

# Natural Area Preservation News

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

Volume 12, Number 1

Spring 2007

## Park Focus: Dolph Nature Area

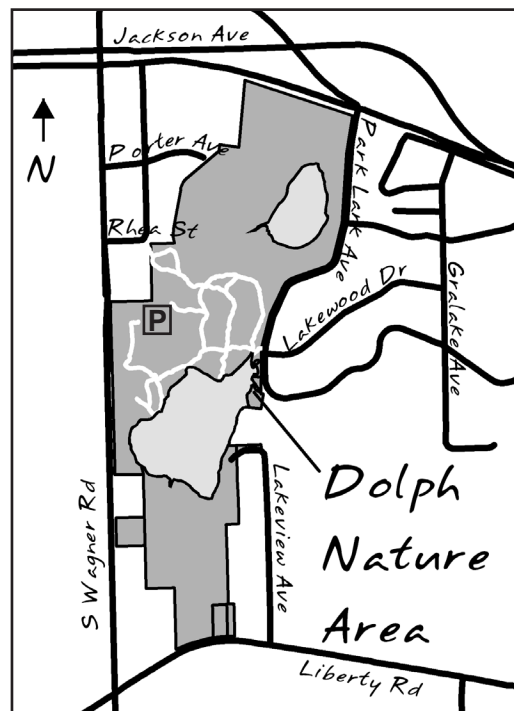
by Michelle Crowder

The woods were quiet the late afternoon I walked through Dolph Nature Area. I heard little more than the crunch of my boots on the frozen earth, the faint whistle of a breeze coursing through bare branches, and an occasional chirp from one of the resident birds. It was January, and a cold front had arrived a few days prior to my visit. The shores of First Sister Lake, the smaller and more vegetated of the two lakes at Dolph, were frozen. Delicate, crenellated patterns had formed around the trunks of the submerged trees near the shore, as though the water had frozen while lapping up against them.

The First and Second Sister Lakes are the only natural lakes within the city of Ann Arbor. Third Sister Lake, another natural lake in this system, is located just west of the city boundaries, in Saginaw Forest, a University of Michigan-owned property. The lakes were formed approximately 10,000 years ago, during the northward retreat of the Wisconsin Glacier. Huge chunks of ice broke off from the main glacier and were buried in glacial outwash or till. As the ice melted, the earth above it settled, forming what are known as kettle lakes.

I stopped first at the dock overlook on First Sister Lake. Even in mid-winter, the mat of vegetation that winds through First Sister is evident, due to the dried cattail leaves and fruiting spikes that persist while the plants are dormant. As vegetation colonizes open water, kettle lakes can turn into bogs over time. First Sister Lake is in the early stages of this process; as such, it is a wonderful place to find both open-water and wetland plants, including some bog species. The floating vegetation mat on First Sister Lake comprises the only bog in Ann

Arbor's parks system. Although the mat can only be accessed via the cattail marsh at the north end of the lake, a stroll along the slope overlooking First Sister is a great way to get a feel for this matrix of water and vegetation. "This overlook," says Sue Miller, Dolph's volunteer Park Steward, "is a lovely spot, one of my favorite in Dolph, and one of Dolph's better wildflower areas."



Look for cool bog plants like leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), bog birch (*Betula pumila*), tamarack (*Larix laricina*), and watch out for poison sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*). Other interesting wetland plants include buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) and turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*). In the open water, look for yellow pond lily (*Nuphar advena* and *N. variegata*), sweet-scented water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*), and duckweed (*Lemna minor* and *L. trisulca*). Along the eastern edge of the lake, NAP is monitoring a small population of water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), an invasive in southern states that is expanding its range northward.

The winter stillness of Dolph stands in stark contrast to its disposition during the warmer months of the year, especially spring. Come April, the park will be "awash with color and song," says Dea Armstrong, City Ornithologist. "It is a very exciting time." Beginning in late April, Dolph transforms into a haven for birds (and the folks who watch them) as the spring migrants arrive and the resident birds become active in preparation for the breeding season. In early May, Dea helps lead a popular bird walk at Dolph, and NAP volunteers begin the annual Breeding Bird Survey later that month (see calendar on pages 4 & 5). This

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# Coordinator's Corner

## The New Park Millage

Last November, Ann Arbor residents once again approved the millage that funds NAP. Actually, they approved combining two expiring park millages into one 6-year "Park Maintenance & Capital Improvements Millage" with a slight increase in the overall mil rate. The other big difference is that this new millage puts a greater emphasis on the "park maintenance" side (roughly 70%) than on the "capital improvements" side (roughly 30%). Together, these changes mean a one-time increase of nearly 20% in NAP's funding for next fiscal year. After that, the millage guidelines approved by Council call for a 3% annual budget increase for NAP over the life of the millage. So, next year will be our one big opportunity to "expand" our program. Here are a few details of how that money will be spent on various aspects of our ecological restoration activities:

First, we'd like to expand our crew of Conservation Workers. They're the folks you see out in the field running the equipment and staffing workdays. They're the ones physically getting the invasives out of the natural areas. Of course, additional staff means some additional equipment needs, including another vehicle to transport people and materials.

The other big area of expansion is in our volunteer program. There are lots of additional potential volunteers out there, in schools and civic groups, as well as neighborhood individuals. In the past, we just haven't had enough staffing available to reach out to those folks, tell them about NAP, and do some recruiting. The new millage will allow us to do that and also be able to increase our number of volunteer workdays.

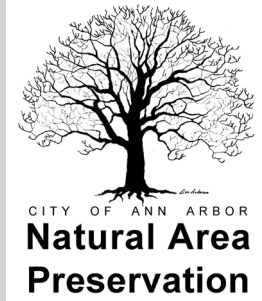
So that accounts for the bulk of our budget increase next year. There may be a few other smaller initiatives to supplement these, such as some additional wildlife surveys in our parks, but you'll have to wait for the summer newsletter to hear about those!

So, "Thanks Ann Arbor" for your continued, and increased, financial support of NAP. We hope you'll come join us during the 2007 field season as we "pick up the pace" on our ecological restoration efforts.

-Dave Borneman, Natural Area Preservation Manager

*Unless someone like you cares a whole lot,  
nothing is going to get better. It's not.*

-from Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*



**Natural Area Preservation**  
is a Division of the City of Ann Arbor Public Services Area.

*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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### Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator

Jason Frenzel

### Outreach Assistants

Michelle Crowder

Dana Wright

Check out our blog at  
[www.a2nap.blogspot.com](http://www.a2nap.blogspot.com)

\* \* \*

If you would prefer to receive your next newsletter via e-mail please call NAP

# Let the Magic Find You

by Dave Marx

There's great beauty all around us, but sometimes it takes some patience to find it. You may stride through your neighborhood nature area in minutes, as there is little that's big and obviously beautiful to find. You may stare with pity and perhaps revulsion at the gray trunks of dead white ashes, yet miss the glossy, fresh green of an unfurling leaf at your feet.

Scale your attention to the size of the woodland. If you'd spend two hours walking the Arb, then give that same time to your neighborhood nature area, at least once. You may not find broad meadows and dramatic glades shaped by landscape architects, but you'll likely find miniature, rough-hewn versions of those same features, which you can revisit as the seasons change. They will become your own private places in the woods.

A photographer with a macro lens can find little gems almost anywhere. Look to your feet and find a patch of moss growing in a nut shell. Look overhead, and find subtle, stained glass window patterns among the branches, leaves and sky. Zoom in on a rivulet to discover the swirling currents of a whitewater river. This is the approach I took growing up in New Jersey, a land of very few great, scenic wonders but many hidden treasures. A wide angle lens was always handy in New Hampshire's White Mountains, but back home my 55mm macro almost never came off the camera.

Touring a ten-acre nature area at a walking pace is akin to driving the Interstate through a National Park – you'll only have time to notice the biggest, most obvious features. Scale your speed to the space at hand. Walk with baby-steps. Sit down, wait, and see what comes to your notice. When I walk the trail loop in Dicken Woods, I reverse directions to encounter every leg of the trail from several perspectives.

I write guidebooks to Disney's theme parks for a living. Despite the significant differences between a nature area and the Magic Kingdom, I give very similar advice to my guidebook readers. If you're constantly rushing from one ride to the next, you miss the real magic of the Disney parks. No matter where you travel, whether to the ends of the earth or your own back yard, the harder you chase the "magic," the harder it will be to catch. Slow down, and give your nearby nature area's magic a chance to find you.

*Dave Marx is co-author of popular guidebooks to Walt Disney World, the Disney Cruise Line, and Disneyland, and is the Publisher at PassPorter Travel Press – <http://www.passporter.com>. In a former life he biked the trails of the northeast, paddled whitewater rivers from Quebec to Georgia, and as a young teen helped preserve a local 17-acre woodland. He lives adjacent to Dicken Woods with his wife and co-author Jennifer, and their toddler son, Alexander.*

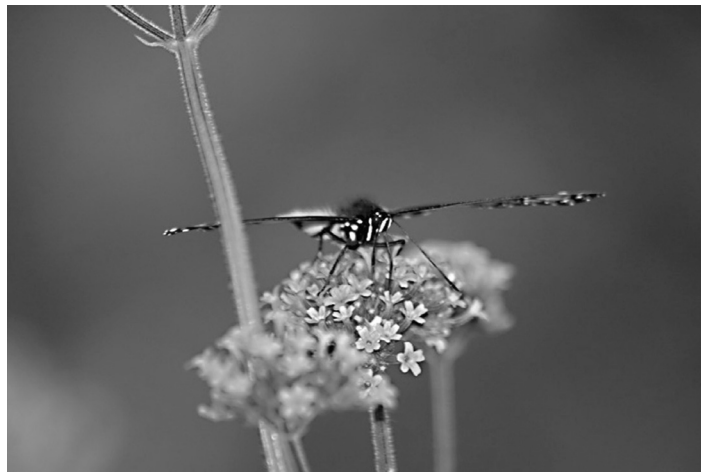
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## NAP 2006 Photo Contest Winners!

Our first Photo Contest was a success! We received some great pictures, and made some new friends. Thanks for all of your entries everyone! And thanks again to our sponsors: Huron Camera, Nicolas Books, Big George's Home Appliance, and Washtenaw County Conservation District!

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize** goes to 17-year-old Pavel Borisov who turned in so many beautiful pictures it was difficult to choose! Pavel received a great pair of binoculars donated by Huron Camera, and an official NAP t-shirt.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize** goes to long-time NAP volunteer, Ralph Powell. Ralph received a gift certificate to Big George's.



*1<sup>st</sup> prize photo taken by Pavel Borisov at Gallup Park*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize** goes to Marion Powers who received *Michigan Wildflowers* by Harry C. Lund, donated by Washtenaw Co. Conservation District.

Our **Youth Category** was taken by 13-year-old Harold Eyster who received a gift certificate to Nicolas Books.

To see *all* the winning photos, visit our website: [www.a2gov.org/nap](http://www.a2gov.org/nap), and click on Photo Contest 2006.

For those of you who didn't enter last year... there's always this year! And it's not too early to start thinking about which photos you want to enter. Our theme will be Volunteer Effort. We look forward to seeing your excellent pictures on a topic in which you are all experts!

# Spring 2007 Natural Area Preservation Volunteer Stewardship Calendar

NAP is located at the Leslie Science Center (LSC) (1831 Traver Road, Ann Arbor, 48105), 734.996.3266.

Workday orientations start promptly at listed times. 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.


Contact NAP if a group you are involved with is interested in planning a volunteer stewardship event.

Our website is [www.a2gov.org/nap](http://www.a2gov.org/nap)


## March

**March 3, Saturday**  
**Stewarding a Workday**  
**Matthaei Botanical Gardens,**   
1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor  
9:00 am to 12:00 noon


Join local experts in learning how workdays are run. We'll talk about working with volunteers, preparing for events, and giving thanks. This workshop is meant for staff and volunteers who will lead stewardship workdays. Cost: \$10 for Stewardship Network Members, \$15 for non-members. Register at [www.stewardshipnetwork.org](http://www.stewardshipnetwork.org) or 734.996.3190.

**March 7, Wednesday**  
**Prescribed Ecological**  
**Burn Public Meeting**  
**LSC Nature House**   
7:30 to 9:00 pm


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 Natural Area Preservation. Burns will be conducted in City Parks throughout the spring and fall.


**March 8, Thursday**  
**Prescribed Ecological**  
**Burn Crew Training**  
**LSC Nature House**   
12:00 noon to 5:00 pm

This is the required yearly training session for all volunteers interested in assisting with the prescribed burns held this spring and fall. Burns take place Monday through Friday between 12:00 noon and 5:00 pm. Pre-registration is required by March 2, as enrollment is limited.


**March 13, Tuesday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**   
**Brueggers Bagels on N Univeristy Ave**  
7:30 to 8:30 am

Prescribed fire. Who's burning? Why and when do we burn? What effects does it have? How do we do it safely?

**March 15, Thursday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**   
**NEW Center, 1100 N Main**  
12:00 noon to 1:00 pm  
See March 13 Stewards' Circle.

**March 24, Saturday**  
**Assess Natural Areas in the**  
**Huron River Watershed**   
**NEW Center, 1100 N Main, followed**  
**by field trip to Barton Nature Area**  
1:00 to 5:00 pm

Learn to conduct a rapid ecological assessment of nearby natural areas. Trained volunteers will work together on site assessment (an expected time commitment of four hours per site). Assessments will be used for prioritization and planning at the township and county levels. Materials fee: \$15 for Stewardship Network or Huron River Watershed Council members; \$20 for non-members.

**March 31, Saturday**  
**Mary Beth Doyle Park**   
10:00 am to 1:00 pm  
Formerly Brown Park, this property was recently renamed in memory of local environmental leader and social advocate, Mary Beth Doyle. Join us in sprucing up the entrances for its grand re-opening in the fall. Help us trim, pull, and plant! Tools will be provided. Meet at the Packard Road entrance.

**April 10, Tuesday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**   
**Brueggers Bagels on N Univeristy Ave**  
7:30 to 8:30 am

What is an herbaceous invasive? So, there's garlic mustard and dame's rocket, what are the new leafy invasives to look for? What techniques are tried and true? We often pull them in the spring, but are we getting them all?

**April 14, Saturday**  
**Furstenberg Native Plant Garden**   
9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Join Park Steward and Master Gardener, Aunita Erskine, for her annual spring cleanup and botanical walk. Meet in the Furstenberg parking lot off Fuller Road, across from Huron High School. Workday orientation starts promptly at 9:00 am. A short nature walk will be held at the end of the workday, time permitting.


**April 14, Saturday**  
**Huron River Cleanup by Canoe**   
9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Help the Huron River by removing trash while canoeing. Please register with the coordinator of this event, David Fanslow, at 734.741.2353 or [dave.fanslow@noaa.gov](mailto:dave.fanslow@noaa.gov) as participation is limited. Canoe usage for this cleanup is FREE!

**April 14, Saturday**  
**Lakewood Nature Area**   
10:00 am to 1:00pm

It's garlic mustard season! Come and get your garlic mustard at its tastiest! Garlic mustard is less bitter in the early spring! We'll be pulling invasives by the bagful. Recipes provided. Meet us at the Lakewood Elementary School parking lot off Gralake Avenue (three blocks south of Jackson Avenue).

## April

**April 1, Sunday**  
**Dolph Nature Area**   
1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Heads up birders, heads up neighbors, it's our annual trail clearing! Are you a Fool-er? We can take it, if you can! Meet at the parking lot off Wagner Road.

# May

**April 15, Sunday**  
**Bird Hills Neighborhood**  
**Coalition Series**  
1:00 to 4:00 pm



Our first meeting! Join us for this workday series at Bird Hills. By focusing our restoration efforts at the same site over four weeks, we will develop a stronger kinship with the park and each other. See page 8 for more information.

**April 19, Thursday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**  
**NEW Center, 1100 N Main**  
12:00 noon to 1:00 pm  
See April 10 Stewards' Circle.



**April 19, Thursday**  
**Breeding Bird Survey Kick-Off**  
**Leslie Science Center House**  
7:30 to 9:00 pm



This is the night to sign up for your favorite park and pick up materials. NAP Ornithologist Dea Armstrong will also report on the 2006 data and survey highlights. Please register by April 13 by calling the NAP office.

**April 21, Saturday, Earth Day!**  
**Huron Hills Golf Course Woods**  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm



This park has seen some major invasives removal! Join us in eradicating the remaining garlic mustard! We'll provide snacks and recipes if you'd like to take some of your garlic mustard home. Meet on Hunting Valley off Provincial Drive.

**April 22, Sunday**  
**Earth Day Festival**  
**UM Matthaei Botanical Gardens**  
1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor  
12:00 noon to 4:00 pm



Join us for this citywide event, which includes free hands-on activities, entertainment, nature walks, and live animal presentations. Children are encouraged to come in costume for the All-Species Parade, starting at 2 pm. Call 734.647.7600 for more information.

**April 22, Sunday**  
**Bird Hills Neighborhood**  
**Coalition Series**  
1:00 to 4:00 pm



We can really use more help! Come join us in stewardship of Bird Hills. (See p. 8.)

**April 29, Sunday**  
**Bird Hills Neighborhood**  
**Coalition Series**  
1:00 to 4:00 pm



There is still time to join us! (See p. 8.)

**May 5, Saturday**  
**Bird Hills Neighborhood**  
**Coalition Series**  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm



The last day in our series (see p. 8 for more info) will give us an opportunity to join a larger group at Garlic Mustard Weed Out Day! We'll finish up our project and help out with their garlic mustard. Afterwards we can socialize and fill our bellies at the barbeque (see below)!

**May 5, Saturday**  
**9th Annual Garlic Mustard**  
**Weed-Out Day**  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm  
**Don't forget about the BBQ!**



Join NAP as we pull invasive garlic mustard in our natural areas **citywide!** This year we're offering even more parks! Help us keep this pervasive invasive in check. We can't do it without you! Keep track of how many bags of garlic mustard you pull and whoever pulls the most in the city gets a prize (to be awarded at the barbeque)! Choose from these locations to pull garlic mustard:

**Bird Hills** - Meet at the park entrance on Bird Road, west of Huron River Drive.  
**Cedar Bend** - Meet at the Island Park parking lot at the end of Island Drive. Park Stewards will be hosting garlic mustard pulls at additional sites. Check our website, or call us to find out if your neighborhood park is participating.

**May 5, Saturday**  
**Garlic Mustard BBQ!**  
1:30 to 5:00 pm  
**Island Park Pavilion**



Rain or shine, we pull and dine! NAP will fire up the grills and bring some burgers, buns, condiments, and drinks. We'll be mixing up garlic mustard hummus and salsa. Please bring a garlic mustard dish or anything to pass. All NAP volunteers, friends, and family invited! Wish you had volunteered with NAP? Hope to? You're invited too!

**May 5, Saturday**  
**Identifying Michigan Spring Wildflowers**  
**Creekshead Nature Preserve**  
**Salem Township**  
10:00 am to 12:00 noon



We'll talk about indicator species and threats to wildflower areas, and then see what we can find and identify. Attendees receive a plant ID book. Cost: \$10 for StewardshipNetwork or Washtenaw Land Trust members, \$15 for non-members. Register at [www.stewardshipnetwork.org](http://www.stewardshipnetwork.org) or 734.996.3190.

**May 8, Tuesday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**  
**Brueggers Bagels on N University Ave**  
7:30 to 8:30 am



Come chat about floristic quality assessment. Ever done a plant inventory for a site, then wondered what comes next in figuring out whether it is a high-quality natural area? The Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA) is one widely-used technique for assessing site quality. What is an FQA? How do we do them? How do we use the results?

**May 14, Monday**  
**Dolph Nature Area Bird Walk**  
7:30 to 9:30 am



Join City Ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for birds in and around First and Second Sister Lakes. Bring binoculars if you have them. A great walk for all levels! Meet at the parking lot off of Wagner Road, between Jackson and Liberty Roads, at 7:20 am.

**April 17, Thursday**  
**Huron Arbor Stewards' Circle**  
**NEW Center, 1100 N Main**  
12:00 noon to 1:00 pm  
See May 8 Stewards' Circle.



**May 18, Friday**  
**Evening Bird Walk: Gallup & Furstenberg**  
6:00 to 8:00 pm

Free for all ages. Join City Ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for birds in the evening in Gallup Park and Furstenberg Nature Area. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at the paddleboat dock in Gallup, near the canoe livery.

**May 19, Saturday**  
**Marshall Park**  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm



One of our favorite parks needs lots of help this spring. Join us in pulling up garlic mustard and other herbaceous invasives. We will provide snacks and tools, and take you on an interpretative walk. Meet in the parking lot off Dixboro Road, north of Plymouth Road.

**May 20, Sunday**  
**Huron Parkway Nature Area**  
1:00 to 4:00 pm



Help us find garlic mustard, pull it up, and make room for native plants like mayapple and dutchman's breeches. Meet at the Park Steward's house—3470 Woodland Road, off East Huron River Drive. You are welcome to park in the driveway if there's room; if not, park in the street.

# Park Focus: Dolph Nature Area *Continued from page 1*

excitement lasts until late summer.

Within the last decade, Dolph has become one of Ann Arbor's premier birding spots for spring migrants. Perhaps the birds are attracted by the water and the range of habitats present in a relatively small area, suggests Dea. Within Dolph's 75.3 acres exist open water, wetland, and marsh habitat, as well as forests and shrublands. These communities provide diverse sources of food, from fish and insects to berries and seeds, as well as diverse breeding habitats. Consequently, a wide variety of bird species choose to visit and breed here. Additionally, Dolph has fewer tall trees than many forested parks; the birds are therefore lower in the canopy and more easily spied by birders.

Over 140 bird species have been recorded in Dolph, roughly half of which breed in the park. Interesting migrants include the American Bittern (rare), Least Flycatcher (its "chebek" call identifies this regular May migrant), and Northern Waterthrush (a warbler that is almost sure to be heard in early May). Dolph is a great place to see most of the known species of warblers, including the secretive Mourning Warbler, and its close relative, the Connecticut Warbler. Dea spoke triumphantly of the morning she was lucky enough to see a Connecticut Warbler bathing in the park. This species is particularly uncommon, and easier heard than seen.

Breeding birds include the year-round residents, Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers; as well as migrants like the Baltimore Oriole, Wood Duck, and Green Heron. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Warbling Vireo, two common songsters, also arrive in May and stay throughout the summer. Dolph is one of the few Wood Thrush breeding sites in Ann Arbor. Listen for its loud, flute-like song echoing through the woods in the evening. Also notable, though not a bird, is the Blanding's Turtle, a species of special concern in Michigan that has been recorded at Dolph.

Because of Dolph's popularity among birds and birders alike, NAP's policy is to manage the park as a bird

sanctuary. We generally refrain from restoration work during the spring migration, and we check with Dea and other birders before removing shrubs or conducting prescribed ecological burns. In addition, during the last several years the park has become easier to traverse, thanks largely to contributions by Eagle Scouts Devin Riker, Wesley Weaver, and Daniel Mitchell. They have created



*The outlook dock on First Sister Lake  
photograph by Sue Miller*

new trails around the pond between First and Second Sister Lakes, new entrances on Rhea Road and Porter Street, and built bridges and a boardwalk that serves as an overlook. During my visit, I walked some of these new trails, which meandered through hardwood swamp and old field on the west side of the park. Occasionally, the trails provided glimpses into the pond that connects First and Second Sister Lake. Because the wetland surrounding the pond is rather densely forested, these trails will be valuable to birders interested in observing more secretive species, such as the Sora and Virginia Rail, both of which feed in Dolph's marshes.

I continued around the pond southward to the overlook on Second Sister Lake. Sheltered by towering cottonwoods, I gazed across the silent lake and the soft reflection of purple-orange evening sky into a forest of tall trees. In 2002, NAP acquired this property to the south of Second

Sister, adding 18.2 acres to the park. Visitors can now enter Dolph via West Liberty Street, as well as connect to the oak-hickory woodlands of Lakewood Nature Area to the east. The existing informal network of trails in the new parcel will be expanded, allowing park visitors to walk almost completely around Second Sister Lake. In the future, we are hoping to acquire additional property to the north of Dolph, which would make it possible to walk completely around First Sister Lake as well.

Strolling back towards Parklake Avenue, from which I entered Dolph, I noticed a small family of waterfowl on Second Sister, a hint of things to come. "Much of Dolph's charm comes from the water," Sue noted. Even on a calm mid-winter day, this was certainly true. I look forward to returning in upcoming months to witness the excitement of spring birds and blossoms amid the watery landscape of Dolph's Sister Lakes.

# NAPennings

## Thank you...

- ♥Curtis Vincze and Drew Clark for your Eagle Scout Projects at Huron Hills Golf Course Woods and Leslie Woods
- ♥Sally and Bob Neill for your donation in honor of Mary and Art Coscia
- ♥Stan and Robin Mendenhall for your donation to Cedar Bend Nature Area

## Congratulations, Dea!

Dea Armstrong was the top bird species lister for Washtenaw County this year, with 233 species! Only 3 other birders have ever recorded higher annual totals.

## Congratulations, Dave!

In January, Dave Borneman was the recipient of the annual *Bob Grese Deep Roots Award* given by the Ann Arbor Chapter of Wild Ones “in recognition of exemplary stewardship of native plant communities through leadership, education, and community involvement.”

## 2007 WAM (Wildflower Association of Michigan)

The 2007 Michigan Wildflower Conference will be March 4 & 5 at the Kellogg Conference Center at Michigan State University. This year's title: *Back to the Future – What Have We Learned?* Sessions will address a range of topics for novice to professional home/land owners, growers, designers, government planners, stewards, and educators. For more information, check [www.wildflowersmich.org](http://www.wildflowersmich.org).

## EAB Tree Removals

The unfortunate loss of our ash to the Emerald Ash Borer has led to the removal of all the city's ash street trees, but ash also exist in our natural areas. While most of these trees will be left to decompose and for habitat, the standing dead ash on the edges of some parks present a hazard for

park neighbors and adjacent streets. NAP is helping the City Forester identify these trees. We will most likely hire a contractor to fell trees, dropping them into the parks, so the trees will still offer habitat but won't pose a threat.

## Conference Updates

Dave Borneman organized an *Herbicide Alternatives Round-table Discussion* at the annual meeting of the Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN) in Milwaukee, WI in December 2006. He rounded up a panel of Midwesterners with expertise in such herbicide alternatives as: grazing, prescribed fire, soil chemistry modification, biological control, and mowing, then asked Lisa Brush to use her facilitation skills to lead the discussion. Lisa is the Executive Director of the Stewardship Network and a co-board member of MIPN with Dave.

Dave also gave a presentation to the Michigan Recreation and Park Association on *Managing Natural Parkland with Prescribed Fire* at their annual conference in February. When NAP started in 1993, Ann Arbor was the only City in Michigan thinking about using prescribed fire in parks. Now, interest seems to be growing!

## Way-Finding Signs

This spring, you will see new signs at Bird Hills, Black Pond Woods, Cedar Bend, Dolph, Mary Beth Doyle (formerly Brown), Marshall, and Scarlett Mitchell Nature Areas – the parks where we've had numerous “lost” users.

## a little help...

NAP is looking for someone to do some video-documentation at various events we will have this spring and summer. We're hoping to put these materials on CTN later in the year. If you're interested in volunteering, please give us a call.

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## Staff Updates

### hello...

#### Nancy Stoll

Greetings! I joined the NAP team as an office volunteer. I help produce brochures, notices, and workday books; enter data from workdays for record-keeping and planning; and other projects. I grew up in Massachusetts, and I have lived in Ann Arbor for twenty years. My background is in publishing, social work, and full-time parenting for ten years. A love of nature has been with me since childhood and led me to NAP. I enjoy gardening, struggling with invasives in my yard, and watching for favorite wildflowers each year.



### farewell...

#### Maggie Hostetler

After four-and-a-half wonderful, magical years I am sad to be leaving NAP. I have been working at home the last year as a freelance technical writer and that work now absorbs too much of my time to continue in my NAP position. I've had many jobs in my life, but NAP was the best—helping to preserve Ann Arbor's natural spaces—working with so many great people. I am not going to say goodbye since I intend to sign up as a NAP volunteer and will be seeing you all around.



# A New Way to Look at Restoration

by Dana Wright



Community building is an important factor in restoration and stewardship. In southeast Michigan, many woodland flowers have evolved with an over-story of oaks and hickories. Butterflies often depend on specific plants to complete their life cycle; larvae of the Spicebush swallowtail, for example, can survive only on sassafras or spicebush. In restoration, scientists who know about flora, fauna, and how they interact are needed, but folks who have the muscle and dedication to get the work done are also required. The survival of a natural community in a developed area depends on a community of people that will take interest and ownership of the ecosystem.

We are trying something new in our effort to build this community of people. We will be hosting a series of workdays at two sites this stewardship season. It is our hope that by focusing our restoration in the same park, week after week, we will develop stronger kinship with the restoration community, allow folks to dig in and be able to see a difference, and in the process create lasting bonds between each other and the park. We hope you will join us in creating these restoration communities. Introducing: **Bird Hills Neighborhood Coalition Series** and starting in June, **The Furstenberg Crew**.

**Bird Hills Neighborhood Coalition Series** is a series of workdays this spring starting April 15<sup>th</sup> and continuing through May 5<sup>th</sup>. Join Park Stewards Rick Isaackson and Ric Lawson, and NAPPER Dana Wright, to welcome in spring. We hope to pull together Bird Hills neighbors, birders, frog and toad inventory folks, photo monitors, and everyone with a special interest in this varied and attractive park. We will enjoy the beauty spring has to offer and help the ecological communities of Bird Hills be as healthy as they can be. Be prepared to see many native wildflowers and put in some work that will make a difference!

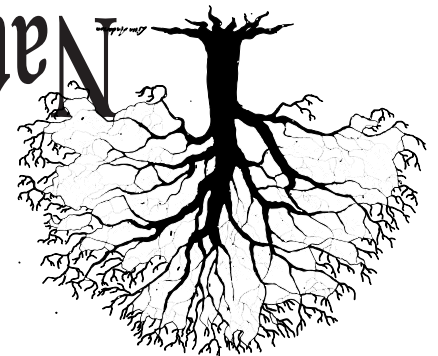
- April 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday 1-4:00pm
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday 1-4:00pm
- April 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday 1-4:00pm
- May 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday 10-1:00pm

Please see pages 4 & 5 for our complete Volunteer Calendar

Water, snacks, tools, and gloves are provided. You may want to bring your own water bottle to carry into the field. Long pants, closed toe shoes, and a long sleeve shirt are recommended. Meet at the park entrance on Bird Road, west of Huron River Drive. Additional parking is available in the Barton Dam parking lot. We look forward to seeing you there!

*by Anderson '97*

# Natural Area Preservation News



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