



michigan nature association

july-sept 2008
newsletter

dedicated to the preservation of michigan's natural heritage since 1952

volume 57 issue 3



From the Director

When powerful storms ripped through much of Michigan in early June, we saw that nature is still quite capable of breaking human-made bonds. The electricity was out in the MNA office for two days, guiding our work to non-computerized tasks and giving pause for thought on human desire to control nature.

For millennia, humans have worked to tame nature. But plants still grow in the sidewalk cracks, ants still march over the kitchen counter, dams still break from nature's force, and buildings still crumble in the face of earthquakes.



In some ways nature is critically fragile and in other ways it is remarkably adaptable. The Michigan Nature Association has always focused on protecting the natural systems on the fragile end of the spectrum. Protecting vulnerable habitats and species means that MNA must put proportionately more effort into each acre of land we protect because each acre is more susceptible to impacts from human activity than the average acre of land.

Many of the human-made threats to our native habitats can be controlled or at least minimized, though often with great effort. Trash can be picked up; barriers can be put in place to stop off-road vehicle trespass; mechanical and chemical control of invasive species can eventually minimize their impact. Though all the resources in the world may never eradicate all invasive species, we are at least empowered with the knowledge that MNA's increased efforts over the past five years are making a marked impact.

Some human-induced threats arrive in the form of nature itself, as invasive species do. Today, we face new human-induced threats in the form of one of nature's strongest forces – weather. The challenge for MNA will be great, as we work to protect the places we preserve forever. Nobody knows what climate change will bring to the world, much less to Michigan specifically. Are the falling water levels in the Great Lakes a result of climate change? Will the Upper Peninsula become warmer or colder?

What we do know is that spring wildflowers have been blooming earlier each year for over a decade now. Many of you, especially photographers, have noticed that your spring excursions are coming earlier each year. We do know that plants found in southern Michigan are now more common farther north and that northerly species are becoming less common farther south. Red maple is becoming more common in northern Michigan as sugar maple is slowly disappearing from forests in the bottom of the Mitten. We are aware that invasive plant species, often from warmer climates in Europe or Asia, respond positively to small changes in temperatures. It has taken almost a hundred years for garlic mustard to become a widespread invasive in Michigan, reaching the Cut River bridge in the U.P.'s Mackinac County only in the last decade.

The Michigan Nature Association is taking action that will help Michigan deal with both human-induced and natural phenomena. The constant efforts to control invasive species help to ensure that if plant species do change over time due to changes in climate, they will be native species from southern Michigan or Ohio, not invasives from Eurasia.

Though we do not definitively know what changes will occur to Michigan's natural systems, we do know that with your help, MNA will be there to ensure that change happens in the best way possible.

Jeremy Emmi
Executive Director

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Monday through Friday**

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Notice to Members

At the regular September board meeting, the Board of Trustees expect to vote on an amendment to the by-laws that will provide a procedure by which a Trustee may be removed from office for misfeasance by a supermajority vote of the Board.

Michigan Nature Association's Mission

The purpose of the Michigan Nature Association is to acquire, protect and maintain natural areas that contain examples of Michigan endangered and threatened flora, fauna and other components of the natural environment, including habitat for fish, wildlife and plants of the state of Michigan and to carry on a program of natural history study and conservation education as permitted under the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Every Sanctuary Has A Story ...

Saginaw Wetlands Nature Sanctuary



Photo by Ryan O'Connor

This photo from 2007 shows a portion of the sanctuary that is benefitting from the reintroduction of fire via a controlled burn earlier last year.

By Sherri Laier, MNA Stewardship Director

We are ready to share one of our best kept secrets: The Saginaw Wetlands Nature Sanctuary. This 156-acre sanctuary is home to the rarest plant community in Michigan - the lake plain prairie.

Saginaw Wetlands Nature Sanctuary, protected since 1984 by Michigan Nature Association and located in Huron County is considered one of the highest quality examples of this special type of prairie. Home to unique and rare plants, the landscape provides important breeding habitat for grassland birds, waterfowl and other migratory birds, while providing habitat for a diverse array of mammals, reptiles and rare insects.

Of the nearly 160,000 acres of lake plain prairie estimated in the 1800's in Michigan less than 0.5% remain

today. In fact, according to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI), only 15 such prairies exist in Michigan, ranging in size from 8 to 265 acres.

The culprits: conversion to agriculture, residential and industrial development, alterations of ground water hydrology, and fire suppression. In the Saginaw Bay area, extensive drainage networks have been built lowering the water table. The combination of suppression of natural and cultural fires and the lower water table allows for the invasion of shrubs and trees.

Biological Perspective

Lake plain prairies are maintained as open grasslands by a combination of disturbances: flooding, drought and periodic wildfires. Spring flooding

is followed by summer drought conditions that persist throughout the growing season. When these disturbances are in place, the grassland is kept free of woody vegetation.

According to the MNFI biological abstract on lake plain prairies, the accumulation of organic material within these wetlands and drought conditions during the growing season made the lake plain prairies prone to wildfires, which limited the encroachment of woody vegetation. They go on to say that it remains unclear whether lightning strikes or Native American activities had a more significant role in the maintenance of lake plain prairie.

It is clear that Native Americans used dune ridges on the lake plain for settlements and trails. As elsewhere

in the state, it is quite likely that fires periodically resulted from this use, spreading to adjacent savanna and grassland. One indication of the significance of fire on the lake plain is the fact that many of the historical oak savannas located along the beach ridges have become closed-canopy oak forests during the last century of fire suppression. You can see this is the case in the two maps that we provide of the sanctuary.

Our Sanctuary

The recent acquisition of 60 acres at Saginaw Wetlands required us to submit a review with the State Historic Preservation Office. We learned that there is an archaeological site located on the sanctuary. Native Americans certainly played a role at Saginaw Wetlands. We cannot say for sure how much or when, but it is fun to imagine the different scenarios. We have provided an aerial photo from 1941 showing open savanna areas. In the more recent aerial, you see a closed canopy as described by MNFI.

We wanted to approach management of this unique sanctuary very carefully. A variety of research questions came to the forefront along with a myriad of management needs. This past year a host of partners stepped forward and matched funds to work together to fund research and stewardship on the lake plain prairie system and its inhabitants.

We continue to learn the impacts of fire on the system and on the rare plants as we add controlled burns to the management efforts on different rotations. So far we are seeing no negative effects of burning on this system. This spring we added an oak woodland area to a burn unit that included the lakeplain prairie.

We have studied the pollinators of the rare plants to understand if their populations are healthy enough to support the plants, or whether they need captive rearing or the plants need hand pollination. We now know that the pollinators are in good shape and doing a great job on the prairie! In fact, our researchers found two rare insects we did not know we had at the sanctuary during the course of



The photo on the left, from 1941, and the photo on the right, from 1998, both show the Saginaw Wetlands Nature Sanctuary. You can see the increase in tree cover (darker areas) that occurred due to the lower water table and suppression of fire.

the study.

We are wrapping up a comprehensive shrub study to learn the effects of different herbicides, concentrates and timing on invasive shrubs. This will make our work as effective and efficient as possible.

We have mapped all the rare plants and most of the invasive plants on the sanctuary to create priority management areas.

One of the most exciting things to come out of these partnerships was a federal grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act that we were awarded with the help of Ducks Unlimited. With the funds from this grant we purchased a little over 60 acres of lake plain prairie and oak uplands that was the key parcel joining us to state land. Now our 156 acre sanctuary becomes part of a much bigger protected wetland complex covering thousands of acres.

This sanctuary is a gem that can only be visited with an MNA guide. Please join us on one of our volunteer

days this summer or come along for a full education on our fall member's adventure on October 10-12, where you will see our management units and prairie restoration while experiencing this phenomenal and secret place in its full fall glory.

Abstract Citation:

Albert, D. A., and M. A. Kost. 1998. Natural community abstract for lake plain wet prairie. Michigan Natural Features Inventory, Lansing, MI. 4 pp.



The green milkweed shown here is one of the many flowers found at Saginaw Wetlands

Photo by Sherri Laier

Saginaw Wetlands Nature Sanctuary Partners

Ducks Unlimited

Michigan DEQ – Coastal Management Zone

Michigan DNR Wildlife Division – Saginaw Bay Management Unit

Michigan DNR Wildlife Division – Landowner Incentive Program

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Saginaw Bay - Watershed Initiative Network

Michigan Natural Features Inventory

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Brown-headed Cowbirds: Nomads of the Avian World

By Keith Saylor, MNA steward

In MNA's Red Cedar River Plant Preserve this spring a white-breasted nuthatch pair were flying to and from their nest cavity to keep their little ones fed. A female Baltimore oriole had recently laid her eggs in her beautiful basket nest and many other bird species were busy preparing their nests or were already well into the nest cycle.

On this particular day, though it could have been any spring day in any year, a pair of song sparrows were frantically racing back and forth in the underbrush in response to the constant call of a very hungry and persistent juvenile that had recently fledged the nest. If the observer was curious enough and watched patiently, he or she would have witnessed something sure to evoke wonder and amazement. The song sparrow parent approached its baby to feed it and, there before the observer's eyes, a young bird larger than the parent came into view and aggressively rushed the parent with fluttering wide-spread wings to satisfy its desire for food. The juvenile looked as if it would collide with the parent as it raced for food. However, this skilled parent had learned and quickly side-stepped the barreling juvenile and at the same time deposited a small larva into the baby's mouth as it almost tumbled in its attempt to correct for its mother's dexterity.

Welcome to the world of nesting bird species parasitized by the brown-headed cowbird. The brown-headed cowbird pair does not build a nest and raise its young like other bird species. This behavior is called "brood parasitism," meaning the female brown-headed cowbird lays her eggs in the nest of other bird species to be incubated and fed to fledging. Cowbird parasitism is common in the avian community among species like warblers, vireos, and sparrows. The cowbird usually



Above: A drawing of adult male (darker) and female (lighter) brown-headed cowbirds. The rest of the photos were taken by Keith Saylor.

seeks host species that are smaller in body mass than itself. This is considered an adaptation to increase the chances of their young surviving competition with the young of the host species. Cowbirds often lay their eggs in a host species nest before the host has laid her own. The photo to the right shows an example of a chipping sparrow nest in which two cowbirds eggs have been laid. If the host responds by beginning incubation before laying her own eggs, the cowbird young will gain a developmental advantage as incubation fosters embryonic development.

It is not always true that cowbirds will locate a host nest

before the host lays her eggs. The photo at the top of page 7 shows a chipping sparrow nest containing three blue chipping sparrow eggs and a single cowbird egg.



Whether the cowbird young hatch before, at the same time, or after the host's own young, they usually



have the developmental advantage. They are usually larger than the host's young upon hatching and they show a distinctive aggressiveness when competing for the host parent's attention. The cowbird juveniles grow quickly and fill the nest cup with their body mass. The young of the host species are often launched from the nest as the very demanding and aggressive cowbird juvenile thrusts its body upwards and flaps its wings to get food from the host species. The young cowbird does not intentionally push the host's young from the nest. It is the result of the aggressive nature of the cowbird's thrusting for the host parent's attention. The young of the host species often perish because they become trapped beneath the much larger cowbird juvenile and are unable to struggle for food. Below is an image of a red-eyed vireo nest parasitized by a cowbird and cowbird juveniles.

The juvenile with the yellow



bill is a red-eyed vireo. The much larger juvenile almost filling the cup of the nest is a juvenile brown-headed cowbird. When the nest was observed two days later, the red-eyed vireo juvenile was on the ground, apparently thrust from the nest off the back of the juvenile cowbird. It is easy to imagine the much larger cowbird pushing the smaller vireo from the nest when it raises itself

to get food from the adult vireos. The next image shows the cowbird juvenile completely filling the cup of the nest. None of the three young from the host species survived.



The cowbird juvenile fledged the nest. The young of the song sparrow pair seemed to meet the same fate as the vireo young. The song sparrows were not observed feeding juveniles of their own species.



In the 1897 book "Bird Neighbors" Neltje "Nellie" Blanchan wrote of the Brown-headed Cowbird:

"Polygamous and utterly irresponsible for its offspring, this bird forms a striking contrast to other feathered neighbors, and indeed is almost an anomaly in the animal kingdom. In the breeding season an unnatural mother may be seen skulking about in the trees and shrubbery, seeking for nests in which to place a surreptitious egg, never imposing it upon a bird of its size, but selecting in a cowardly way a small nest, as that of the vireos or warblers or chipping sparrows, and there leaving the hatching and care of its young to the tender mercies of some already burdened little mother. It has been seen to remove an egg from the nest of the red-eyed vireo in order to place one of its own in its place."

It is certainly the case that the brown-headed cowbird can frustrate the observer and there are, no doubt, good reasons why concern for some sensitive avian species (like the Kirtland's Warbler) has prompted scientists to support and call for the ongoing management of cowbirds in breeding habitat of the Kirtland's Warbler. With that said, the amazing adaptive behavior of this native bird should be a source of wonder and no small amount of respect. The brown-headed cowbird's success in the struggle for life is a powerful testimony to the adaptability of the natural world.

Become a Steward

The Michigan Nature Association relies heavily on volunteer stewards to help maintain our sanctuaries. The basic requirement for becoming a steward is to visit the sanctuary twice a year and report on its condition. Many stewards go above and beyond by leading field trips and work days but it is not required.

By becoming a steward you not only help the MNA protect its sanctuaries, but you'll also be able to get into the field and see the amazing events that happen in nature, such as the cowbird's story documented here. If you are interested in becoming a steward please contact Natalie Kent at (517) 655-5655 or nkent@michigannature.org.

MNA is currently in particular need for stewards in these counties:

- Chippewa
- Delta
- Lenawee
- Mackinac
- Muskegon
- Schoolcraft
- St. Joseph

MNA Schedule of Activities

Welcome to the MNA Schedule of Activities!

As you know, Michigan weather can be unpredictable. For this reason, it is important to register for these activities so we can notify you in case of a cancellation. Please remember to verify your contact

information when you register by calling the office at (517) 655-5655, or e-mailing volunteer@michigannature.org.

When joining us for a Volunteer Day, please remember to wear sturdy boots and gloves, and bring water and a snack or lunch.

July Volunteer Days

Thursday, July 10

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres



Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



MNA co-founders Joan and Louis Senghas's great granddaughter visits MNA's original sanctuary, which was recently renamed in memory of Louis.

Photo by Natalie Kent

Saturday, July 12

Meet at 9 a.m.

Alta Warren Parsons Memorial

Clare County – 80 acres



Help us clear debris from the loop trail here in preparation for the field trip that follows starting at 1 p.m.

Directions: From US-127, take US-10 West/MI-115 West and get off at the Old State Rd. exit. Turn north onto Old State Rd., drive for about a mile, and then turn west onto Ziggy Rd. Pull into the driveway of 1328 Ziggy Rd. and park at the end of the driveway.

Saturday, July 19

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Karner Blue

Newaygo County – 80 acres



Grab your gloves and help us pull invasive spotted knapweed that survived the May 2008 prescribed burn here.

Directions: Take M-37/M-82 north from downtown Newaygo and turn east onto Croton Dr. after passing over the Muskegon River (M-82 splits off going west at this same intersection). From Croton Dr., turn south onto Spruce Ave. and look for the new sanctuary sign. Park on the east or west side of Spruce Ave.

Sunday, July 13

Meet at 9 a.m.

Jackson Memorial and Leatherleaf Bog

Roscommon County – 40 acres



Help install the new sign for these unique bog sanctuaries. Call office for directions.

Wednesday, July 23

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Barvicks Sand Dunes

Van Buren County – 40 acres



Help us install the new sign at this diverse sanctuary with open dune, swamp forest and dry-mesic forest communities. Call office for directions.

Wednesday, July 16

Meet at 9 a.m.

Save-It-Creek

Genesee County – 32.35 acres



Help us install the new sanctuary entrance sign at this beautiful sanctuary. Steward Marlene Leaman and Stewardship Director Sherri Laier will lead a field trip of this interesting southern floodplain forest after the volunteer day.

Directions: From US-23, take the Thompson Road exit and drive 1.5 miles west on Thompson Road. Turn south onto Linden Road and then turn west onto Lahring Road. After you travel 3.5 miles on Lahring Road, turn south onto Seymour Road (go slow as you come over the hill) and then east onto Rolston Road. The sanctuary entrance is on the north side of Rolston Road, 0.4 miles east of Seymour Road.

Thursday, July 24

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres

Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



AUGUST VOLUNTEER DAYS

Tuesday, August 5

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sarah Janes

Hillsdale County – 186 acres

Help remove shrubs invading the unique wetland complex at this sanctuary. Call office for directions.



Don't forget to register for these Volunteer Days!

Call the office at (517) 655-5655 or e-mail volunteer@michigannature.org.

ies: July through October

Wednesday, August 6

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp.



Directions: From the North - Take M-24 South and turn East onto Burdick St., which will eventually become Lakeville Rd. Turn South onto Rochester Rd from Lakeville Rd.* From the South - Take M-53 North to 32 Mile Rd. Go West on 32 Mile Rd. and then turn North on Rochester Rd. Continue on Rochester Rd. until you reach a gravel turn area/parking lot on the West side of the road. Be sure to look for the MNA sign by the parking lot.

Thursday, August 7

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres

Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



Tuesday, August 12

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Wilcox Warnes

Macomb County – 45 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs from this mature mixed hardwood forest.



Directions: Head north on M-53 from M-59. Take the 26 Mile Road exit and head east on 26 Mile Road. Turn south on Schoenherr Road and look for the sanctuary entrance on the west of Schoenherr Road.

Tuesday, August 19

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sarah Janes

Hillsdale County – 186 acres

Help remove shrubs invading the unique wetland complex at this sanctuary. Call office for directions.



Wednesday, August 20

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp. See directions for the August 6 Volunteer Day.



Thursday, August 21

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres

Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



Don't forget to register for these Volunteer Days!

Call the office at (517) 655-5655 or e-mail volunteer@michigannature.org.

Saturday, August 23

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

McGaw Memorial

St. Clair County – 4.2 acres

Please help us repair MNA co-founder Bertha Daubendiek's house, which is adjacent to the sanctuary and now owned by MNA. Several projects involving yard work will also take place.



Directions: Take M-136 roughly 12 miles west of Port Huron and turn south onto Fargo Road. Go one mile on Fargo until it ends, then pull into the driveway ahead and slightly to the left of you – 7981 Beard Road.

SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEER DAYS

Saturday, September 6

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

McGaw Memorial

St. Clair County – 4.2 acres

Please help us remove invasive autumn olive and honeysuckle at this preserve along the valley of Mill Creek. See directions for the August 23 volunteer day.



Tuesday, September 9

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sarah Janes

Hillsdale County – 186 acres

Help remove shrubs invading the unique wetland complex at this sanctuary. Call office for directions.



Wednesday, September 10

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp. See directions for the August 6 Volunteer Day.



Thursday, September 11

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres

Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



Don't forget to register for these Volunteer Days!

Call the office at (517) 655-5655 or e-mail volunteer@michigannature.org.

Saturday, September 20

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Butternut Creek

Berrien County – 103 acres



Please help us remove invasive shrubs that are taking over this high-quality prairie fen. Call office for directions.

Wednesday, September 24

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp. See directions for the August 6 Volunteer Day.



Thursday, September 25

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saginaw Wetlands

Huron County – 156 acres

Contribute to the innovative research and management effort at this incredible sanctuary! Activities will involve removing invasive shrubs and/or collecting seeds to restore an adjacent old field to quality lakeplain prairie. Call office for directions.



OCTOBER VOLUNTEER DAYS

Tuesday, October 7

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Parsons Memorial

Clare County – 80 acres

Interested in seeing fall colors, Furgeson Lake and signs of beaver activity? Here's your chance to do so and also help remove autumn olive invading the upland forest of this sanctuary.

Directions: From US-127, take US-10 West/MI-115 West and get off at the Old State Road exit. Turn north onto Old State Road, drive for about a mile, and then turn west on Ziggy Road. Park along Ziggy Road where the road curves to the south (near mailbox #1328, about a half-mile from Old State Road.)



Wednesday, October 8

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp. See directions for the August 6 Volunteer Day.



Saturday, October 18

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Butternut Creek

Berrien County – 103 acres



Please help us remove invasive shrubs that are taking over this high-quality prairie fen. Call office for directions.

Tuesday, October 21

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rizor

Livingston County – 19.5 acres

Please help us remove several invasive shrubs here including autumn olive, honeysuckle, barberry and multiflora rose. After the volunteer day, join us for a trip to the local cider mill for fresh apple cider and donuts.



Directions: From northbound US-23, take exit 70 for Clyde Road. Cross over the expressway and turn right onto Old 23. Drive north 2 miles to Faussett Road, turn left, and drive $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to Shannon Glen Drive. Turn left onto Shannon Glen Drive and then right onto River Walk Drive. Continue to the cul-de-sac and park near the chain gate.

From southbound US-23, take exit 75 and turn right onto Center Road. Turn left onto Old 23 and follow it south two miles to Faussett Road. Turn right onto Faussett Road and follow the above directions from Faussett Road.

Wednesday, October 22

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lakeville Swamp

Oakland County – 76.35 acres

Help remove invasive shrubs and/or burn brush piles created during previous volunteer days at this diverse sanctuary with prairie fen, southern wet meadow, and relict conifer swamp. See directions for the August 6 Volunteer Day.



Thursday, October 23

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Parsons Memorial

Clare County – 80 acres

Interested in seeing Furgeson Lake and signs of beaver activity? Here's your chance to do so and also help remove autumn olive invading the upland forest of this sanctuary. See directions for the October 7 volunteer day.



Wednesday, October 29

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Krum Memorial

Montcalm County – 17 acres

Help remove invasive autumn olive from this beautiful sanctuary on Millmine Lake.



Directions: Take County Road 522 four miles east of Stanton. Look for the sanctuary entrance on the north side of County Road 522.



Photo by Natalie Kent

New volunteers, Karen and Abbie Harris, explore Radabaugh Memorial Plant Preserve.

JULY FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, July 12

Meet at 1 p.m.

Alta Warren Parsons Memorial

Clare County – 80 acres



Join Lower Peninsula Stewardship Coordinator Natalie Kent and members of the Parsons family for a walk along the sanctuary's loop trail. Along the way, we'll visit the cedar swamp and adjacent areas where recent autumn olive removal volunteer days have taken place and see what's left of the old sugar shack where the Parsons family made maple syrup. If you have time available before the field trip, please consider helping with trail improvement activities during the volunteer day that starts here at 9 a.m.

Directions: From US-127, take US-10 West/MI-115 West and get off at the Old State Rd. exit. Turn north onto Old State Rd., drive for about a mile, and then turn west onto Ziggy Rd. Pull into the driveway of 1328 Ziggy Rd. and park at the end of the driveway.

Saturday, July 12

Meet at 4 p.m.

Fred Dye

Mackinac County – 35.9 acres



Join steward George Ford for a tour of the prairie here that supports one of two known populations of purple coneflower in Michigan. Drinks will be generously provided by George.

Directions: Take M-123 about 8.5 miles northwest of Moran and look for the new sanctuary sign on the southwest side of M-123.

Wednesday, July 16

Meet at 11 a.m.

Save-It-Creek

Genesee County – 32.35 acres



Join steward Marlene Leaman and Stewardship Director Sherri Laier for a tour of this interesting southern floodplain forest in Genesee County. Please consider arriving early at 9 a.m. to help install the new sanctuary entrance sign.

Directions: From US-23, take the Thompson Road exit and drive 1.5 miles west on Thompson Road. Turn south onto Linden Road and then turn west onto Lahring Road. After you travel 3.5 miles on Lahring Road, turn south onto Seymour Road (go slow as you come over the hill) and then east onto Rolston Road. The sanctuary entrance is on the north side of Rolston Road, 0.4 miles east of Seymour Road.

Saturday, July 26

Meet at 9:30 a.m.

A Looking Glass River

Clinton County – 14.5 acres



Join us as we dedicate this beautiful southern floodplain forest and associated wetlands, prairie and oak uplands. The Fellowship for Today, a New Thought spiritual community located in East Lansing, will be present to celebrate their donation of this wonderful site and its protection into the future. Call office for directions.



Photo by Natalie Kent

A family enjoys a peaceful stroll through the Alta W. Parsons Memorial Nature Sanctuary. Join Natalie Kent on July 12 for a field trip to this great site.

SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, September 7

Meet at 2 p.m.

Keweenaw Shore Nature Sanctuary

Keweenaw County - 36 acres



Join Trustee Joan Chadde to explore this unique nature sanctuary with one of the most interesting short trails in the Keweenaw. This $\frac{3}{4}$ mile trail traverses the backbone of the Keweenaw to Brockway Mountain Drive, offering the hiker a sampler of four different plant communities, including a lichen-filled northern boreal forest, a cedar swamp, a northern bog, and a dry northern forest. With so much to do and see in a short distance, this sanctuary is ideal for families. Optional: Continue hiking into the Upson Lake Nature Sanctuary.

Directions: Follow M-26 six miles north of Eagle Harbor. A short distance past Brockway Mountain Drive on your right, look for the Esrey Park picnic area along the shore and park here. The trail begins on the south side of M-26 at the trailhead sign.

Saturday, September 27

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Keweenaw Color Tour & Family Outdoor Weekend

Keweenaw County – 6 Sanctuaries

MNA stewards will be stationed at six MNA sanctuaries in the Keweenaw: Estivant Pines, Redwyn's Dunes, Keweenaw Shore, Upson Lake, Grinnell Memorial and Gratiot Lake. The stewards will be at the sanctuary trailheads to greet you and answer questions from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Outdoor educational activities for the entire family will also be awaiting your visit. See page 13 for directions and more details.



OCTOBER FIELD TRIPS

Friday-Sunday, October 10-12

MNA Fall Social

Huron and St. Clair Counties – 6 sanctuaries

Join us for our 6th annual MNA Fall Social! This year we'll be visiting Saginaw Wetlands, Kernan Memorial and Sonnenberg Memorial in Huron County, and Brennan Memorial, McGaw Memorial and Jasper Woods in St. Clair County. See the back cover for more details.



Don't forget to register for these fun field trips!

Call the office at (517) 655-5655 or e-mail volunteer@michigannature.org.

Noticing Nature

by Joan Chadde, MNA Trustee

Sensory activities can heighten awareness and observation skills for children (and adults!) when visiting a natural area – forest, wetland, or grassland. Children like to work together, so whenever possible, have two or three children team up to do each of the following activities, or have an adult and child work together. These activities are typically done with younger children, ages pre-school to 2nd grade, but children in grades 3-5 would enjoy them, too.

Sounds – Who has the best hearing? Children close their eyes and raise both fists in the air. Every time a child hears a new sound, they raise a finger. After three to five minutes of listening (this can seem like a long time!), ask the children to share the different sounds that they heard. How many were human-made sounds? This will make children more aware of different sounds (or stillness) around them.

Colors – Assign each child a different color – black, brown, orange, pink, yellow, white, red, purple, blue, green – and ask them to find five examples of that color as they explore the natural environment. The examples can be collected into a small plastic container (i.e. old yogurt tubs), paper bag, or egg carton, and brought back to share with the group. Repeat and assign a new color to each pair of children. (Note: If there are rare flowering plants in the area, you'll want to inform children not to pick that particular plant.) Children typically collect rocks, leaves, sticks, etc.

Sensory Scavenger Hunt – Ask children to find examples of a specified characteristic: dry or wet, smooth or rough, hairy or not hairy, soft or hard, smell or no smell, etc. and bring their objects back to share with the group. These sensory characteristics can be written down on small piece of paper, and then swapped between groups when the activity is repeated. Repeat as time allows, or until each child has had an opportunity to search for all of the different sensory characteristics.



Photo by Joan Chadde

The Keweenaw Family Outdoor Weekend is a great opportunity for children to learn to love nature.



Photo by Natalie Kent

Alta W. Parson's great-granddaughters explore the Alta W. Parsons Nature Sanctuary in Clare County.

Camera – Work in pairs. One child is the “camera” and the other is the “photographer”. The “camera” covers his/her eyes, while the “photographer” leads him/her to a place to take a picture (this could be a landscape view, close-up of a flower, insect or interesting object, etc.). When the “photographer” has selected the object to be photographed, they tap the “camera’s” shoulder. The “camera” then uncovers their eyes for a brief moment to “click” the picture. The “camera” and “photographer” trade places. Once each has taken one picture, everyone regroups to share their “photos.”

Mystery Bags – Children love guessing games. Place different objects from the forest or natural area into individual paper lunch bags (nut, acorn, moss, leaves, bark, pine needles, feather, rock, bone, cone, snail shell). Have the group sit in a circle and divide the circle in half. Have children on one side of the circle take turns placing their hand into the bag and saying one adjective to describe the object – small, sharp, smooth, long, bumpy, hard, heavy, etc. The other half of the circle tries to guess the bag’s contents. The last child gets to reveal the object. Repeat so everyone gets to feel and guess.

Annual Keweenaw Color Adventure

The last weekend in September is the peak time when the leaves are at their best and starting to fall along the ridges, blanketing the forest floor. On Saturday, September 27, the Michigan Nature Association will staff six of its favorite Keweenaw sanctuaries, inviting the public to join them in getting out and hiking the trails during this colorful season. Visitors will be greeted by an MNA steward at each sanctuary starting at 10 a.m.

Michigan Nature Association volunteer stewards will be at their trailheads to greet you and provide information about the sanctuaries. The day is planned for the hikers to set their own pace and enjoy these beautiful natural areas. MNA maintains 18 sanctuaries in the Keweenaw and maintains 19 miles of trail in 10 different sanctuaries, protecting natural areas and habitats for future generations, while providing educational opportunities for the public.

At the end of the day on Saturday, all are invited to gather at Manganese Lake for a time of sharing stories around a fire, beginning at 6 p.m.



The **Redwyn Dunes Nature Sanctuary** has a one-mile trail through beautiful stable dunes covered with red oak and pine. The trail also weaves around dune ponds used by migrating waterfowl. This is a nice hike for all ages.

At the **Keweenaw Shore Nature Sanctuary** trail head, across M-26 from Esrey Park, the trail takes the hiker over the ridge to the Upson Lake Nature Sanctuary. The total distance is two miles. This is a great trail that gives you a cross-section of Keweenaw geology and habitats. This is the only trail that is not a loop.

Three miles south of Copper Harbor is the most popular MNA sanctuary, the **Estivant Pines**. Hikers will learn about this 504-acre wilderness before hiking trails between one and three miles long. The color will vary, giving hikers a variety of spectacular views.

Gratiot Lake Overlook Nature Sanctuary provides a spectacular view of Gratiot Lake. This one-mile trail is a gradual climb through a beautiful maple forest with a spectacular view at the top.

Klipfel Memorial Nature Sanctuary, located at the top of Brockway Mountain, is a special sanctuary. An easy one-mile loop trail starts at the sign and takes

hikers north to a lookout that shows Mt. Lookout, Eagle Harbor and Lake Superior. This is an easy hike for all ages.

Grinnell Memorial Nature Sanctuary at Bare Bluff is one of the most spectacular vistas in the Keweenaw. Our most difficult trail has been improved this year. Take a three-mile hike along the base of this beautiful rhyolite formation then up a natural fault to the top, where the stunted forest opens to spectacular balds with a southeastern view down the Keweenaw to the point. Allow three hours for this challenging adventure.



Directions to the MNA Sanctuaries:

Keweenaw Shores and Upson Lake: From Calumet drive north on U.S. 41 to Phoenix, M-26 junction, turn left, drive through Eagle River and Eagle Harbor. From the Shoreline Resort corner in Eagle Harbor, turn left and drive 6 miles on M-26 to Esrey Park. The trailhead is across the highway and to the right about 50 yards.

Redwyn Dunes: From the village of Eagle River take M-26 north three miles to the Jam Pot Bakery, then about a half-mile to the sanctuary sign and trailhead on the right side of the road.

Estivant Pines: From the Copper Harbor Community Visitors Center on U.S. 41 turn right and go 3 miles, following the signs. This bush road is rough, so be careful.

Gratiot Lake: From Calumet take U.S. 41 north to Phoenix (M-26 junction) then go four miles farther on U.S. 41 to the Gratiot Lake Road (right). At the bottom of the hill approaching the lake, turn left and drive a half-mile to the DNR public access site. Park here and walk across the road to the trailhead.

Klipfel Memorial: From Copper Harbor drive west on M-26 and turn up Brockway Mountain Drive at the edge of town. Drive 3.4 miles up the Mountain Drive until you see the green MNA sign, which marks the trailhead.

Grinnell Memorial: Drive north on U.S. 41 from Calumet to Phoenix, then drive 10.4 miles to the Lac La Belle Road. Drive 4.7 miles to the bottom of the steep hill in Lac La Belle. Turn left and continue 2.8 miles to Smith Fishery Road on the left. Then travel 2.4 miles to the MNA parking area to the right as the road turns left.

Trustee Profile: Stanley Dole

By Mary Ann Czechowski and Stanley Dole, MNA Trustees

Stanley Dole, Michigan Nature Association Trustee and Treasurer, has served the Association for many years, using his expertise in accounting and his interest in the natural environment. His expert knowledge of accounting and finance has helped guide the Board of Trustees and the Association through the years in financial and related matters.

I first heard about the Michigan Nature Association (MNA) from my mother, who, I believe, met Bertha (the late Bertha A. Daubendiek, MNA co-founder) at some meeting in Detroit, years ago. It sounded like something I believed in, so I have supported it since then.

I am most interested in preserving some truly natural areas for future generations to enjoy, but on a limited basis, so they do not get destroyed.

I grew up in Detroit. At that time there were still vacant lots within the city. Pheasants and quail came to our backyard to get fed. I think it is very beneficial for children to see wildlife and enjoy the beauty of the creation. I hope that there can always be some natural areas accessible to city people, and also wilderness areas where practically nobody goes and wildlife can exist undisturbed.

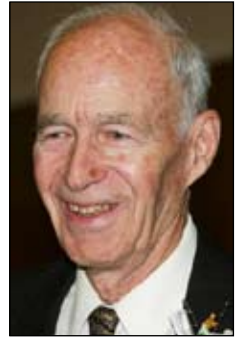
I believe that enjoying nature has a real restorative value in getting away from the stress of everyday living. I have enjoyed being in natural areas since I was a child.

My wife, Betsy, and I have lived in Grand Rapids since 1962. I have an MBA from the University of Michigan. Although now retired, I am a CPA and for many years I had a practice in serving not-for-profit organizations. I am presently the treasurer of five organizations, including MNA, and manage MNA investments and those of other organizations. Because that is my area of expertise,

"I think it is very beneficial for children to see wildlife and enjoy the beauty of the creation. I hope that there can always be some natural areas accessible to city people, and also wilderness areas where practically nobody goes and wildlife can exist undisturbed."

Stanley Dole

longtime member and Treasurer of the Michigan Nature Association



I concentrate there rather than on managing MNA properties, although I like to visit the sanctuaries and plant preserves whenever possible.

Because Michigan is a uniquely beautiful state with lakes and large natural areas, and because of its problems resulting from decline in manufacturing, I believe it is extremely important for our economic future and quality of life that we work to preserve our natural values so that people who cherish these values will continue to find it a good place to live and vacation.

It is good to be part of the MNA, which has preserved over 160 natural areas over the past 50 years, and can preserve yet more if resources are made available to us for that purpose in the future.

Saying Goodbye to Special Friends

By Phillip Bergquist, Administrative Assistant



Esther Struble at Bois Blanc Island

Esther Struble was born 94 years ago in a remote village in the Upper Peninsula, and grew up as the youngest of eight children. She was married to her husband Ken for over 50 years, and raised five children.

Esther had an aptitude for science. She spent her entire life working in the medical field as a nurse and home care giver. She was also deeply creative, and expressed herself as an author through short stories and poems, some of which were published in her collection "The Stars As My Compass."

Esther shared the importance of giving to others, being thrifty, recycling, staying active and appreciating the world around her. She passed on her love of the natural

world to her children and grandchildren, especially to her son Michael who became an avid naturalist. The MNA Struble Memorial Plant Preserve in Mackinac County is named after Michael, who died in a plane accident in 1978.

In a short story Esther wrote entitled "Musical Chairs of Life" she spoke about passing away, and we would like to remember her using these words:

"There is a game we must play – the Musical Chairs of Life. We move along in a circle of chairs as the music plays, until it stops abruptly. One of the chairs has been removed ... the loser finds no chair and is out of the game forever. There is little time to mourn; the music begins again and we scramble to find our places."

We will miss her spirit and love, but remember her always.

A special thanks goes to Esther's daughter Mary for her help writing this article.

New Faces at MNA



Edward Schools, Trustee

Ed Schools lives in Okemos and is currently the Conservation Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Section Leader for the MSU Extension, Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Prior to getting a Master's in Applied Ecology, Ed worked as an engineer

in the defense industry. He has a background with land conservancies, serving on the board of the Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy, and helping to found and manage the Sycamore Land Trust in Bloomington, Indiana.



Vicki Levensgood, Trustee

A true native Michigander, Vicki Levensgood was born and raised in rural Barry County. Since 1997, Vicki has served as the Michigan Representative for the National Environmental Trust (NET), a Washington D.C.-based environmental organization. Prior to

joining N.E.T., she spent many years in public relations and media relations in the worlds of campaign politics and higher education. She has served on several U.S. Congressional campaigns, and in 1994 she was Press Secretary to candidate Howard Wolpe in the race for Governor of Michigan.



Barry Horney, Land Protection Specialist

Barry Horney grew up in Dearborn Heights and now lives in Iosco Township in Livingston County. He received his degree from Wayne State University in Secondary Science Education with an emphasis in Biology. Since graduating he has worked in

both the private and public realm as a microbiologist, water quality specialist, project development planner, and land and water resource manager. After leaving state government he sought to continue use of his experience in service of a nonprofit organization with a focus on natural resource protection. As MNA's Land Protection Specialist, Barry works with the Acquisition Committee through coordination, documentation and information gathering; communicates with potential donors, property owners, other land interests; and handles property encroachments.

Phillip Bergquist, Administrative Assistant



Phillip Bergquist joined the Michigan Nature Association in April. He works with all MNA staff on numerous projects including the MNA Web site and blog, member correspondence and Michigan Nature Association events. He currently attends Rochester College where he

Nominations Now Open

The Michigan Nature Association is always looking for new candidates to serve as Trustees. MNA Trustees are elected to four-year terms on a rotating basis. In 2009, seven Trustees will be elected. The Trustees are expected to attend, in person or via conference call, six meetings a year. As a Trustee, you will play a key role in setting organizational policy, shaping the long-range strategic plan, fund-raising, serving on committees, and helping to implement MNA's annual plan.

If you have any questions or are interested in serving on the Board of Trustees please contact Beverly Bandt, chair of the Nominating Committee at

6945 Applegate Road
Applegate, MI 48401-9711
bbandt@greatlakes.net
(810)622-9962

All nominations for Trustees are due by December 1, 2008.

is a senior majoring in Mass Communication and Public Relations. Prior to joining the Michigan Nature Association Phillip worked with several other nonprofit organizations including the United Way's disaster relief effort in Louisiana. His background also includes over three years working with the YMCA where he developed leadership, education and recreation programs for inner-city youth. Phillip enjoys the outdoors of Michigan and loves to sail. In his free time he enjoys landscape photography.

Meghan Ferguson, Graphic Designer / Project Coordinator



While attending Michigan State University to receive her Bachelor's degree in Creative Advertising, Meghan Ferguson interned at the Michigan Nature Association designing merchandise and helping with our annual "Gala for the Wild" charity auction. Shortly after graduating,

Meghan became part of the Michigan Nature Association staff as the graphic designer / project coordinator. She now enjoys creating Michigan Nature Association promotional materials and assisting her co-workers in their various projects. What attracted her to the Michigan Nature Association was her love for Michigan's nature and animals. She resides in Milford with her family, which includes two dogs and two cats.

Paper Smart



**By: Phillip Bergquist,
Administrative Assistant**

In the United States we consume millions of tons of paper each year; 4 million tons of copy paper, 25 billion newspapers, 350 million magazines and a whopping 90 billion pieces of junk mail. Some of the paper used to make those products comes from recycled materials, but the majority

is produced by cutting down 30 million acres of trees every year - that's an area the size of the entire state of Pennsylvania. On top of that, paper products make up 35 percent of the material put into landfills each year, which is more than any other kind of waste.

Simply put, we use too much paper and then we throw it in the trash. Anyone can see that the effect paper usage has on the environment is a huge problem, but not many people choose to do something about it. That's why I am challenging you to become Paper Smart. There are literally thousands of ways to save paper every day. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- Buy recycled paper products
- Use the internet, e-mail and e-fax to cut down on the amount of printing you do

- When you have to print, use both sides of each piece of paper
- Get books from the library and other providers instead of buying them
- Don't use paper bags at stores and fast food restaurants when you only have a few items that you can carry
- Take advantage of online banking and bill payment services

• Use online editions of newspapers and magazines instead of paper copies

MNA would like to help you with your challenge, so we are now offering online access to our newsletter and e-mail acknowledgements for donations. If you would like to sign up for either one of these paper-saving services please call our office or e-mail pbergquist@michigannature.org.

If every person recycled just half of the paper they currently use, we could save over 125 million trees every year. If we not only recycled, but also reduced our use as well, we could do so much more.

I invite you to take me up on the challenge, and join the millions of people who are trying to become paper smart.

Electronic Newsletter Available!

In an effort to save paper, the Michigan Nature Association's newsletter will now be available via e-mail.

If you would like to receive your newsletter as an Adobe PDF, please e-mail us at michigannature@michigannature.org. You will need a free copy of Adobe Reader (available at www.adobe.com) or Adobe Acrobat to view the electronic version, most computers already have this capability.

The electronic version of the newsletter also will be available on the MNA Web site at www.michigannature.org

Are you a Writer?

By Phillip Bergquist, Administrative Assistant

If you have been on the MNA Web site recently you may have noticed that we have a new blog. Blog is short for Web log, or online publication. Our MNA blog contains stories from sanctuaries, reports from stewards and volunteers, information on upcoming events and interesting environmental news. The best part about our blog is that it is constantly being updated, at least two times every week in fact, so there is always something new to see. You can read the blog by visiting mymna.org.

Keeping the blog up-to-date is an important job that we can all do together, and we need your help to make it possible. So, if you would like to contribute a story, report, photo or interesting piece of news to the blog please e-mail pbergquist@michigannature.org. If you would like to contribute an article or idea to the newsletter please

Request for Articles

You may notice that many of the articles that appear in the MNA newsletter are written by our members. If you would like to write an article for the newsletter please contact Paul Steiner at (517) 655-5655 or psteiner@michigannature.org for more details.

e-mail psteiner@michigannature.org. Your help is always appreciated.

Featured Volunteer: Katy Christensen



**By: Phillip Bergquist,
Administrative Assistant**

Katy Christensen is a student intern at the Michigan Nature Association and will be with us throughout the summer. She is working with

the stewardship staff to coordinate volunteer projects, recruit new volunteers and ensure project leaders are prepared for their events. Katy is also a student at Michigan State University majoring in Communication with an emphasis in interpersonal studies.

Since she has been working at the Michigan Nature Association, Katy has been an incredible asset to the stewardship staff. Her efforts have been an important factor in maintaining, and building on the volunteer stewardship program the Michigan Nature Association is so proud of. She has also taken



Photo by Phillip Bergquist

steps to publicize volunteer events with press releases to newspapers and organizations, as well as new brochure material for prospective volunteers.

Katy is originally from Greenville and enjoys spending her time reading and watching movies. In addition to her internship at the Michigan

Want to Help?

The Michigan Nature Association is always looking for volunteers to help in the Williamston office. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available. If you are able to help in anyway, please contact Paul Steiner at psteiner@michigannature.org, or visit the MNA Web site at www.michigannature.org

Nature Association, she works at the East Lansing Public Library.

Katy says that she has enjoyed meeting new people during her work at the Michigan Nature Association and is looking forward to working for a nonprofit organization in the future.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird Nest DVD

In the January newsletter, we announced that the Michigan Nature Association had a new DVD available for sale. The response was so great that the original batch sold out before we actually received them from the production company. We reordered them and once again have them in stock.

These items continue to get great reviews from members who have purchased them. Don't miss your chance to get this unique video.

MNA member Keith Saylor takes us on a visual journey through the nesting cycle of the ruby-throated hummingbird. You will experience a female hummingbird raising her young over a 43-day period – from nest building to fledging the young. This narrated tour will take you to places you will love and you will learn some of the most intimate secrets of these elusive birds.

Intermingled throughout the video you will glimpse other nesting birds raising their young. See footage of juvenile northern goshawks and hermit thrush. Watch pileated woodpeckers tend their young and witness other bird behaviors rarely seen.

An almost two-hour journey that will surely heighten your appreciation of the ruby-throated hummingbird, and wild birds in general, can be yours for only \$29.95



Photo by Keith Saylor

(includes shipping and handling). All proceeds benefit the Michigan Nature Association. A short clip of the video is available on the Michigan Nature Association's Web site at www.michigannature.org. You can order the DVD online or use the enclosed envelope.

Members and Donors From March 1 to May 31, 2008

We apologize for any errors or omissions.

Michigan Nature Association Guardians Karner Blue Butterfly Level (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Doris Applebaum

Michigan Nature Association Guardians Hart's-tongue Fern Level (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

James Buschmann & Shirley Sampier

Michigan Nature Association Guardians White Pine Level (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

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plan helps us protect
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Community Foundation Tax Credits

Why is it important for you to know that the Michigan Nature Association has set up endowment funds with the Keweenaw Community Foundation and the Community Foundation for Muskegon County? Because contributions made to either of these funds earn you a tax credit, not just a tax deduction, on your state taxes. It is also deductible on your federal taxes. A \$200 contribution could reduce your taxes by \$130 or more!

Be sure to designate your contribution to the "Michigan Nature Association Endowment Fund" on your check and include a note with your check. Donations can be made to:

Michigan Nature Association Endowment Fund
 Keweenaw Community Foundation
 P.O. Box 101
 326 Sheldon Ave.
 Houghton, MI 49931

Michigan Nature Association Endowment Fund
 Community Foundation For Muskegon County
 425 W. Western Ave., Suite 200
 Muskegon, MI 49440



michigan nature association
326 East Grand River Ave.
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MNA's Fall Adventure to Michigan's Thumb

By Andrew McGlashen, MNA Intern

We all love the long, lazy days of summer, and we hate to think how soon there will be a chill in the air. But there is something wonderful about autumn in Michigan. The crisp air, brilliant leaves and blustery days of October make our woods and wild places especially beautiful, and there's no better way to enjoy the season than on the Michigan Nature Association's annual Fall Adventure.

This year, starting on Friday, October 10, our members will head to the Thumb for a weekend of wildlife, fresh air and camaraderie.

On Saturday the group will visit Huron County's Kernan Memorial, a 45-acre lakeshore sanctuary rich in birds, plants and aquatic life, and steeped in the lore of shipwrecks and rum-running.

October is the best time to see the plovers, sanderlings and other shorebirds that inhabit the sanctuary's 4,000 feet of secluded Lake Huron coast.

The group will have lunch on the shore at Sonnenberg Memorial, a lovely sanctuary a stone's throw from Kernan that honors Thelma Sonnenberg, a co-founder and former president of MNA.

We'll end Saturday's adventure at the 156-acre Saginaw Wetlands. It will be a great opportunity to explore this delicate preserve, which can only be visited with an MNA guide. Here the group will see the ecosystem's response to a prescribed burn in the



Photo by Natalie Kent

What is happening here? Join us for the Fall Adventure and see if your guess as to why these trees are growing sideways at Brennan Memorial is correct.

Sign up by Sept. 15

This year's Fall Adventure will include visits to six MNA sanctuaries in Huron and St. Clair counties. It is a great chance to visit sanctuaries and meet other MNA members, trustees and staff.

When: October 10-12

Cost: \$225 including bus, hotel and meals

Please call Paul Steiner at the MNA office at (517) 655-5655 to register. Space is limited so be sure to sign up early.

spring, and will collect native grass seeds that will help reclaim a fallow farm field. See the article on page 4 for more details about Saginaw Wetlands.

Sunday's outing will take the group south to St. Clair County, beginning with the 118-acre Brennan Memorial, a floodplain sanctuary at the headwaters of the Pine River.

Next we'll visit McGaw Memorial, located behind MNA's long-time office. Here you can take a stairway down a steep hill to see eight natural springs.

Our final stop will be at Jasper Woods, a southern forest with an "up north" feel. A lake-moderated climate and acidic soil make this 49-acre sanctuary suitable for species that don't often thrive so far south, like the hemlock trees that shade these cool woods.

We have again chartered a bus that will pick up members in Grand Rapids, Lansing, Novi and Imlay City. Traveling this way allows you to catch up with old friends and mingle with first-time adventurers. With gas prices skyrocketing, a relaxing bus ride is an even better value.

The \$225 cost includes transportation, meals and two nights lodging at the Holiday Inn in Bad Axe, not to mention a weekend in the woods. Please register with MNA by September 15 by calling our office at (517) 655-5655.