



# THE BUZZ N' BLOOM

## QUARTERLY

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### Nature In Short

- Aquatic turtles go dormant under water under the ice and breathe through their skin. You may see them move about under the ice if you look closely.
- Wood frogs are frozen solid.

## DO NOT WISH WINTER AWAY

Although our mild weather may make it feel otherwise, winter is definitely here. What effect does such mild winter weather have on local animal and plant life?

During a typical winter, the cold is the main factor for wildlife. Many organisms employ different techniques to survive during the winter. Some, like our local wood frogs, even freeze solid and have natural antifreeze in their bodies!

The day length and reduction in sunlight hours are important factors in winter, as well. The change of leaf colors is often brought about through reduction in day length, or photoperiod. Plant organisms sometimes respond to this factor more than the cold. As we have seen this winter season, day length and reduction in sunlight hours can be a more reliable indicator of winter than the temperature.

If our winters continuously become warmer, certain species will no longer be able to live here. Climate change will have an impact on our natural fauna



and flora, but what that will be is hard to determine.

So, while we enjoy the pleasantly mild winter, we should think about the impact that it

may have on our environment, especially if it becomes a trend. Let's not wish winter away. There may come a time when we want it back.

### MASTER SITE PLAN UPDATE

We are in the finishing stages of the development of our Master Site Plan. We appreciate the great amount of input we have received from the community and from attendees at the public open house held in November. Once completed, the Master Site Plan will be on display at Lake Katherine for the public to view.

The Master Site Plan is a long-term, multi-feature plan. Upon completion, the Board of LKNCBG will approve fund-raising priorities for portions of the Master Site Plan. We also will be implementing parts of the plan that do not require special funds in our day-to-day work.

### THIS QUARTER'S QUOTES



Jane Goodall

This issue of *Buzz N' Bloom* contains quotes from Jane Goodall, a noted primatologist famous for her work with the chimps of Gombe Stream National Park, Tanzania.

She has worked tirelessly throughout her life to learn about chimpanzees and used that work to help conserve what she loves.

## VOLUNTEERS YOU SHOULD KNOW—MICHAEL LITTMAN

**Q:** What was your first experience with nature?

**A:** It was either vacationing at Camp Martin Johnson near Ludington, MI, where my parents had met as camp counselors, or fishing for chubs, bullheads, and sunfish in Butterfield Creek in Flossmoor, IL.

**Q:** What first motivated you to get involved in the natural world?

**A:** Probably watching Jacques Cousteau TV specials. I was

definitely fascinated with sea life at an early age.

**Q:** Do you have a favorite “getaway” location and if so, where?

**A:** Lately I have been sneaking off to the Driftless area of the Midwest. It's amazing to think that our entire region was glaciated and covered in ice, except for this area that served as refugia for ancient populations of brook trout, my favorite fish to chase.

**Q:** What was the last unexpected pleasure you experienced while out in nature?

**A:** On a diving trip to Culebra Island in Puerto Rico, a guy I was traveling with spotted two cuttlefish (a chameleon-like squid relative) in a protected cove. We were able to observe them for 15 minutes while they changed into a multitude of colored patterns, which they can switch instantaneously.

**Q:** Where is the one location that took your breath away upon first seeing it?

**A:** Definitely the Grand Canyon. I was on a field trip while taking a geology course and we hiked to the bottom and camped overnight. Every corner we turned seemed to reveal a whole different world. No film or photograph does it justice. I've been there three times and hope to bring my children there as soon as I get a chance.

## BOOK REVIEW—*MY FAMILY AND OTHER ANIMALS* BY GERALD DURRELL

*...The mist lifted in quick, lithe ribbons, and before us lay the island, the mountains as though sleeping beneath a crumpled blanket of brown, the folds stained with the green of olive groves."*

This is one of the first books that inspired my love of nature when I was growing up in Cornwall, England.

It is the story of a boy that moves to Corfu, Greece. While there, Gerald's interest in nature

becomes cemented by his forays into the natural world around him, whether it be visiting the blue Adriatic and staring at fish or sitting in the shade beneath the cypress trees. The level of detail with which Gerald describes his observations is so infectious, it made me want to grab a magnifying glass and go out and stare at any bugs I could find. All these observations are entwined with engaging stories of his family, be they reacting in revulsion to scorpions loose in their bedroom or planning how to set up their widowed mother with a number of potential suitors.

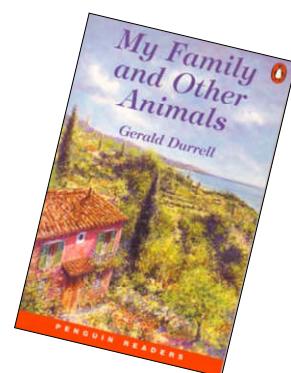
Throughout the story, Gerald clearly expresses his love of the natural world, his Greek friends, and his family.

I remember thinking as I read Gerald's story that I wanted his life. Then I realized I just needed to go outside and look at the great things around me.

Now, nearly 20 years later and working at Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanic Gardens, I remember the importance of this book and how it shaped my education, career, and outlook on the natural world. It reminds me of the importance of books and how they

can shape a young mind. I recommend this book to any budding naturalist, young or old.

Review by Gareth Blakesley



## RUNNERS, COME BE PART OF TEAM LAKE KATHERINE!

*"We have the choice to use the gift of our life to make the world a better place-- or not to bother."*

—Jane Goodall

Calling all runners! LKNCBG is recruiting Team Lake Katherine runners for the First Midwest Southwest Half Marathon being held May 6, 2012.

By joining Team Lake Katherine, you help gather donations for your individual run. Those donations are used by LKNCBG for its restoration efforts, education programs, and care of its animals.

On the day of the Half Marathon, Team Lake Katherine run-

ners will receive a wick-away T-shirt, water bottle, and free gear check at the Lake Katherine beer tent area.

If you are unable to join Team Lake Katherine but are still running in the Half Marathon, please consider donating to Lake Katherine when you sign up for the race. Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanic Gardens is one of the registered charities for the race this year.

For more information, please call Gareth Blakesley, Operations Manager, at 708-361-1873 or email him at: [gareth.blakesley@lakekatherine.org](mailto:gareth.blakesley@lakekatherine.org)

## DISCOVER LAKE KATHERINE BY JIM REICHEL

My mother-in-law loved coming to Lake Katherine, not for the educational opportunities or to visit the Nature Center, but to be alongside the waterfall listening to the soothing gurgle of water tumbling over the many rocks. Even though she was a frail woman, my mother-in-law would trudge up the backside of the waterfall to be rewarded with sounds and sights of such an uncommon setting in the Chicago area.

When she was not able to walk to the top of the waterfall anymore, my wife and I would push her up in a wheelchair so she could still hear the familiar, yet distinctive, sounds resonating off the rocks and earth that comprised the 30-foot high waterfall. The old saying

"stop and smell the roses" is so apropos here. The fresh-scented air of the conifers coupled with the numerous little birds that frequented these trees only added to the calm that seeps into your very being. Because of the waterfall, one does not even hear the sound of traffic coming from Harlem Avenue or 119<sup>th</sup> Street and you tend to remember other tranquil places that were tucked away in your mind.

Most times on our meandering descent we would stop at some point just to watch the water spill over the rocks and hope to catch a glimpse of the black-crowned night-heron that frequented the waterfall. That night-heron would usually stand so still waiting for a frog or some

other morsel that we would think that it was not real even though it was only ten feet away. Every now and again, my wife and I will walk alongside the

waterfall to take in the calm and to remember the woman that was so dear to both of us.



## SURVIVING: MAKING A FIRE BY GARETH BLAKESLEY



We have talked about the generalities of survival, with some specific examples. I now want to talk about starting a fire. Depending on your interest, you can go high tech, basic survival, or very rustic woodsy.

I will be honest—rustic woodsy is incredibly difficult. Even though I know the principles and have succeeded in elements of the rustic process, I have never completed a fire solely from this

methodology. Its essence takes practice, and I am still learning.

The basic premise of starting a fire the rustic way, though, is to rub two bits of wood together. You will need a tinder bundle and dry wood. It is worth your while to pay close attention to the tinder bundle because it can help with starting any fire, regardless of the ignition method. The bundle should consist of available paper bits, dry grass, fluffy seed, wood shavings, or any dry light fibrous materials that could be ignited.

To light the tinder bundle, you can try the hand drill method or the bow method.

The hand drill method uses a 2-foot spindly bit of wood that is inserted into a small hole in a baseboard. The baseboard has a notch for the hot shavings to come out of it. Apply constant downward pressure while spinning the 2-foot bit of wood between your hands. The friction

you create will produce hot shavings, which will start to form coal. Then carefully transfer this coal to the tinder bundle and ignite it.

The bow method still uses a base board with a notch in it, but you are using a thicker spindle. The propulsion is driven by a 2-foot bow under tension wrapped around the spindle. Again, with constant pressure, it will build shavings and then coal, which is transferred to the bundle.

With both of these methods, I have created coal, but have not been able to successfully transfer the tinder bundle for proper ignition. The delicate act of preserving the coal, starting the tinder bundle to burn, and then actually getting it to ignite into flame has always been my problem. It is something that requires much practice.

Thankfully, there are easier ways of starting a fire, even if

you do not have matches or a lighter. For an approach a bit easier than rustic, you can use jumper cables to generate a spark from your car battery and ignite your tinder bundle that way. Even smaller batteries may produce enough juice to get something to burn.

Spark sticks are also readily available now and can be used to start a fire. Again, the tinder bundle is essential, but usually can be gathered from available materials.

There you have it—how to make a fire. The ability to create fire is one of the things that separates us from other animals, so embrace your inner Homo sapien and give these approaches to fire-starting a try.

## LEARNING AT THE LAKE — LKNCBG PROGRAMS

For program details and registration information, call the LKNCBG Nature Center at (708) 361-1873.

### *Adult And Family Programs*

#### **DRAGONFLY MONITORING WORKSHOP**

Wed, Mar 14  
6:00-8:00 pm

Want to know more about dragonflies? Attend our Workshop, presented by Gareth Blakesley, the new director of the Illinois Odontological Survey. The workshop is for people who want to monitor dragonflies and damselflies at different sites, and for folks with a general interest as well! This class is directed toward adults, but children are also welcome.

#### **FAMILY STAR GAZING**

Sat, Mar 31, 7:00 pm

Includes presentation by guest astronomer, followed by outdoor viewing with telescopes. Cost: \$5/person

#### **SNOWSHOEING AND SKIING**

Mon-Fri, 9:00 am–5:00 pm  
(last rental 3:45 pm);  
Sat, 10:00 am–2:45 pm  
(last rental 2:45 pm)

When snow is on the ground, enjoy a trek through our wintry wonderland. Use your own cross country skis or rent snowshoes, which are available at the Nature Center. Cost: \$3/hour, 1 hour minimum

#### **STAR GAZING AND HAYRIDE**

Sat, Apr 28, 7:30 pm

Includes presentation by guest astronomer, astro project, hayride around the lake, and star gazing through our telescopes. Popcorn and lemonade will be served. Cost: \$5/person

### *After School Programs— 3rd-5th Graders*

#### **ANIMALS AT RISK**

Wed, Feb 22, 3:45-4:45 pm

Learn about endangered and threatened animal species in Illinois. Experience close encounters with cousins of threatened amphibians and reptiles. Create an endangered animal collage to take home. Cost: \$5/person

#### **ERIN GO BRAGH**

Fri, Mar 16, 4:00-5:00 pm

Watch the waterfall turn green with your family, then join the special fun at the Nature Center for Green River floats and a special "Paddy Day" project to take home. Cost: \$5/person

#### **NATURAL EGG DYING**

Wed, Apr 4, 3:45-4:45 pm

Roots and beans, stalks and skins are used to make natural vegetable dyes. Join us as we concoct our colorful stew. This Easter celebrate with the dyes you learned to make to color your Easter eggs. Cost: \$5/person

#### **TWISTERS**

Wed, Mar 7, 3:45-4:45 pm

Learn all about this amazing phenomenon and make a tornado simulator out of bottles to take home. Cost: \$5/person

#### **POLLUTION, WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?**

Wed, Mar 21, 3:45-4:45 pm

Brainstorm some ideas on how YOU can help prevent water pollution. We will be using our model "City of Ooze" to recreate some of our poor choices and watch what happens to all that yuck. Cost: \$5/person

#### **EARTH DAY EVERY DAY**

Wed, Apr 18, 3:45-4:45 pm

Hike outdoors to help clean up Lake Katherine! Then, using a variety of media we will create new treasures from (clean) trash. Bring a pair of garden gloves to use while outdoors. Cost: \$5/person

#### **TWISTERS**

Thu, Mar 8, 3:45-4:45 pm

Learn all about this amazing phenomenon and make a tornado simulator out of bottles to take home. Cost: \$5/person

#### **NATURAL EGG DYING**

Thu, Apr 5, 3:45-4:45 pm

Roots and beans, stalks and skins are used to make natural vegetable dyes. Join us as we concoct our colorful stew. This Easter celebrate with the dyes you learned to make to color your Easter eggs. Cost: \$5/person

#### **EARTH DAY EVERY DAY**

Thu, Apr 19, 3:45-4:45 pm

Hike outdoors to help clean up Lake Katherine! Then, using a variety of media we will create new treasures from (clean) trash. Bring a pair of garden gloves to use while outdoors. Cost: \$5/person

### *After School Programs— K-2nd Graders*

#### **ERIN GO BRAGH**

Fri, Mar 16, 4:00-5:00 pm

Watch the waterfall turn green with your family, then join the special fun at the Nature Center for Green River floats and a special "Paddy Day" project to take home. Cost: \$5/person

#### **MEET OUR MAMMALS**

Thu, Mar 22, 9:30-10:30 am

Fri, Mar 23, 9:30-10:30 am

Sat, Mar 24, 10:30-11:30 am

Choose the day you prefer!

### *Little Explorers Programs— Children 3 to 6 Years Old and Parents*

Children will learn about mammals by first handling skulls and pelts and then petting/holding our caged mammals in the lower level of the Nature Center. A walk outdoors looking for tracks and a craft project are included in our hour of learning fun. Cost: \$5/child

#### **EARTH DAY FOR LITTLE EXPLORERS**

Thu, Apr 19, 9:30-10:30 am

Fri, Apr 20, 9:30-10:30 am

Choose the day you prefer!

We will read a story about a tree, and then look at and touch leaves, bark, and twigs. Our walk outdoors will include hugging and adopting a tree, complete with name tags. We suggest you bring your camera! Cost: \$5/child

## TALES FROM THE FIELD BY GARETH BLAKESLEY

Last summer I had the opportunity to visit Switzerland. I was meeting up with my best mate from childhood and visiting the Bernese Oberland, an area of ground famous for the Jungfrau, Eiger and Monch. My mate Gavin and I had booked a guide to take us up a beginner's peak, our first foray into technical climbing.

We met our guide and took the highest railway in Europe to 1100 feet. We then headed out across the glacier. We initially thought about climbing the Monch, which did climb up the flank of the summit, but our guide turned us back as soon as the wind picked up.

We made our way instead to the Walcherhorn; not a big peak, but neither the least one. We required crampons and ice axes, and for us to be roped together. The conditions were pretty tough, partly because the snow was so deep. We had to kick step all the way, and more often than not we fell through our kicked step in the snow.

Starting the climb we didn't get a sense of it being too steep, until we looked back and realized that we were on a 60-70



degree slope and any fall would result in sliding all the way back down to the glacier – nothing any of us wanted to experience.

We finally did summit, which was truly exhilarating. To paraphrase one of my idols, Ed Viesteurs, however, "Getting up is optional; getting down is mandatory." Descending is always more difficult and more dangerous than ascending. Fortunately, we had one slip on the way down, where I had to arrest myself and try not to yank my comrades off the mountain with me. Nothing too scary, but enough to

make me realize my predicament.

We made it done the peak, followed by a long slog across the glacier to the alpine hut that night. Using snow shoes, but still staying roped, the 1-mile return trip took us 3 hours. Every step caused us to sink into the snow about 1 foot. My mate Gavin said it was one of the hardest things he has ever done.

We were very excited about our achievement that day amongst the absolute beauty of the Alps. Even though our peak is not that

famous, there was no one else on the mountain, and we had complete solitude. It was absolutely fantastic to just be with your thoughts, achieving a goal, and being fully immersed in nature.

We spent the night in the hut, which was warm and dry, and the guide provided great big hearty bowls of food. It was definitely nice to get out of the cold, warm up, and be in comfort after the rigors of the day.

We did other hikes on this trip, including summiting a 10,000 ft. peak called the Schwarzhorn.

What I get from a trip like this is a complete separation from day-to-day living, a sense of self reliance and the feeling that I am living in the now. That immersion in nature, along with thrill, is why I do these things. Any time I can focus on the now and not worry about things in the future or past is completely refreshing. That is why nature is important to me and why I like to go out into the field.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT LAKE KATHERINE?

*"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."*

— Jane Goodall

If you would like to volunteer your time and skills, Lake Katherine is looking for dedicated volunteers that can help in a variety of roles and positions. We ask that you commit to a minimum of 2 hours. If you have 2 hours per week or 2 hours per month, we'd be happy to have you!

### VOLUNTEER ROLES:

- Animal Care
- Garden Maintenance
- Ecological Restoration
- Receptionist
- Festival Assistance
- Tour Guide
- Canoe Attendant



Please phone the Nature Center at 708.361.1873 for more details about becoming a Lake Katherine volunteer.

Lake Katherine Nature Center & Botanic Gardens  
7402 West Lake Katherine Drive  
Palos Heights, IL 60463

Phone: 708.361.1873  
Fax: 708.361.2978

[www.lakekatherine.org](http://www.lakekatherine.org)

The Natural Resources Management Committee's mission is to promote, improve, and fundraise in regards to all matters pertaining to Lake Katherine's natural resources.

“Change happens by listening and then starting a dialogue with the people who are doing something you don't believe is right.”

— Jane Goodall



## Hibernation, Torpor, Brumation— how are they alike?

Hibernation is a state of inactivity in animals, characterized by lower body temperature, slower breathing, and lower metabolic rate. Hibernating animals conserve food, especially during winter when food supplies, energy reserves, and body fat are limited. It is the animal's slowed metabolic rate which leads to a reduction in body temperature and not the other way around. Animals that hibernate include bats, some species of ground squirrels, and other rodents. One animal that is famously

considered to be a hibernator is the bear, although bears do not go into "true hibernation." The bear's body temperature remains relatively stable, and it can be relatively easily aroused.

Torpor, sometimes called temporary hibernation, is a (usually short-term) state of decreased physiological activity in an animal, usually characterized by a reduced body temperature and rate of metabolism. This is not as deep a "sleep" as hibernation. Some animals that torpor are badgers, raccoons, skunks, rodents, and birds, even tiny hummingbirds. Lungfish switch to the torpor state if their pool dries out and tenrecs (a Madagascar mammal) switch to the torpor state if food is scarce during the summer. This prolonged and deep torpor during summer months is known as aestivation.

Brumation, which is similar to hibernation, is the dormancy in reptiles. Reptiles generally begin

brumation in late fall. It is triggered by cold weather, lack of heat, and the decrease in the amount of hours of daylight in the winter. Reptiles can often go through the whole winter without eating, but they need to drink water. They will often wake up to drink water and return to "sleep".

All three involve different degrees of inactivity, but the trigger mechanism for each is different

**“If we kill off the wild, then we are killing a part of our souls.”**

— Jane Goodall

## 2012 EVENTS—MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**St. Patrick's Day—  
Dying of the Waterfall**  
March 16, Noon and 4:00 pm

**Spring Fishing Classic**  
April 14, 7:00 am—Noon

**Earth Day Celebration**  
April 28, 11:00 am—3:00 pm

**Family Fishing Day**  
June 9

**Monarch Butterfly Festival**  
September 16

**Fall Fishing Classic**  
October 13

