

Natural Area Preservation News

Protecting and restoring Ann Arbor's natural areas and fostering an environmental ethic among its citizens.

Volume 14, Number 2

Summer 2009

Park Focus: The Botsford Recreational Preserve

by Bev Walters, former NAP Botanist

Don Botsford, a connected Ann Arbor resident known by his students as “Grandpa Don,” recently sold the development rights for just over half of his beautiful woodland property, which lies just west of the Ann Arbor, to the City of Ann Arbor and Scio Township. I was delighted to learn of the preservation of this natural gem that is tucked into the landscape immediately outside the freeway ring around Ann Arbor. Let me share with you my first encounters with this property and why I think it is especially worthy of preservation.

As one of three botanists hired by the newly created NAP in the summer of 1994, the Botsford property was one of the first sites assigned to us as we started compiling plant lists for natural areas around town. As we drove west out Miller Road, we almost missed the small sign posted for the Botsford Recreational Preserve. We followed a

long driveway through the rich oak-hickory woodland and marveled at the profusion of pink-flowered wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) carpeting the forest floor. When we met up with Don, he soon pointed out a rare albino-flowered wild geranium he had discovered. After a quick but entertaining tour of his property and some of its botanical highlights, including a low swale with bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*), he left us to our work.

Over the course of that summer, our explorations revealed that the hilly upland forest has a stream at the edge that carries away spring snow melt, while a low moist swale is nestled in the interior of the 20-acre tract. This variation in topography and hydrology contributes to the exceptionally diverse flora in the area. While the upland forest area supports the usual vegetation for these habitats, such as May-apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) and toothwort (*Cardamine spp.*), several less common species are also present. A small patch of Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullata*) is near the south edge of the woods and a bit of blue-cohosh

(*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) dots a hillside. Along the seasonal stream, a grove of the rare wahoo (*Euonymus atropurpurea*) enjoys the extra moisture, while a few young shingle oaks (*Quercus imbricaria*) prefer the drier upland woods. This oak



Shingle oak leaves. Photo from USDA website.

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Coordinator's Corner

Do You Skype? - Do You Pull?

I have this love/hate relationship with technology. For years I resisted voicemail, preferring to stick to my old cassette tape answering machine. I finally let myself get talked into voicemail, and haven't been able to live without it ever since! Same with Facebook, that social networking phenomenon with which every college student in the world seems to be infatuated.

My 20-year-old niece was studying abroad this spring semester. While away she talked me into setting up a Facebook account so I could more easily communicate with her. I was sure I would ONLY use it to keep in touch with Sarah, but shortly after setting up my account I started getting "Friend Requests" from old high school and college friends, former co-workers, and long-lost relatives. I even re-connected with former students who were 2nd graders when I taught in Costa Rica 20 years ago! It is amazing how easy it is to connect to others so far away! Facebook quickly led to LinkedIn, a similar networking vehicle seemingly more used for maintaining professional connections. I now have hundreds of "friends" with each of these networks.

I thought I was doing pretty well keeping up with the times until my 85-year-old mother asked me one day, "Do you Skype?!" (For those of you not in the know, Skype is a software application that allows users to make telephone calls over the Internet – for free!) Well, the truth was that I didn't Skype. I hardly knew what it meant! But you can guess that if my mother were Skyping, I soon would be too! Of course, this just goes on and on. Although I can now Skype, I still can't "Tweet" or "Blog" and am not even comfortable using those words! And I'm sure that by the time this goes to print there will be other newer technologies with which I am even less familiar!

We at NAP are also trying to stay current with the new technologies. Besides the NAP website, we've had a NAP blog for a few years (www.a2nap.blogspot.com), and now there's a Natural Area Preservation group on Facebook, so you can stay abreast of upcoming NAP events that way if you wish. Hopefully all this will help us better reach out to the tech savvy.

But it'll never be a substitute for working side-by-side with another park neighbor, pulling garlic mustard and catching up on each other's lives – in real time – where the only "tweets" come from the baby robins in the nest overhead. Don't let your time on Facebook keep you from getting out and volunteering in the parks this summer. And bring your friends along to join you in the field. Just ask them, "Do you pull?"

David Borneman - NAP Manager



CITY OF ANN ARBOR Natural Area Preservation

A unit of the City of Ann Arbor
Public Services, Field Operations

The mission of Natural Area Preservation is to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and to foster an environmental ethic among its citizens.

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Volunteering Costs Can Be Tax Deductible

Read the following article from *Volunteer Management Report* to find out more about volunteering and taxes. Remember to save your receipts for next year!

Volunteers in the United States can receive tax deductions from the federal government on some costs associated with volunteering: mileage and other travel expenses, paper, copying, convention attendance fees, parking, uniforms (if the volunteer purchases her/his own) and more. These deductions apply only if you are not getting reimbursed for these expenses by the organization you are assisting, and you are itemizing on your tax form (not if you use the 1040 EZ form). If you have questions about your particular situation, consult a tax professional or download IRS Publication 526: Charitable Contributions (www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf) for complete information on this topic.

For example: if you drive a considerable distance to volunteer, your car expenses, including the cost of gas and oil you use specifically for transport while volunteering, are deductible. You have the option to keep track of your actual costs, or use the IRS rate per mile.

You know your're a NAPper when...



Graphic by Nancy Stoll



Park Focus: The Botsford Recreational Preserve

Continued from page 1

is at its northern limit in southern Michigan and it is distinctive because it is the Michigan oak that has unlobed leaves. The woods are fairly open and free of underbrush which makes it especially good habitat for grass and sedge species. This is where I first encountered the striking Sprengel's sedge (*Carex sprengelii*) with its bristly seed heads nodding toward the ground, growing in an abundance that I have not encountered elsewhere. In all, over 200 plant species have been found on the property.

I've kept in touch with Don, even as life's journey led

me away from NAP and Ann Arbor, and continued to support the preservation of this outstanding natural area. Now with the Purchase of Development Rights, most of this parcel will be preserved, while at the same time Don will have the opportunity to expand the recreational activities available at the Botsford Recreational Preserve. Be assured that Don and the creatures of the forest there welcome your visit.

To learn more about Don Botsford, known as "Grandpa Don" see the AA Observer's article http://blog.mlive.com/annarbornews/2008/06/whoisdon_botsford.html

Volunteer Stewardship Calendar

June

June 6, Saturday
Bird-Watching Walk
7:30 am - 9:30 am

Free and fun for all ages! Join City Ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for early summer birds at the old landfill site. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet in the small parking lot on the right off the main entrance to the Material Recovery Facility off of Platt Rd. just south of Ellsworth.

June 6, Saturday *
Furstenberg Native Garden Workday
9:00 am to 12:00 noon

A fun opportunity to learn about all kinds of native prairie plants in this special garden with local expert and Park Steward Aunita Erskine. A nature walk and snack will be provided. Meet in the parking lot off Fuller Road, across from Huron High School.

*Please wear pants and closed-toe shoes to all workdays. Minors must be accompanied by a guardian or contact NAP in advance to obtain a release form. Snacks water and tools are provided.

June 9, Tuesday
Stewards' Circle
Bruegger's Bagels - 709 N. University Ave
7:30 am to 8:30 am

Are you interested in learning more about how to care for our natural areas - woods, creeks, prairies, wetlands? Then join the Stewardship Network's Huron Arbor cluster for an informal discussion on a monthly topic with volunteers, professional land stewards and others interested in nature. For more information and topics go to <http://www.stewardshipnetwork.org>.

June 12, Friday
Mayor's Green Fair
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Join Natural Area Preservation at the 9th annual Mayor's Green Fair on Main Street in downtown Ann Arbor! Downtown Main Street will be open to pedestrians for free entertainment and over 100 exhibits with environmental information, hands-on youth activities, clean energy info, green construction transportation options, BikeFest 2009, WasteKnot Business Partners, walking tours, and more! A free, family-friendly, "drop-in" event! For more information, call 734.994.2766 or go to <http://www.a2gov.org/green>.

June 13, Saturday
Bird-Watching Walk
7:30 am - 9:30 am

Free and fun for all ages! Join City Ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for summer birds at this beautiful site along the Huron River. You may even catch a glimpse of Osprey and Great Egrets! Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at the paddle boat dock in Gallup, near the canoe livery.

June 14, Sunday *
Bird Hills Neighborhood Coalition
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

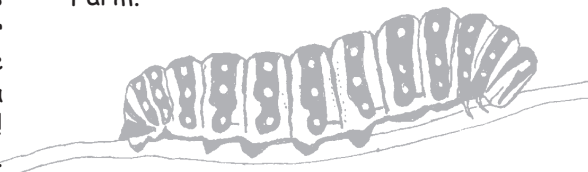
We need your help for the last in our series of three workdays in this special nature preserve. Bird Hills is a heavily used, large nature area with miles of trails that need regular maintenance. Everyone is welcome at this workday where we will learn about building effective trails and see early summer blossoming with diverse and plentiful native plants! Meet at the Newport Rd. entrance, just north of M-14.

June 20, Saturday *
Redbud Nature Area Workday
10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Help us kick off Pollinator Week and work to preserve this high quality floodplain forest, which is rare and special in the Ann Arbor area! We'll meet up at the park entrance at the intersection of Parkwood Avenue and Jeanne Street.

June 20, Saturday *
Buhr Park Children's Wet Meadow Potluck & Stewardship Workday
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Kids of all ages and their parents are welcome to join us to help make the wet meadow more welcoming to pollinators to help celebrate Pollinator Week! Bring hats, and sunscreen. Bring a dish to share for a potluck to follow the workday! Meet in the playground parking lot next to the tennis court at Cobblestone Farm.



June 27, Saturday *
Mary Beth Doyle Nature Area Workday
12:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Come out to celebrate Pollinator Week during this fun summer workday and add to the tremendous progress that has been made to increase the native habitat in this large preserve! We provide tools and yummy snacks. Meet us at the parking lot off Packard Road, across from Easy Street.

July

NAP Photo Contest Reminder

Don't miss out on the fun! See our website for complete contest information at <http://www.a2gov.org/NAPphotocontest>

July 11, Saturday *

Furstenberg Native Garden Workday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Park Steward and local native plant expert, Aunita Erskine, will be tending our native garden. Join her to help keep it in top notch shape, and to learn all about native gardening! Meet in the parking lot off Fuller Road at the native garden, across from Huron High School.

July 11, Saturday *

Barton Nature Area Workday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Bring your family to learn about native plants and lend a hand in this beautiful nature area! We will be identifying plants and weeding in the prairie area of this park. Meet at the Barton Dam parking lot on Huron River Drive.

July 12, Sunday

Huron River Day Gallup Park & Parker Mill Park 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Enjoy the beautiful Huron River and participate in free family activities during the Huron River Day celebration at Gallup Park and Parker Mill. Start the morning off with a fun run along the river beginning at 8:30 am and a free morning of canoeing and kayaking afterwards! The afternoon is full of fun children's activities including storytelling, learning about river animals, rain garden demonstrations, fishing, and much more! Food will be available for purchase. Visit for more information:

<http://www.a2gov.org/hrd>

July 14, Tuesday

**Stewards' Circle
Bruegger's Bagels - 709 N. University Ave
7:30 am to 8:30 am**
See listing for June 9.

July 18, Saturday *

Cranbrook Nature Area Workday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Get outside and lend a hand to clear trails and spread wood chips to keep this park's nature trail accessible to everyone! Meet in the Church of Christ parking lot at 2500 South Main.

July 18, Saturday *

Lakewood Nature Area Workday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

This park has trails that wind through acres of hilly woods jointly owned and maintained by NAP and Ann Arbor Public Schools. Please join us as we focus on watering newly planted native plants, clearing the park entrance, and having a great time! Meet us at the Lakewood Elementary School parking lot off Gralake Avenue, three blocks south of Jackson Avenue.

July 26, Sunday *

Onder Nature Area Workday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Join us in working to create and maintain the trails in one of the newest parkland additions to the city! This property offers important habitat for native plants and animals and extends the "green corridor" which helps connect the natural upland forests of Leslie Park and Black Pond Woods with the riparian complex of other parks along the Huron River. Meet at the intersection of Hilldale Dr. and Brookside Dr.

August

August 11, Tuesday

**Stewards' Circle
Bruegger's Bagels - 709 N. University Ave
7:30 am to 8:30 am**
See listing for June 9.

August 15, Saturday *

Buhr Park Children's Wet Meadow Potluck & Stewardship Workday 4:00 to 6:00 pm

Come lend a hand for this family-friendly workday to maintain the Wet Meadow in Buhr Park! This park has been, and continues to be an important learning experience for all who come out to participate, young and old alike! Bring a dish to share for a potluck or a picnic dinner! Meet in the playground parking lot next to the tennis court at Cobblestone Farm.

August 16, Sunday *

Sunset-Brooks Nature Area Workday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

We will be working together to remove non-native shrubs to preserve native plants and species diversity. Meet us at the park entrance on Sunset Road at the end of Brooks Street.

August 29, Saturday *

Leslie Woods Workday 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Leslie Woods is home to some of the largest oaks and hickories in the Ann Arbor park system! Your help is needed to remove non-native species from the woods which can out-compete the native species. Bring your friends and family out to lend a hand to keep it such a special place! Snacks and water will be provided. Meet us at the park entrance at the north end of Upland Drive, north of Plymouth Road.

*Please wear pants and closed-toe shoes to all workdays. Minors must be accompanied by a guardian or contact NAP in advance to obtain a release form. Snacks water and tools are provided.



NAPpenings



Graphic by Nancy Stoll

Thank you...

- ♥ St. Thomas Boy Scout Troop 8 for your donation.
- ♥ YVC for joining in at multiple workdays throughout the season.
- ♥ UM Alpha Phi Omega for your invasive removal work at Fuller.
- ♥ Cub Scout Troop at Miller for pulling garlic mustard.
- ♥ Pioneer Rowers at Bandemer for continuing to remove invasive shrubs and expand the prairie.
- ♥ Boy Scout Troop 8 for removing garlic mustard and working on the trails at Bluffs
- ♥ Temple Beth Emeth seventh grade chipping machines who obliterated the pile of chips in a few short hours at Dolph Nature Area.
- ♥ UM Engineering students for pulling garlic mustard at Marshall Nature Area.
- ♥ UM Ross School of Business students for pulling garlic mustard at Huron Hills Golf Course.
- ♥ Annie Broederick's high school group from WCC for removing garlic mustard from Forest Park.
- ♥ Harvest Mission Community Church for helping maintain the trails and removing garlic mustard at Miller Nature Area.
- ♥ Pittsfield Elementary second graders for keeping the trails at Redbud looking great.
- ♥ TBE, PVC, Google, Community Volunteer Club and all the citizens of Ann Arbor who came out for Garlic Mustard Weed Out Day!
- ♥ Girl Scouts of the Huron River Valley for removing garlic mustard at Lakewood Nature Area.
- ♥ Washtenaw Youth Mentoring Coalition for volunteering on Day of Caring at LS&NC to help us plant more natives.
- ♥ Ann Arbor Geocachers for their "Cache in Trash Out" event where they removed large amounts of trash from Maryfield Wildwood, Bluffs, Hannah, & West Parks.
- ♥ UM Alumni Association for removing garlic mustard at Bird Hills.
- ♥ Key Bank for using their "Neighbor's Day" to come out to Argo and Bandemer and remove trash and invasives.

NAP staff and volunteers were trained early this spring to lead volunteer events at our annual **Workday Leader Training**. By the end of the season NAP will have, in addition to staff, 14 volunteer Workday Leaders!

NAP is taking an active role in a newly formed state chapter of **Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC)**. Michigan is the first state chapter in the Midwest with the first meeting in February 2009. There were over 60 participants in that first meeting and momentum for the group is growing. If you are interested in learning more please visit the PARC website (<http://mwparcinmi.ning.com/>).

The **Midwest Oak and Savanna Woodland Conference, Recognizing the Importance of Oak Savanna and Woodland Ecosystems**, will take place July 29 to August 1, at Lourdes College in Sylvania, Ohio. The mission of this conference is to promote conservation-based research, planning, management, and education focused on protecting, enhancing, and restoring oak savannas and woodlands in the Midwest. (<http://www.aeoned.org/oakcon/agenda/>)

Over the past year, NAP has been looking at **local turtle species** and how they are faring in the City to help NAP manage the city natural areas as turtle friendly. In urban areas, "subsidized" predators such as raccoons—whose populations are kept large by eating garbage and other food scraps—are known to consume up to 100 percent of the annual turtle eggs produced. Keeping your garbage and compost bins protected from raccoon marauders is one of the things you can do to help turtle populations! Look for our upcoming fact sheet about turtles, which will have more information on how to design habitat structures to aid in turtle nest success and to reduce predation.

Michigan Invasive Species Information Network (www.misin.msu.edu) is now live! MISIN is an evolving data collection effort targeting invasive species early detection and rapid response needs within the state of Michigan. This effort is being lead by the Invasive Species Initiative at Michigan State University and the Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Garlic mustard and other invasive populations can now be entered on the website.

Please remember to use **NAP's new phone number** to reach your favorite staff! Our new number is 734.794.6627.

Staff Updates

hello...

Amanda Nimke —

I started volunteering with NAP two years ago, and now work with the crew part-time. Working outdoors, managing our natural areas is a wonderful change from my office schedule. I have been practicing massage therapy for ten years, and currently live in Chelsea. I recently completed my advanced Master Gardener certification, and am studying hypnotherapy and organic gardening. Beyond my work schedule, activities I enjoy are hiking, gardening, cooking, and writing.



hello again!...

Dana Novak —

You may have seen me toddling around doing smoke monitoring at some prescribed burns last spring after I nearly doubled in size with my pregnant belly. With the births of our two beautiful boys, my family doubled in size last May and thankfully I no longer toddle! My husband and I try to revel in the babies' every new discovery, and grab some sleep when we can. Hopefully I'll see you out at a weekend workday this season. With children comes a renewed sense of our collective ability to make a positive impact. I challenge you all to get out there in 2009 and join us at a workday, if you haven't before — or attend one more workday than usual. If you're like me, it will invigorate your body and refresh your spirit. See you soon!



staff alumni...

Malin Ely — Administrative Assistant, 1996-97

After leaving Michigan in 1997, Will and I got hitched and moved to New Hampshire. After a few years working for New Hampshire Audubon, I now work at UNH Cooperative Extension, coordinating a natural resource volunteer program called the Coverts Project. We train landowners and community activists to do outreach about wildlife, forest stewardship, and land conservation throughout the state. Like at NAP, I get to

work with great people, and get to know a wide range of curious, knowledgeable and energetic volunteers. On the home front, I have two kids, Abby (8) and Tate (5), who, when they aren't trying to shove each other into the nearest ditch, like to catch salamanders, look for bugs, and watch birds. They're very fun.

I miss lots of things about Ann Arbor, most notably the smell of smoke on my clothes after working on the burn crew...

Irene Frentz — Intern, Summer 1994 (the beginning)

[At NAP] I set up the plant inventory database using very awkward database software. I was also involved in a working group consisting of mountain bikers, NAP staff (i.e., Dave and me), and other trail users, to figure out how mountain bikers could be accommodated without upsetting the other trail users. Furthermore, I went lake water sampling on a monthly basis in the Sister Lakes.

After getting my MS from UM in Natural Resources and Environment, we moved to Arkansas. I worked there as a research associate in rural sociology. From there I went into the Environmental Dynamics Ph.D program. I finished the Ph.D. in Richmond, Virginia. I now work for the Division of State Parks within DCR as a District Resource Specialist.

congratulations!...

Jason Frenzel-Wright CVA —

Jason has been awarded the credential, "Certified in Volunteer Administration," by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration. The credential is the only one in the field that is recognized internationally. It is awarded after a process that includes an extensive self-evaluation and preparation of a professional portfolio. In addition to compiling the portfolio, Jason sat for a two-hour examination testing knowledge, application, and analysis of skills related to volunteer resources management.

Jason is one of 800 individuals who have attained this credential as demonstration of their professional excellence in mobilizing and managing volunteers. We are lucky to have him working with us!



Midwinter Candlelight Walk

by Stephanie Hunter, Park Steward

On February 3rd the Friends of Dicken Woods, in conjunction with Dicken Elementary School, held its fifth annual Midwinter Candlelight Walk through Dicken Woods Nature Area.

Students of Dicken Elementary made luminaries in their art classes. This year's design had multi-colored intricate geometric designs cut into small squares of colored paper affixed to glass containers. The candle-lit luminaries followed a circular path through the woods beginning and ending at the school where cookies and hot cocoa were provided by the Friends. Over 300 people — students, parents, neighbors, and friends — followed a glorious trail of



Path of luminaries. Photo by Stephanie Hunter

luminaries along sparkling, snowy trails.

The mission of FoDW is to preserve, protect, and improve the woods and also to integrate the use of the woods into the school's natural science curriculum. This walk has become a popular winter activity where the woods can be enjoyed and appreciated in a unique way that causes no damage to the plants or animals living here.

Editor's Note: NAP thanks the Friends of Dicken Woods for their organization, dedication, and all the work they accomplish not only to make the woods a better place, but to include the larger community in sharing their gem!

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Printed on Recycled Paper with Soy-Based Ink

Natural Area Preservation
City of Ann Arbor
1831 Traver Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Return Service Requested

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