

Natural Area Preservation News

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

Volume 7, Number 4

Winter 2002

Park Focus: Foxfire West *by Ross Orr*

Within a mere six-and-a-half acres, the little jewel that is Foxfire West contains a remarkable diversity of ecosystems: from upland woods to fen openings (alkaline wetland); from shady woodland seeps to an extremely lovely sedge meadow that has the upper reaches of Traver Creek winding through it. Near Dhu Varren Road on Ann Arbor's North side, Foxfire West is also a recent addition to the Ann Arbor park system.

Foxfire West is an example of the challenges NAP faces: trying to preserve nature in a time of suburban sprawl and fragmentation of wild areas. As beautiful as this park is, it is rapidly becoming an island of nature stranded in a sea of suburban lawns.

I still vividly remember a day, just after Shira and I started to work at NAP, when we went to the park's wet meadow to wrestle with an infestation of invasive Canada thistle. Appropriately booted and suited, we waded into waist-high sedges, admired the towering Joe-Pye weed, and inhaled the sweet fragrance of the mountain mint that we brushed against. Both of us were frankly astonished to find ourselves working in such a wild and beautiful spot.

Then at the far side of the opening, we saw a tanned, lanky woman zigzagging out from behind some shrubs and into the sedges. "Hey! Are you from NAP?" I shouted. "We're the new crew people!"

This was our introduction to NAP's entomologist Barb Barton. As we talked, she carefully transferred a skipper from her butterfly net to a small baggie, where she could get a closer look at its wing markings. She made her ID, Black Dash, and let the butterfly go again, ruffled but unharmed.

On more recent trips, I've been delighted to find large colonies of blue lobelia growing wild. (This is a plant I've tried and failed twice to grow in my own garden at home.)

Visitors to the park can take a pleasant trail looping through the woods from the Birchwood Road entrance. Moving west from there, the ground does become more soggy, enough to deter most casual hikers. But a new second entrance to the park is planned as part of future neighborhood developments.

In terms of the ecological quality of its plant life, Foxfire West is one of the top 20 sites in the Ann Arbor park system. We at NAP have the duty to protect those special pockets of biodiversity, as sanctuaries and living seed banks.

Unfortunately, isolated pockets of remarkable species face special challenges, and might not remain viable without our ongoing, active intervention.



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Coordinator's Corner

The Natural Areas Association

In early October, I joined the board of the Natural Areas Association, the international professional association for those of us who manage natural areas. NAA's stated mission is to advance the preservation of natural diversity. When first asked if I'd be interested in being considered, I wasn't sure if I'd be a good candidate for the board. My impression of NAA over the nine years that I've attended the annual conferences and read the Natural Areas Journal was that much of its focus was directed at the state or regional level. What could I as a manager of urban natural areas contribute to the board?

But it was specifically *because* of my affiliation with Ann Arbor's model program to preserve and restore natural areas at the local level that I was asked to be on the board. Ann Arbor is recognized nationally for its efforts to not only set aside parkland, but to actively care for it and protect its biodiversity. We're helping to set the standard for municipalities nationwide. Now, with a voice on the board at NAA, Ann Arbor can also have some influence in the direction of this professional organization.

NAA began in the Midwest about 30 years ago, and this region continues to be the core of its membership. So the conference sessions, journal articles, and networking channels are especially applicable for those of us who work in the Midwest. In fact, next year's conference will be in Madison, Wisconsin (Sept. 24-27, mark your calendars!). The following year it is planned for Illinois. I'd encourage anyone involved in managing natural areas — as either a staff member, volunteer, or private land owner — to get involved in NAA. For me, it has been a primary source of new information on many ecological stewardship issues. It's how I stay abreast of emerging issues in the field. In fact, any of you who have been involved with NAP over the years have indirectly benefited from NAA, since I and the other staff have been "channeling" that expertise to you and to Ann Arbor's parks.

Now you have a chance to provide NAA with some feedback. I represent you and the municipal perspective on the board. I'll try to be a good representative, and a good ambassador for Ann Arbor. Thanks for your support, your volunteer efforts, and your help in making this city a model for other municipalities.

Contact me if you'd like more information on the Natural Areas Association.

- David Borneman, *Natural Area Preservation Manager*



Parks & Recreation
CITY OF ANN ARBOR

Natural Area Preservation

is a Division of the City of Ann Arbor
Department of Parks and Recreation.

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

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For up-to-date information on stewardship activities, call the "hotline" at 734.996.3266.

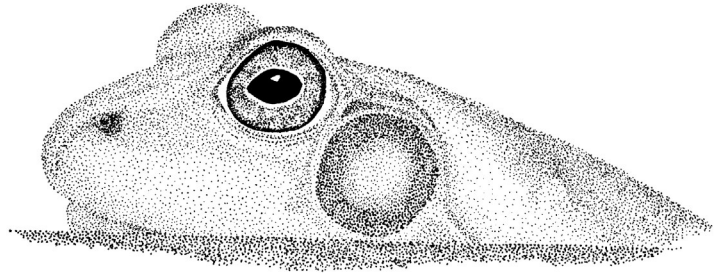
Ribbit Report *by David Mifsud*

Well, it is time to wrap up our 8th frog and toad survey season! In over 100 hours of surveying this year, our volunteers have collected lots of important data on the status of frog and toad populations within the city. This year turnout was lower than in previous seasons, but our dedicated volunteers pulled together and picked up the slack. In total, 18 volunteers surveyed 14 routes! Only the Platt Route was not surveyed this season.

Volunteers were faced once again with the problem of traffic noise. This has been documented at an increasing rate over the past few years as more areas have become developed. Similar findings have been documented in other amphibian studies. These analyses looked at the effects of noise on breeding success of frogs and toads. They found that in areas where noise was greater, frog and toad mating success was lower, due to both increased predation and difficulty in mate location. We will continue to monitor noisy sites to determine if long-term population declines occur as a result of noise. These data will help us to better manage these areas and guide us toward preventing such situations in the future.

I have compiled and entered all the survey information into NAP's Natural Features Inventory Database. Analysis of the last eight years of data shows population trends are becoming more evident. I have observed that the city has stable populations of Spring Peepers, Gray Tree Frogs, and American Toads. These species also have the widest ranges and greatest densities within the City. Other species have more spotty distribution and densities, and will require more scrutiny to determine trends, if any.

We have some exciting news on Blanchard's Cricket Frog sightings in the city. A couple of veteran volunteers went out in June and heard a lone male Blanchard's Cricket Frog, a species of Special Concern in Michigan. Despite repeated attempts by various people to hear a repeat performance, no such luck. We will certainly revisit the site next year and see what we find!



We here at NAP are excited about our survey findings and will continue to look at the data and conduct surveys. One goal for the winter is to reformat the survey maps and try to provide greater route details. We also hope to incorporate our data into our GIS database this winter. This information will be used to make management decisions that will better preserve our amphibian and reptile residents.

I would like to take this time to formally thank all those responsible (especially the volunteers!) for making this survey season and years past such a success. I would particularly like to thank John and Gwen Nystuen for surveying 3 routes and logging an amazing 20 hours (each) of frog and toad surveying this season! I would also like to thank Penny and Jim Szczechowski, Mark Brahce, Janice Pappas, and Jane Hayes for all tying for second place with 11 hours of surveying each, and for making multiple visits to their survey routes! Without the assistance of our dedicated volunteer surveyors, this program would not be the success it is today.

If you or anyone you know could not participate this year and would be interested in participating next season, please contact NAP for more details. I can be reached directly at DavidMifsud@comcast.net.

Frog and Toad Inventory Kickoff

It seems like only weeks ago that the 2002 field season began. Nevertheless, the 2003 kickoffs are right around the corner! As always, the frog and toad inventory kickoff will be the first of the series. If you would like to learn to identify southeastern Michigan's frogs and toads by ear, help NAP with our inventory, and discover some of Ann Arbor's wetlands, you should plan to attend this event. But when will it be? **Wednesday, February 12, 2003, 7:30 to 9:00 PM.** And where? **At the Leslie Science Center's Nature House.** Please call NAP by February 7 to register.

NAPpenings

Park Trail Update

One of the best ways to enjoy your City parks is to take a hike on one of the numerous trails. Thanks to the efforts of hard-working volunteers and NAP staff, this is now easier than ever. Here are some recent trail developments:

- ❖ **Argo/Bandemer (the Barton Drive Boardwalk):** After years of planning, fundraising, and project bidding, the boardwalk is now open. Earlier this summer NAP sponsored a workday where volunteers transplanted native plants from the worksite to other parts of the park. A special thanks to **Amy Kuras**, *Landscape Architect* with Park Planning, for seeing this project through.
- ❖ **Hollywood:** Park Steward **Katherine O'Brien** conducted two workdays to improve the trails in this lovely park on the northwest side of town. With the help of the **Abbott Elementary School** 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders, and **Girl Scout troop 1211**, all the existing trails were lined and covered with wood chips. An extension to the trail system was installed by super volunteer **Moray O'Riordan**, a study-abroad student from England.
- ❖ **Leslie Woods:** A group of **UM Project Serve** volunteers worked with the NAP Crew to put in the first-ever designated trail at Leslie Woods. The new trail loops through the varying habitat of the woods and is lined for most of the way. The trail is about 400 meters long, somewhat hilly, and crosses a small vernal stream. The NAP Crew and Leslie Woods Park Steward will continue to make improvements.

Feel free to enjoy these new additions!

The **Wildflower Association of Michigan (WAM)** annual conference. This annual conference will be held Sunday and Monday, March 2 and 3, 2003, at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. Among others on the program... Bonnie Harper Lore of the US EPA, the National Wild Ones Board of Directors' first quarterly board meeting, a speaker from Wild Ones, and a session on fire! For more information, or to register, drop in on www.wildflowermich.org.

The Southeast Michigan Stewardship Network (a partnership of many groups in the area doing ecological stewardship, including NAP) launched an exciting pilot course this fall. This **Stewards' Training** is intended to teach individuals how to lead and manage stewardship activities for natural areas in southeastern Michigan. Three teams, including one working for a NAP site, are attending this course on eight Saturdays from late September through February 2003. If you're interested in learning more you can contact Lisa Brush at 769.6981 or lbrush@umich.edu.



Park Focus: Foxfire West *Continued from page 1*

Ultimately though, maintaining a few "hot spots" of special ecological quality is not enough, so NAP has another goal. We hope to share our delight in the natural world with the public, and so perhaps spread a greater awareness of the qualities being lost through development and ecological degradation. That awareness might translate into greater public commitment to preserving natural areas.

We also hope that these little pockets of natural beauty, located right where people live, might lead people to rethink their home landscapes. It would be wonderful if some of Foxfire West's new neighbors were inspired to make space for native plants and animals in their own yards. We at NAP have our hands full just taking care of City parkland. To restore natural environments across a whole region, everybody needs to get involved.

Winter 2002 Natural Area Preservation Volunteer Stewardship Calendar



Many groups participate in NAP workdays, or arrange special workdays for their organization. Contact the NAP office if a group you are involved with is interested in planning a volunteer stewardship event. Workday orientation starts promptly at 10:00 AM. Please wear pants and closed-toe shoes. Minors must either be accompanied by a guardian or contact NAP in advance to obtain a release form.

December

December 7, Saturday
Argo Nature Area
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM



What's better than getting some exercise in the winter? Help us cut buckthorn and honeysuckle, while keeping yourself warm. Meet us at the Argo Livery parking lot on Longshore Drive.

December 7, Saturday
"Nature in Winter" Walk

1:30 to 3:30 PM, Barton Nature Area
Take a walk with NAP Entomologist Barb Barton and locate signs of wildlife. We will meet in the small Barton parking lot, just west of the Main Street M-14 interchange. There is a \$5 charge.

December 10, Tuesday

Steward's Circle

7:30 to 8:30 AM, Bruegger's

North University Avenue, Ann Arbor
Join the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Network for this informal discussion with volunteer and professional stewards. This month's topic: Threatened and endangered species. What are the implications of having threatened or endangered species at a site? How do you manage this situation, with the allure of people wanting to see them (and maybe even wanting to do something awful like collect them)?

January

January 14, Tuesday

Steward's Circle

7:30 to 8:30 AM, Bruegger's

North University Avenue, Ann Arbor
This month's topic: Taking a stance on invasive species. How might communities use a list of invasive species to prohibit use in new plantings? Can/should groups or individuals become more

active in working to ban invasives? What can a community do when a developer says s/he will plant sugar maples and ends up planting Norway maples?

January 25, Saturday
Cedar Bend Nature Area
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM



Come see the beautiful views of the Huron while cutting invasive shrubs. Meet us in the Island Park parking lot on Island Drive.

February

February 11, Tuesday

Steward's Circle

7:30 to 8:30 AM, Bruegger's

North University Avenue, Ann Arbor
This month's topic: Resources for managing natural areas. What are they? This community is rich in resources. How does a group or individual know where to start? Who are the people resources? What are the organization-type resources? What are the web resources that people like? What groups have lending libraries that provide good stewardship resources?

February 12, Wednesday

Frog and Toad Survey

Kick-Off Meeting, 7:30 to 9:00 PM

Leslie Science Center Nature House - 1831 Traver Road, Ann Arbor
Volunteers can learn more about Ann Arbor's amphibians while contributing to our inventory efforts. The meeting will cover general information about the annual survey and is required training. Route sign-up will also take place. Please call the NAP office to register or for more information.



February 19, Wednesday

Public Meeting: Prescribed Ecological Burn Program, 7:30 to 9:00 PM

Leslie Science Center Nature House

- 1831 Traver Road, Ann Arbor

Fire is used as a restoration tool in some of Ann Arbor's natural areas. This meeting will provide information and an opportunity for discussion about the Prescribed Ecological Burn Program conducted by NAP. Burns are conducted in City parks throughout the spring and fall.

February 20, Thursday

Prescribed Burn Crew Training, 12:00 to 5:00 PM

Leslie Science Center Nature House - 1831 Traver Road

This is the required annual training session for all new volunteers interested in assisting with the prescribed burns to be held this spring and fall. Burns take place Monday through Friday between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Registration is required by February 14, as enrollment is limited. Please call the NAP office to register or for more information.

March

March 5, Wednesday

Native Landscaping Workshop

Leslie Science Center Nature House, 7:00 to 9:00 PM

Interested in native plants? Would you like to learn how to establish them in your yard? Then this workshop is for you! Topics will include site assessment and preparation, seed and plant selection, installation, and maintenance. Program fee: \$15. Registration is required by February 7. (To register or for program information call the NAP office.)



March 11, Tuesday

Steward's Circle,

7:30 to 8:30 AM, Bruegger's

North University Avenue, Ann Arbor

This month's topic: To Be Announced

Volunteer Year in Review *by Jason Frenzel*

In case you aren't sure that all your hard work is making a difference, I will slice and dice some volunteer related numbers for your enjoyment... In the past fiscal year (July 2001 through June 2002), NAP conducted 50 workdays. A total of 392 volunteers worked with us, producing a grand total of 4600 hours volunteered. 4600 hours! That's 60% as much work as our entire full-time Conservation Crew. That's an average of over 12 hours of work per day, every day of the year!

Obviously, oodles of volunteers have been extremely generous with their time - supporting Ann Arbor parks and NAP. We here at NAP want to say **THANK YOU** to all of you who have pitched in to make our natural oases better places. Your help has led NAP to better management decisions, improved local biological diversity, and increased awareness of these issues throughout town.

You may not think that it can be done, but I have chopped and grated the numbers in another new and exciting way for you... In the first 9 months of 2002, approximately 350 volunteers donated over 3100 hours to protect and promote our natural areas! 35 stewardship

workdays have provided over 800 hours of work in our parks. Thanks to groups from Abbot Elementary; Ann Arbor Girl's Middle School; Ayres, Lewis Norris, and May; numerous Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops; Carlisle-Wortmon; Eastern Michigan University; Emerson School; Loyola University (in Chicago); Merchant of Vino (Whole Foods); the Professional Volunteer Corps; Temple Beth Emeth; UM Project Serve; UM Engineering School; and YMCA Youth Volunteer Corps for all your help at those workdays. 21 Burn Crew volunteers put in 137 hours. The loyal and committed photomonitors have now grown in number to 6 strong. One of the biggest developments we had this year is in the Park Steward program. Not only did they put in almost 800 hours, but they also doubled in number. That's right — there are now 22 Park Stewards helping NAP care for the natural areas we look after. Last, but certainly not least, all the inventory volunteers put in a load of hours, as usual, reporting 874 hours to this point.

I hope I've conveyed to you how much everyone at NAP appreciates your help. If it weren't for your volunteering, NAP wouldn't be half the program it is.



Native Landscaping Workshop

If you missed NAP's last workshop, not to fear, we've planned another for March. This will be a great session to help you to spring into the growing season!

When: Tuesday, March 5, 2003, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Where: Leslie Science Center Nature Housee
Fee: \$15
To Register: Call NAP at 734.996.3266

You can always purchase our native landscaping brochures for \$1 each from the NAP office or from the Parks Department (on the 6th floor of City Hall).

From Rags to Riches *by Bev Walters*

Last fall I stopped in at Kuebler Langford prairie and was finally successful at finding the ladies' tresses orchid (*Spiranthes cernua*) the conservation crew had told me about several years ago. Feeling pretty good about this, I took a look around the site and was impressed with what I saw.

When the M-14 highway was built in the late 1970s Kuebler Langford was used as a staging area for road construction equipment. The topsoil was removed at that time, exposing a gravelly substrate that had been deposited long ago by the last retreating glacier. When I first surveyed this area in 1994, it was quite barren with just a smattering of native prairie species: stiff goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*), showy goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*), and little bluestem (*Andropogon scoparius*)-the only native plants tough enough to withstand the harsh conditions. Taking a cue from these existing species, NAP started conducting prescribed burns here in 1997 and then sowed seed of prairie species. Two prairie grasses, big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) and Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), took hold fairly quickly, along with some native wildflower species like bee-balm (*Monarda fistulosa*) and black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*).

The prairie area blankets a gradual slope, and as I made my way uphill last fall, I was pleased to note that many broad leaves of prairie dock (*Silphium terebinthinaceum*) had made their first appearance this year. I thought about how fine things will look in a few years when their yel-

low flowers tower over the waving grasses. Pausing at the top of the slope, I looked out over the big bluestem, which was back-dropped by a stand of poplars that were just starting to show their golden fall color. Seemed like a good photo, so I pulled my camera out of my backpack to frame up a picture. Too bad about that purple blob of spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) in the foreground, I groused. But wait-the flowers were too dark; must be the less common brown knapweed (*Centaurea jacea*) that grows there. I toyed with the idea of just pulling it out to make a better picture. But no, something wasn't right. I lowered the camera, peered at the purple again, and then rushed over for a closer look. The purple blob was northern blazing star (*Liatris scariosa*)!! What a thrill to see this species making its home here, blooming now, five years after NAP dispersed a few seeds. It's been very rewarding to see the positive change NAP has initiated in this difficult landscape.



Liatris scariosa
northern blazing star

Butterfly Survey Turns Up State-Threatened Species!

by Barb Barton

What could be more exciting for our inventory staff than to discover a State-Threatened species?? Butterfly volunteer Roger Kuhlman and I put in a little extra effort this season to search for a small, brown butterfly called Duke's Skipper (*Euphyes dukesi*), which has a pretty selective taste in habitat. Duke's Skipper caterpillars feed exclusively on *Carex lacustris* (a broad-leaved sedge), and only in places that are shaded for most of the day. The adults seem to have an affinity for buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) flowers. We found several places in various natural areas that seemed suitable for the skipper, but only one had this State-listed species living there. Now that we have identified suitable habitat sites for Duke's Skipper, we can monitor them in the future for additional colonies.

Butterfly survey volunteers put in a lot of time and hard work this year, making this one of the most successful efforts ever! We picked up some new folks who have contributed greatly, and of course the "old timers" have been as faithful as ever. This year we instituted new survey protocol, breaking the surveys into two types: a quantitative survey that is more scientifically rigorous, and a qualitative survey that is less meticulous. I am compiling data right now and hope to produce the most thorough report of our efforts to date.

We would like to thank our incredible volunteers - Roger Kuhlman, Jerry Paulissen, Roger Wykes, John Swales, Nancy Shiffler, Joann Cavaletto, Dave Fanslow, Barb and Ed Taylor, Judy Lobato, the Sussels (Evan, Aaron, Cheryl, and Abby), Nancy Hill, and Jim Weyman — for all of their hard work and dedication to the butterfly survey!

Staff Updates

Hello...



Maggie Hostetler — My heart has always been with the outdoors, starting in my youth as a Girl Scout, then in my twenties and thirties as a backpacker and canoeist, and in middle-age as a birder and native plant fan. I even thought once of studying to be a field biologist. But somewhere along the line teaching, social work, technical writing and computer science kidnapped my career. No more. At last, I'm working where I've always wanted - in a job that is all about wild plants, birds, and butterflies.



Upon leaving university, **Jason Tallant**, one of NAP's newest employees, was in dire need of direction and purpose. Here at NAP we were happy to provide this lost soul with said direction and purpose. When he's not battling many of the botanic scourges we seek to control, he can be found baking bread, starting projects he'll never finish, and brushing his cat, Sophie.



Jon Williams — If you were a rock star, who would you be? I would be Jon Bonham. He played the drums for Led Zeppelin and his style blended hard hitting rock beats with a delicate sensitivity, just like me. I like to hit invasives hard, but extend a gentle hand towards our native species. I'm excited to be a part of this team and I like to think that I help everyday to carry on the legacy of the greatest drummer ever. Oh yeah, I play the drums too while I'm not kayaking or playing with my dogs.

Other Updates...



Eric Ellis — A part of the crew since April, Eric was recently promoted to Crew Leader. His first assignment was the hiring of two new crewmembers (Jon and Jason). The new job has a few more "office" responsibilities but otherwise he will still be out in the field chasing invasives and helping keep Ann Arbor's natural areas healthy and enjoyable.

Volunteers...



Shannon Fiala has joined NAP this fall as a student intern. She is in her fourth year at the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment. Shannon enjoys taking her environmental aggressions out on the invasive species of Ann Arbor's parks. After graduating in April, she hopes to work in restoration ecology and intends to supplement her income by pillaging as a pirate on the high seas.



Henry Kovacs — A native to southeast Michigan, I am a proud UM SNRE alum who has recently returned to this area to be near family and friends. For the last few years I have dedicated myself to natural resource management and environmental education in upstate New York and central New Hampshire, respectively. Now that I am back, with a little extra time on my hands, I am happily volunteering on the Crew with NAP. I am interested to see how NAP operates, but I am especially looking forward to burn days and non-native removal workdays.

Maggie is the new NAP Specialist, while Jon, Jason, Eric, Shannon and Henry are working on the Conservation Crew.

Galerucella Beetles

(purple loosestrife-eating beetles) — The How To's



If you are interested in raising the little bugs that eat the invasive purple loosestrife, now's the time to start thinking about it. Linda Coughenour, a volunteer with the Michigan Purple Loosestrife Control Project, is looking to expand the program. To this end, the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Network will be holding a training session on April 12, 2003. This training will be geared towards land stewards hoping to raise *Galerucella* beetles. It will also have a registration fee (estimated at this time to be \$100) to cover the costs of the materials described below.

If you (as an individual, or a group) participate, you will learn how to establish a population of beetles at your own loosestrife site and to monitor their impact over the next few years. The workshop will provide you with the equipment and training to act as a site coordinator. It will take 2 to 5 years of releases to establish a healthy population of beetles. Raising the beetles will involve digging up 2 to 10 loosestrife plants and repotting them. Once back at your home, you will need to place the plants in a child's swimming pool (or devise some other way to keep the roots constantly wet) and cover the plants with netting (to protect the beetles from predation). Linda will provide

a few beetles to stock your plants. Periodically through the summer you will be able to harvest the hatchlings (1000 to 5000 beetles per year) and move them to your loosestrife-infested site. You will also be able to monitor the affects of your introduction. This will begin by marking out a one-meter plot that you will be able to locate in the coming months and years. A quick survey of the plants will document a baseline density for later comparison. Then you simply monitor for the beetles' damage.

Note: If you decide to participate, you must make sure to obtain permission from the landowner, especially on public lands.

For more detailed information contact Linda Coughenour at 734.622.7487 or l.coughenour@att.net.

Space is limited, so be sure to register by contacting Lisa Brush at 769.6981 or lbrush@umich.edu.

NAP News Questionnaire

Would you like to receive an email announcement of this newsletter being posted to our webpage?

If so, would you like this email notice...

in addition to the paper copy.

instead of the paper copy.

Please clearly print your email address: _____

Help us make the newsletter more enjoyable to you...

What is your favorite section of the NAP News? Please rank 1-10 (1 - I love that section, 10 - Take that out)

_____ Coordinator's Corner

_____ Park Steward Focus

_____ Invasives Information

_____ Staff Updates

_____ Inventory Reports

_____ Volunteer News

_____ NAPpenings

_____ Other

_____ Park Focus

If you have ideas for how to make any of these sections or the newsletter as a whole better, we would love to hear them.

Please mail or email this information back to us.





Burn Crew Training

Thursday, February 20, 2003 — That's when all of us here at NAP will be hosting our yearly Prescribed Burn Crew Training. If you are interested in volunteering on our Burn Crew, this is your chance to be trained to do so. This session will start at 12:00 and end at 5:00, and will be held at the Leslie Science Center Nature House. We will spend a few hours inside discussing the benefits, techniques, and safety of NAP's prescribed burns. All participants will then join us for a mock burn, so dress appropriately for the weather.

The spring burn season will run from March through April; the fall season is late October and November. The typical burn day begins with an email alert from NAP around 8:00 or 9:00 am. Those who can make it let us know and meet (at varying times, typically around noon) at the nature area de jour. Once on site, there is a review of goals and logistics for the day. Then we conduct the burn. Most burn days wrap up between 5:00 and 6:00 pm. (Leaving early is an option.)

Please register for burn training by November 14.


Burn Public Meeting

This session is for anyone who would like more background information about our prescribed burn program — the how's and why's. It is recommended that new Burn Crew volunteers also attend this meeting. Time and Place — the Leslie Science Center Nature House, Wednesday, February 19, 7:30 - 9:00 pm..



Natural Area Preservation News



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A Call for Volunteers!!!

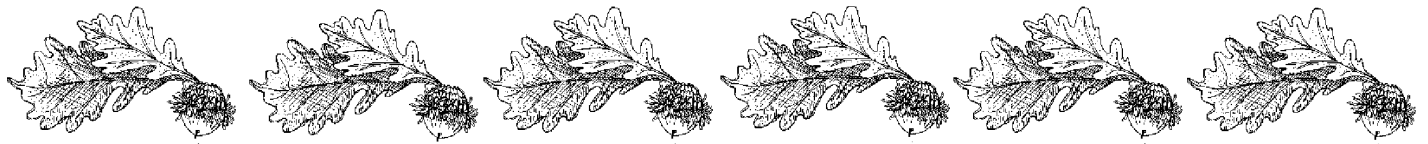
For the past 9 years NAP has consistently relied on volunteers to work on a wide range of projects. We have tried our best to keep our eyes open to new, exciting and invigorating types of work. We are currently hoping to start or increase participation in these four programs:

- **Park Stewards:** see article on page 11.
- **Office Assistant:** this will be a new type of volunteer for NAP. We are looking for someone to come into the office one or two half-days a week, on a semi-permanent basis. S/he would answer the phone, direct calls, answer questions and do some computer work (such as data entry). In addition, this individual must be willing to work closely with us NAPpers.
- **Photomonitors:** while the photomonitoring program has been around for 8 years, we are currently looking to expand the number of volunteers. The time commitment per park is reasonable, but you must be will-

ing and able to work on this project at the precise time of year that the wildflowers, leaves and grasses dictate. Typically a volunteer would spend a full day each in, the spring, the summer, and the fall, to get all the photos taken. NAP will provide you with film and other essential materials. * * * You must have a camera with a wide-angle lens to take these pictures. (Or share NAP's camera with other Photomonitors.)

- **Conservation Crew Members:** Come work alongside NAP's Field Crew as they control invasives, maintain trails, harvest seeds, or carry out other stewardship activities. It's a great way to see the parks and gain hands-on experience. And it's Fun! If there is a particular time of year or day of the week you would regularly like to work along side our crew, restoring Ann Arbor's natural areas, please let us know.

If you are interested in these opportunities call the Outreach Coordinator.



The Park Steward Program Continues to Expand

Would you like to be a Park Steward?

While concerned citizens have long worked to protect their favorite parks, only in the past few years has NAP truly joined forces with these folks. We collaborate to identify stewardship priorities, determine management techniques, maximize workday participation, and develop neighborhood involvement. These Park Stewards work on a variety of projects, such as monitoring for invasives or hazardous trees, maintaining trails, and, of course, removing oodles of invasives. These individuals all have different interests and work on wide-ranging projects in their parks. In fact, Park Stewards are as varied as the parks they work in. Some of the Stewards are private business owners, City workers, retirees, and one is a pilot! What they all have in common is a love for nature and a desire to adopt and restore one of Ann Arbor's natural areas.

Much to our excitement, the Park Steward program has grown greatly in recent years: from four individuals two years ago to eighteen presently. This encourages us to seek Stewards for the remaining natural areas in Ann Arbor. There are currently Stewards in fourteen nature areas; NAP would like Park Stewards in all the nature areas we are charged with maintaining. In particular, we would love to see some additional stewardship at Barton, Gallup and Sugarbush, as well as at many smaller neighborhood parks.

If you are interested in a local park and want more information about becoming a Park Steward, NAP will be hosting an informational meeting about the Park Steward program on Thursday, November 21, 2002. This session will begin at 7:30 PM at the Leslie Science Center Nature House. Some current Park Stewards will be on hand to discuss their projects and field questions. Please register by calling NAP.

Park Focus: Native Plant Gardens *Continued from page 1*

A resource like this is too good to pass up. If you are thinking about native plantings, or would like to add something to what you already have and don't know what would go well in your space...come visit and get ideas from our demonstration garden. There are volunteer opportunities with the native gardens - you can work alongside a Master Gardener in tending the gardens.

Furstenberg Native Plant Demonstration Garden *by Eric Ellis*

Along Fuller Road, across from Huron High School, grows a small piece of Ann Arbor's natural history. The Furstenberg Demonstration Garden, established in 1994 as a memorial to Casey Gilbert Hakken, is planted with 73 species of prairie plants native to southeast Michigan. Many of the plants can be found in the surrounding park as well.

There is something in bloom from early spring until the end of the growing season. Late summer is the best time for peak wildflower viewing. The plants are labeled in all stages of their growth, which can be particularly useful to people interested in planting natives.


Park Steward Aunita Erskine diligently maintains the garden with the help of many Washtenaw County Master Gardeners and the general public at volunteer workdays.

Every year she encounters new challenges. Early on, she worked to keep out invasive cool season (turf) grasses and isolate the individual native species. More recently she has dealt with hungry critters such as deer and rabbits. This past spring a split-rail fence was erected to keep the deer (not people) out. The rabbits continue to nibble. Another challenge is finding space for new species in the small garden. This year there are three new additions; pasture thistle (*Cirsium discolor*), false sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*), and one of the numerous native asters. In early spring NAP conducts prescribed burns in the garden to simulate the natural process these native species are adapted to. The last burn was this April.

If you would like to learn more about the garden, Aunita will be leading a volunteer workday on Sunday, September 15th from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Aunita's workdays are more than a chance to help with the garden's upkeep; she also gives out a native plant resource sheet, a plant list, and leads a short nature walk in other parts of Furstenberg. If you don't have time to attend the workday, feel free to visit the garden and enjoy the wildflowers.

Natural Area Preservation News



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