pay for items like newsletter printing and/or supplies for a recruitment event. Congratulations to the following 2006 award recipients: Embarras Volunteer Stewards, Save the Prairie Society, Downers Grove Park District, TNC Emiquon and Spunky Bottoms Preserve, Palos Restoration Project, Poplar Creek Prairie Stewards, Friends of Bluff Spring Fen, Friends of Indian Boundary Prairies, Des Plaines River Valley Volunteers, Grand Prairie Friends/Prairie Grove Volunteers, Peoria Wilds Volunteers, North Branch Restoration Project, Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Friends of Illinois Beach, I & M Canal – Santa Fe Prairie Volunteers, Deer Grove Restoration Project, Dragonfly Monitoring Network, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Bartel Grassland Volunteers, Orland Grassland Volunteers, Jubilee Prairie Dawgs, Coon Hill Prairie, Plants of Concern, McHenry County Natural Area Volunteers, Hawthorn Hill Nature Center, Beaubien Woods Volunteers, Joliet Junior College, The Nature Institute – BRAVO, Indian Creek Watershed Project, McHenry County Conservation District, Lake County VSN, East-Central IL Master Naturalist Program, Friends of Wingate Prairie, Kane County Natural Area Volunteers, and the Rock River Turkey Chapter – Dixon Park District.

Your Support Needed for Nomination to the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame*

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is submitting a nomination packet in honor of Carl Becker for the 2007 Class of the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame. Carl was a leader in the conservation field and an active participant in the founding of Chicago Wilderness. The Chicago Wilderness (CW) consortium adopted a resolution in support of this nomination that will be included in TNC's nominating packet. However, additional letters of support from individual consortium members are also welcome and encouraged. Copies of the resolution and the template letter are available on the CW member web site at

<http://www.chicagowilderness.org/members/repository/folders/index.cfm?folderid=6>. Letters of support should be sent to Susan Donovan, of TNC, at 8 S. Michigan Ave, Suite 900, Chicago,

IL 60603 or via fax to 312-346-5606 by July 20th for inclusion in the nomination packet. For more information contact Susan Donovan at sdonovan@tnc.org.

II. VOLUNTEER AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Millennium Seed Bank Project – Volunteer to help to Preserve our Native Seeds for the Future

The Millennium Seed Bank Project is an international conservation effort with a goal of preserving 10% of the world's seed-bearing flora through seed collection. The Chicago Botanic Garden, one of the North American institutes involved, aims to collect seed from 1,500 native species by 2009, with a focus on prairie species due to the loss of prairie habitat. Our objective is to collect between 10,000 and 20,000 seeds of one population from each of the species. These collections can act as a basis for off site (*ex situ*) conservation and, where and when appropriate, can be used for study and propagation for restoration purposes. Long-term seed banking can also act as an "insurance policy" against extinction in the wild.

<http://www.rbgekew.org.uk/msbp/index.html>. We are looking for volunteers to assist us in finding sufficiently large populations of our target species, monitoring their seed development during the season, making seed collections and cleaning the seed before it is shipped to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Additional tasks include help with germination studies and data entry. Field sites are throughout the greater Chicago region and include Cook, Will, Grundy, Lake, DuPage and McHenry counties. Help with scouting for populations and seed collecting is needed now, but is particularly heavy during the months of September and October. Seed cleaning will begin in July and last through to March. For further information contact the seed bank coordinator, Betsy Allen, at (847) 835-6957 or email ballen@chicagobotanic.org. Visit our website at: <http://cbgseedbank.org/>.

Identifying Shrubland Habitat under Power Lines

The Bird Conservation Network (BCN) and Audubon conducted a Shrubland Blitz in June with the ultimate goal of counting all the shrubland birds of conservation concern in Chicago Wilderness and identifying their habitat. Another part of that Blitz is to identify shrubland habitat under power lines that has significant shrubland birds. Here's the list of birds we're looking for: Birds of conservation concern identified by Partners in Flight: Bell's vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Golden-winged Warbler, Lark Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Bobwhite, Orchard Oriole, Prairie Warbler, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, White-eyed Vireo. Birds of local interest: American Redstart, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Bird of concern that can be found in woodland and shrubland: Yellow-billed Cuckoo. If you know of a power line with any of these birds spending the nesting season under it, please send Judy Pollock an email with the location and birds observed. Judy can be reached at jpollock@audubon.org or 847-965-1150. ComEd has expressed an interest in starting some pilot shrubland bird habitat management areas.

Education Program Coordinator- MCCD

This position is based out of Prairieview Education Center in Crystal Lake, IL. Program responsibilities throughout the county with a focus on the west half of the county.

SALARY: \$35,269/ yr plus benefits.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: This individual would design, implement, coordinate, administrate and supervise education programs for residents throughout the District's service area. The incumbent of this position is responsible for, but not limited to, the delivery of children and adult natural resources education programs and organizing field trips; assists with writing of

interpretive materials and development of displays; and manages program budget and assists with program facility management.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's degree or knowledge equivalent in environmental education, environmental or cultural interpretation, natural resource management or related field; At least three years of experience in providing environmental learning experiences for children and/or adults; Extensive knowledge of Illinois natural history; Considerable knowledge of environmental education program planning, principles and objectives; Knowledge of the trends and innovations occurring in environmental learning/interpretive programs and services nationwide; Excellent communication skills; Valid drivers' license
HOW TO APPLY: Coverletters and resumes can be sent to: Prairieview Education Center, Attn: Deb Chapman, 2112 Behan Rd, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 or email to dchapman@mccdDistrict.org. For questions, contact Deb at (815) 479-5779.

Director of Individual Giving and Constituency Coordination Position – Friends of the Forest Preserves

Friends of the Forest Preserves, founded in 1998, brings together people and resources to protect, preserve, and restore the Forest Preserves of Cook County for the benefit of the public. Our initiatives include policy work, organizing volunteer and constituency groups, and collaborating with others to increase focus on the District, bringing legal and technical assistance to it, and assisting the District in adhering to its mission. Friends is a volunteer-based organization with staff support. In 2002, Friends in collaboration with several partners published hard-hitting comprehensive reports, highly critical of business-as-usual at the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. The reports guide our present work. Things have started to turn around but there's much more to do.

Position:

This new position is responsible for growing our membership base, cultivating new donors and new relationships with Forest Preserve user and volunteer groups, identifying major donors, and maintaining the donor database in collaboration with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. This will be a key position partnering with the Executive Director to build a broad- and sustaining-base of support for the future of this young and vital organization.

Status: Full-time; reports directly to the Executive Director

Responsibilities:

50% Implement three-year individual giving plan - Coordinate five mailings per year, including writing letters, producing follow up mailings, follow up phone calls, and thank you letters; Assist in coordinating annual fundraising event; Assist in coordinating annual membership event; Coordinating 6 membership outings per year.

25% Growing Friends network - Conduct prospect research for major donors; Assist Executive Director and Board by coordinating major donor cultivation; Identify local steward, volunteer, user, and constituency groups and send membership invitations to each; Assist Executive Director in strengthening these new relationships by identifying contacts and coordinating presentations.

25% Mechanics - Manage membership database; Expand and manage email database; Produce thank you notes for every donor on a weekly basis; Generate membership and individual-giving reports.

Requirements:

1. Committed to growing organization for the long-term and working in a highly collaborative environment;
2. Must be highly interested and committed to open space preservation and dedicated to improving the state of environmental issues in Cook County;
3. Three years experience in non-profit fundraising preferred but not required; at least one year should include significant personal solicitation activities;
4. Excellent interpersonal skills and experience in working as a team player with people of different races, ages, and backgrounds.
5. Excellent verbal, written, and administrative skills;
6. PC literate with strong skills in word processing and spreadsheets required, experience with database software (MS Access) preferred;
7. Highly organized and demonstrated dependability through adherence to timelines

and schedules; 8. Energetic, creative, and open-minded in approach, while comfortable in receiving direction; 9. Access to a car required; 10. Ability to work flexible hours required. 11. Cook County resident preferred; 12. Bachelor's degree preferred.

Salary and benefits: \$35,000 - Two weeks vacation, plus holidays; Health coverage; 403(b) retirement plan; Excellent prospects for increased salary in the near future; Reviews at 6 and 12 months

Email or snail mail your cover letter and resume to: Benjamin Cox, Executive Director Friends of the Forest Preserves; 205 W. Monroe St., 4th Floor; Chicago, IL 60606-5006
Email: benjamin@fotfp.org. No phone calls, please.

Canadian Aquatic Invasive Species Network (CAISN) Manager

CAISN is an NSERC-funded, collaborative research network involving 25 faculty from 15 universities, provincial and federal government agencies, shipping and aquaculture industries, and conservation partners who will work to address one of the most serious threats to biodiversity. The network will examine the colonization of Canadian freshwater and marine ecosystems by aquatic invasive species, and develop risk assessment and mitigation strategies. The Manager will work to support the CAISN's Science Committee and Management Board on matters pertaining to activities of the network, including but not limited to liaison with network investigators and partners, data management, and preparation of reports for financial reviews, appropriations and accounting in conjunction with university staff. The Manager will possess a background (MSc or higher) in science and administration, and will be based at the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research. The position is for one year, renewable for four additional years contingent on funding. Please send application materials consisting of a cover letter, curriculum vitae and names of 3 references to Prof. Hugh MacIsaac, Director, CAISN, Great Lakes Institute, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4. Email: invasion@uwindsor.ca. Closing date for applications is July 28, 2006.

III. WORKSHOPS AND OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

New Invasive – Dog-Strangling Vine/Black Swallowwort Webcast

ONLINE Wednesday, July 12 from 11:45 to 1:00 pm Eastern time for a presentation and discussion on the invasive *Cynanchum louiseae* (dog-strangling vine or black swallowwort). Ever heard of dog-strangling vine? Black-swallowwort? This invasive, *Cynanchum louiseae*, is new to Michigan, but has been threatening natural areas on the east coast of the United States for a while. Join us as we talk with people with experience in tackling this invasive. What does it look like? What are the impacts of this plant on our natural areas? How does it spread? What control techniques and timing are effective? This webcast of The Stewardship Network is hosted and sponsored by MSU Global Ventures with support from the USFS Northern Initiatives Electronic Commons. To join the meeting, please click on the following link www.stewardshipnetworkwebcast.org on Wednesday, July 12 anytime after 11:45am EDT: and log in anytime after 11:45am Eastern time. If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact Todd Shunneson at 414-254-0122. We'd also encourage everyone to do a quick trial run AHEAD OF TIME (by going to http://www.instantlyglobal.com/system_test) to make sure you are able to access the meeting on your computer. If you try beforehand and encounter difficulties Todd will be able to help you discover what the problem is. Once you have logged in to the meeting, you will be able to ask questions of and share information with these experts and others who join us online. You will be able to hear the presenters through speakers on your computer (make sure they are turned on!). You will be able to share your thoughts, ideas, questions, and perspective via your keyboard. Participants will be able to see everyone's typed comments.

Habitat Clinic – Waterfall Glen, July 22

The Habitat Project and the Volunteer Stewardship Network invite all restoration volunteers, monitors, interpreters, and advocates to join us this spring and summer for Habitat Clinics at various sites in different parts of Chicago Wilderness. The next habitat clinic is scheduled for Saturday, July 22 from 2-5 pm at Waterfall Glen in DuPage County. Details of the clinic are listed below. Information about this and other habitat clinics are available on line at www.habitatproject.org. Please register by e-mailing Shelley Ancheta at chicagowildthings@yahoo.com or calling 847-965-9239. Habitat clinics are for Chicago Wilderness conservation volunteers (current and potential).

Waterfall Glen, DuPage County - Saturday, July 22, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

NOTE: The Habitat Clinic will take place at the Bluff Savanna area of Waterfall Glen.

Owned by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, this 2,474 acre forest preserve has ravines, steep bedrock outcroppings, woodlands, marsh, a remnant dry prairie, 500 acres of oak-hickory savannas, kettle ponds, and a dolomite prairie. In addition to more than 600 native plant species, it harbors red-shouldered hawks, barred owls, bobcats, and more. Greg Rajskey, former steward and now current co-steward at Bluff Savanna, will lead a team of presenters that will include other stewards from this huge site, Bob Fisher, bird monitor, and possibly a DuPage county plant ecologist. They will tell how they deal with:

- Excessive Deer Browse Deer are managed to fight overpopulation.
- Recreational Pressures A serious problem due to the highly erodable clay soils on sloping bluffs.
- Oak Regeneration

Directions: From I-55 (Stevenson Expressway), take the Lemont Road exit south, about two miles, to Bluff Road (past the crest of the Des Plaines River Valley). Turn left onto Bluff Road and follow it back up the hill to the chain link gate. A greeter will direct you to the parking area.

Lichen Survey at Midewin

Want to explore the unusual side of Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie? Rich Hyerczyk, Director of Education Programs at the Morton Arboretum, will be doing a long-term survey of lichens on Midewin. Learn the truth about this misunderstood organism with a split personality (the lichen...not Rich): part fungus, part alga. Rich is looking for volunteers who can spend time with him stalking the wild lichens of Midewin. In return, he will hold informal yet informative workshops before heading into the field. Most work will be done on weekends, Saturdays and/or Sundays, starting in late summer or early fall, dates to be determined. For more information, call 815-423-2148.

Chicago Wilderness Program Evaluation Workshop*

As part of its Chicago Wilderness (CW) funded professional development workshop series, the CW Education Team will offer a workshop on program evaluation on July 20 from 9am-4 pm at The Field Museum. There is a \$20 registration fee. This all-day workshop, facilitated by Lucy Knight of Knight Consulting, is designed to provide CW members with skills to more successfully evaluate their education programs. The registration form is posted on the CW member web site at <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/members/calendar/index.cfm>. Please register by July 17. The workshop planning committee is still interested in identifying examples of evaluation methodologies currently being employed by CW members that can be shared during the afternoon portion of the workshop. If you have an evaluation tool that you would be interested in sharing please contact Chris Mulvaney at cmulvaney@chicagowilderness.org or 847-242-6424. Your evaluation technique will not be critiqued but will be used as an example that others may want to utilize.

Chicago Wilderness New Member Orientation*

An orientation is planned for current and new members of the Chicago Wilderness consortium on Thursday, July 27 from 1-3 pm. The orientation is an opportunity to learn more about the structure of the consortium, the benefits and expectations of membership, information on the grants available through CW and will also be a networking opportunity. The orientation is free and is generously hosted by the US EPA in their offices at 77 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL in room #325. For more information or to RSVP, contact Michelle Uting, CW manager of membership and government relations, at 847-965-9253 or muting@chicagowilderness.org.

Restoring Plant Diversity to Prairie Wetlands: Seed Ecology of Sedges

A seminar presented by Dr. Karin Kettenring, Visiting researcher at The Morton Arboretum. To be held on Thursday, July 13, 2006 at the Cudahy Auditorium. A seminar will be held at 2:30-3:30 pm with a reception following at 3:30 pm. For more information, visit The Morton Arboretum website at www.mortonarb.org.

In the prairie pothole region of the mid-continental U.S., plant recolonization in most hydrologically restored wetlands occurs through natural dispersal. Little emphasis has been placed on accelerating succession through seeding or planting of native species. While some plants return quickly, others do not, especially the sedges of genus *Carex*, which are the dominant species and vegetation of seasonally flooded wetlands. The slow establishment of *Carex* spp. is problematic because potential sites for recolonization are preempted by the invasive reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), resulting in a wetland with low plant diversity and little wildlife habitat value. Karin's doctoral research entailed evaluating why *Carex* are not returning to restorations through studies of (1) seed availability, using seeds traps placed in restored and natural wetlands in northwest Iowa to quantify the seed rain; and (2) seed germination, in which seeds of 5 *Carex* spp. were sown into restorations and neighboring natural wetlands. At restored sites, all sedges were limited by seed availability but germinated well when sown into plots, indicating that practitioners should sow *Carex* seeds into restorations to achieve the diversity characteristic of natural wetlands. Karin also conducted dormancy and germination growth chamber studies with 14 *Carex* spp. to determine optimal germination conditions. Her work demonstrates that to accelerate succession of native *Carex* spp., practitioners should stratify seeds and then sow them early in the spring before the establishment of plant canopies to ensure optimal light and temperature conditions for *Carex* germination. Karin is a visiting researcher at The Morton Arboretum and The Pritzker Laboratory of The Field Museum, working under a Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Fund grant to The Morton Arboretum. She is beginning as a Postdoctoral Fellow at The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center this Fall.

IV. CONFERENCES AND OTHER EVENTS

Wild Ones National Conference, July 14-16, 2006 in Naperville

The conference Native Plant Landscaping, More than a Garden, It's a Lifestyle will feature courses on a wide variety of exciting topics as well as speakers and tours. The program features six tracks: Plants, Design, Habitat/Ecosystems, Animals/Wildlife, Bringing It to the Masses, Attitudes and Perceptions, and The Next Generation. Speakers include Michael Jeffords (Illinois Natural History Survey), Gerould Wilhelm (botanist and co-author of the Chicago plant encyclopedia *Plants of the Chicago Region*) and Darrel Morrison (School of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia). The conference also includes a Wild Ones photo contest; photos will be displayed at the conference. For more information or to register,

go to www.for-wild.org/conference/2006. For exhibit and sponsorship opportunities contact Marie Herman at marie@mrhenterprises.com.

BioBlitz 2006 in St. Joseph County Parks, South Bend, IN

A BioBlitz is scheduled in St. Joseph County Parks, South Bend, Indiana on September 23. The St. Patrick's County Park is 293 acre site that has a diverse amount of habitat including woodlands, open grassy areas, wetlands and riverfront (St. Joseph River). The scientific data generated at the BioBlitz will help guide park management plans and new information about plants and animals living in the park can be incorporated into interpretive programs. For more information contact Maria Peacock, Interpretive Services Manager, St. Joseph County Parks, 50651 Laurel Road, South Bend, IN 46637, Tel. 574-277-4828 or mpeacock@sjcparks.org.

Inspiring Conservation: The 2006 Chicago Wilderness Congress

Planning for the November 15, 2006 CW Congress is in full swing, with assistance from the consulting firm of Great Chicago Events. The 2006 Congress, at Northwestern University's Norris Center in Evanston, IL, will include more than fifteen sessions on topics such as ecology and restoration, outreach and education, land management, and aquatic concerns. New this year will be the opportunity to register online. More information about registration will be available on the Save the Date cards arriving in the next month. If you are interested in presenting during the poster session or displaying information, please contact Catherine Bendowitz at cbendowitz@chicagowilderness.org or 312-580-2137.

V. GRANTS AND OTHER RESOURCES

Patagonia Environmental Grant Program

The Patagonia Environmental Grant Program supports the environmental work of small, grassroots activist organizations with direct-action agendas, working on multi-pronged campaigns to preserve and protect our environment. Patagonia primarily funds local groups working to protect local habitat. The company's philosophy is that the individual battles to protect a specific stand of forest, stretch of river, or indigenous wild species are the most effective in raising more complicated issues - particularly those of biodiversity and ecosystem protection - in the public mind. Funded programs should be quantifiable, with specific goals, objectives, and action plans, and should include measures for evaluating success. Applications are accepted during the months of April and August of each year. The upcoming deadline is August 31, 2006. Most grants are in the range of \$3,000 to \$8,000. Visit the website listed below for detailed funding guidelines.

<http://www.patagonia.com/web/us/patagonia.go?assetid=2927>

Acres for America

Acres for America, a partnership between Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (<http://www.nfwf.org/>), was established to provide funding for projects that conserve important habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants through acquisition of interest in real property. Endorsement by appropriate federal, state, and local government agencies that the acquisition is of high conservation value is a primary consideration. Preference will be given to acquisitions that are part of published conservation plans, State Wildlife Action Plans, or Endangered Species Act Recovery Plans. Applicants are strongly urged to contact the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation regional director in their area to discuss project ideas prior to submitting pre-proposals. The deadline is September 1, 2006 (Pre-proposal). Complete program and application information available at <http://fconline.fdncenter.org/pnd/10003235/nfwf>

SeaWorld/Busch Gardens/Fujifilm Environmental Excellence Awards

The 2007 SeaWorld/Busch Gardens/Fujifilm Environmental Excellence Awards will recognize the outstanding efforts of students, teachers, and community groups across the United States who are working at the grassroots level to protect and preserve the environment. All schools (grades K-12) in the U.S. are eligible to apply. Projects must be sponsored by a formally recognized school group, such as a grade level, classroom, or club. Public, private, and licensed home schools are all eligible to apply. Individual students (i.e., science fair projects) and previous award-winning projects are not eligible to apply. Community-based projects, such as those managed and operated by community service organizations, public recreation centers, 4-H clubs, and other public, nonprofit groups working to protect the environment at the grassroots level are also eligible to apply. Eight projects will be selected. Each winning group will receive \$10,000 to benefit the award-winning project; an all-expenses paid trip for three students and one adult leader to an Anheuser-Busch theme park for a special awards event; a Fuji-film digital camera for use by award-winning group; a hundred T-shirts to share with school and community partners; and award trophy and certificates for every student/group leader participant. From the eight projects, one outstanding environmental educator/leader will be recognized. That educator will receive \$5,000; an all-expenses-paid trip for themselves and one guest to an Anheuser-Busch theme park for a special awards event; a Fujifilm digital camera; an all-expenses- paid trip to the 2007. National Science Teachers Association (<http://www.nsta.org/>) national conference; and an award trophy and certificate. Visit the program's Web site for complete application information and examples of previous award winners. Deadline to apply is November 30, 2006.
<http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/pnd/10002937/swbg-animals>

Chicago Wilderness Site Finder Helps the Public Find You!*

The Site Finder was added to the Chicago Wilderness (CW) public Web site to encourage visitation to local natural areas. If your organization owns or manages natural areas, the Site Finder is an excellent way to direct the public to them, and to advertise the programs and activities offered at those sites. To add your organization's sites, simply complete the form located at www.chicagowilderness.org/explore/sites/nasearch/entry. If you have questions about finding this page or how to use it, contact Catherine Bendowitz, CW program coordinator, at cbendowitz@chicagowilderness.org or 312-580-2137. And don't forget, you can also add events and volunteer opportunities to the CW web site at <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/whats happening/all/index.cfm> and <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/involve/volunteer/all/index.cfm>, respectively.

CW Excellence in Conservation Awards*

The Chicago Wilderness Excellence in Conservation Awards program was started in 2004 as an opportunity to recognize and celebrate both the work and the spirit of the conservation efforts underway in our region. The awards honor three categories of conservation work that advance the goals of the Biodiversity Recovery Plan: *Individual achievement – volunteers; *Individual achievement – professionals; *Projects, programs and/or initiatives: - organizations with a budget of less than \$100K, - organizations with a budget of more than \$100K. Submission deadline: September 17, 2006. Awards will be presented at the Chicago Wilderness Congress on November 15, 2006 at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. For more information on the award or to apply, visit <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/members/repository/folders/index.cfm?folderid=231> or contact Michelle Uting at muring@chicagowilderness.org or 847-965-9253.

2006 Conservation and Native Landscaping Awards*

Chicago Wilderness, in partnership with the US Environmental Protection Agency, uses the Conservation and Native Landscaping Award program to recognize sites that are exemplary in

the use of native landscaping and/or demonstrate the principles and best practices of conservation-style development. The program is also designed to raise awareness about conservation and native landscaping practices and encourage their use. Sites within the CW region owned or managed by corporations, non-profits, developers, public sector entities or public-private partnerships can be nominated for an award. Reviews of the nominated sites will be conducted through September, and the sites that best demonstrate support of nature and biodiversity within the CW region will receive awards at a recognition ceremony in the fall. For more information or to apply, visit <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/greenacres/landscapeaward2006.html>. If you have questions about the awards, contact Danielle Green at 312-886-7594 or green.danielle@epa.gov. The nomination deadline is July 21, 2006

Chicago Wilderness Small Grants*

The CW consortium is accepting proposals for small grants (generally not to exceed \$15,000). Grants are directed to those member organizations working on projects that help to implement the Biodiversity Recovery Plan. To apply for a small grant, please read the RFP and guidelines available in the highlights box on the homepage of the CW member web site at <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/members>. The deadline is September 13, 2006. Questions may be directed to Catherine Bendowitz, CW program coordinator, at cbendowitz@chicagowilderness.org or 312-580-2137

Insects: Their Natural History and Diversity With a Photographic Guide to Insects of Eastern North America

Author: Stephen A. Marshall

Meticulously research and illustrated with color photographs, this newly released book is a landmark reference book that is ideal for any naturalist or entomologist. To enhance exact identification of insects, the photographs in this encyclopedic reference were taken in the field – and are not pinned specimens. The more than 50 pages of picture keys, containing hundreds of illustrations, lead to the appropriate chapter and specific photos to confirm identification. The keys are surprisingly comprehensive and easy for non-specialists to use. This book features: detailed chapters covering all insect orders and insect families of eastern North America; a brief examination of common families of related terrestrial arthropods; 4,000 color photographs illustrating typical behaviors and key characteristics; 28 picture keys for quick and accurate insect identification; and expert guidance on observing, collecting, and photographing insects. For more information or to order this book visit the following website: <http://www.fireflybooks.com/advance/bookdetail.asp?id=8760>

A Handbook for Stream Enhancement & Stewardship

Prepared by The Izaak Walton League, this newly released handbook provides a consolidation of much otherwise-dispersed information into a well organized and clearly written single volume. This handbook is a basic resource for individuals, classes, organizations, volunteer groups, or communities-- and for those who mentor them -- wishing to carry out environmentally sound, cost-effective stream corridor assessment, enhancement, and stewardship programs. This resource is of great value to readers who want to acquire a solid grasp of the fundamentals of assessing the physical condition and ecological well-being of streams, of what might be done to improve the stability and ecological health of stream corridors, and of implementing effective stream enhancement and stewardship programs in their communities. For more information or for ordering information, visit the following website www.mwpubco.com/stream.htm.

Pitcher Plants of the Americas – Coming This Summer

Pitcher Plants of the Americas by Stewart McPherson presents the most extensive general review of the pitcher plants of the Americas yet undertaken – it is a substantive overview of the systematics, biology, ecology, biogeography, conservation, and horticulture of the five

genera of American pitcher plants (*s.l.*), and their member species, hybrids, and cultivars. This book includes detailed descriptions of three genera of true pitcher plants (*Darlingtonia*, *Heliamphora*, and *Sarracenia*) and two genera of carnivorous tank bromeliads (*Brocchinia* and *Catopsis*), a review of the conservation status and needs of the pitcher plants, and a consideration of the role of horticulture in increasing awareness of and interest in the group. This beautiful and informative study of these alluring plants will contain more than 200 spectacular photographs, and will be appreciated by a wide audience of naturalists, botanists, ecologists, biogeographers, resource managers, and horticulturists – among others! For more information and/or ordering information visit the following website:
www.mwpubco.com/PitcherPlants.htm.

VI. JUST FOR FUN

Natural Materials for the Arts

Next spring, The Morton Arboretum is hosting an exciting artist who will build sculptures made out of natural materials. These sculptures will be built on site throughout our grounds. For this project, Patrick Dougherty will utilize woody plant material by the truckloads to build these pieces which resemble 'nests, cocoons, hives, and lairs built by animals, as well as the manmade forms of huts, haystacks, and baskets'. In preparation for this installation, we need to secure the plant material, primarily saplings, for Patrick's work. If you are planning projects that will cull willow, maple, gum, or elm saplings, then we may be able to take them off your hands. These need to be: 1" diameter, 6-12' long, or 1/2" diameter, 4-6' long. This material cannot be collected from your site until mid-late winter, and it cannot be seasoned or dried. Unfortunately, his work doesn't allow for the use of honeysuckle or buckthorn. If you think you can supply materials for this project, or if you have specific questions, then please Kurt Dreisilker, Manager of Natural Resources, The Morton Arboretum at (630) 725-2093.

A Time for Blackberries

From: *Essays on Nature* by Virginia S. Eifert, 1967

July and August are wild blackberry time in Illinois. It is a pleasant, warm season when the juicy black globules ripen under the summer sun – globules which, in spite of the surrounding fortress of thorns, nevertheless are taken as part of the summer's annual provender by many creatures other than man. Man comes with his pails and pans and picks blackberries for pies and jellies and jams and wines, but during the quiet hours when people are not in the berry patch, the animals and birds come there to dine.

The berry-eaters come – the robins and catbirds and brown thrashers, the bluebirds and grosbeaks and waxwings – to eat ripe blackberries until beaks are stained and the birds sit about in rapt satiety with no room for more. Chipmunks from the nearby woods come to the upland pasture or along the country lane to visit the blackberry patches. Not just for the flesh are the berries gathered – the chipmunks prefer the hard seeds inside. The bobwhites come; they, too, eat blackberries for their seeds.

The blackberry tangles themselves are a specialized sort of environment in which certain mammals and birds find haven and a way of life. Since long before Br'er Rabbit and Peter Rabbit made a made dash to safety in the Dear Old Brier Patch, blackberry bushes have provided shelter for many a rabbit and wood mouse and chipmunk. Few foes except the lean and sinuous weasel can follow game among the thorny canes.

Birds live, too, in the realm of blackberries. Brown thrashes and cardinals nest here. And always the Bell's vireo, quiet and small, builds a neat, tight basket which is swung from a cane

so securely that often the old nests of other years last through still another season among the haunts of blackberries. (July 1951)

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