

THE BUZZ N' BLOOM QUARTERLY



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Nature in Short

- **Dragonflies out in full force**
- **Look for skimmers:**
 - **Eastern Amberwings**
 - **Widow Skimmers**
 - **Twelve Spotted Skimmers**



CANOES HAVE ARRIVED!

This July we are excited to begin offering canoe rentals at Lake Katherine.

Between the hours of 11am and 3pm Monday through Saturday, visitors can rent 2- and 3-person canoes and single kayaks to use on Lake Katherine.

This is a golden opportunity for members of our community to explore our Lake from a different perspective and enjoy wildlife in a non-impactful way. It also gives visitors the opportunity to get a bit of exercise outside in a natural setting.

The rentals are \$6 per hour per person for residents of Palos Heights, or \$10 per hour per person for non-residents.

The Beautification Committee of Palos Heights kindly donated the money to Lake Katherine to develop the Canoe Program, which we thank them for.



Gareth and John testing the canoes

So come out to Lake Katherine, rent a canoe and enjoy our wildlife. You may spot muskrat, herons, swans, turtles, and muskie.

FIELD NOTES BY JIM REICHEL

A few weeks ago while vacationing on Cape Cod, my wife and I went on a Massachusetts Audubon birding trip to Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge off the southeastern tip of Cape Cod.

Monomoy is an ever-changing salt marsh island, where many birds nest, including the piping plover. A federally en-

dangered robin-sized bird with only 1,800 breeding pairs along the Atlantic coast, the piping plover is considered the rarest shorebird. Little did we know that the weather for Flag Day (June 14) would be 50 degrees with 25 mph gusts instead of the normal 70's. While the short boat ride to Monomoy was uneventful, the wet landing

was a challenge given the weather conditions.

Once onshore, we started walking between the staked markers protecting all of the nesting birds, including the piping plover. We trudged through the salt grass and seawater towards the western shore looking for any number of birds. We saw many black-

back gulls, some herring gulls, a number of willets, and a few song sparrows. After 20 minutes or so we almost reached the Atlantic Ocean side of the island, but retreated due to the flooded path.

After returning to our starting point, we headed north up the eastern shore of the island for an area where we might actually see

FIELD NOTES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

a piping plover. Upon reaching "the spot" we did see an oystercatcher, snowy egret, black-headed gull, common tern, but no plover. The group turned around to head back to our pick-up point, when I noticed a small bird land on the sand where everybody's gaze had just been. I said, "I see a sandpiper or a plover."

Our guide swung around with his scope, and exclaimed, "It's a piping plover!" It was the only one we saw. Our trek back was cold, windy, and long. We were rewarded though with seeing an adult black-backed gull feed a newly hatched chick. In spite of the weather, it was a great morning.

Black-backed Gull



VOLUNTEERS YOU SHOULD KNOW — SUE PALKA

What was your first memory of nature?

I remember fishing in Wisconsin with my dad when I was a little girl. There were no boys in the family, so my dad fished with his three daughters. We dug for worms, threaded the worms on hooks, and tossed our bobbers and lines from bamboo poles into the lake. We yanked perch and blue gills out,

cleaned the fish and fried them for dinner. I started to understand that there was other life all around me, in the ground, the air, and the water, and I started to understand the food chain in nature.

Where is the one location that took your breath away on first seeing it?

The first time I looked over the side of a row boat into a crystal clear Wisconsin lake I was amazed. Beneath the water, I saw schools of fish darting, turtles swimming, aquatic plants rooted in the sand, and speckled rocks. Above, water lilies floated, bulging frog eyes watched me, red-wing blackbirds clung to swaying cattails,

dragonflies hovered, ducks paddled past, there was so much life in, on, and around that water. Decades later I took my husband to the same location for the experience and to make new memories. Lake Katherine revives that feeling of amazement I felt as a little girl looking into the water.

(Cont. page 3)

SURVIVAL TIPS BY GARETH BLAKESLEY

There are two types of cattail in Illinois: *Typha latifolia* and *Typha angustifolia*

We last talked about the basics of survival. From observing wildlife, we learn that they need the same things we do.

Today I specifically want to talk about food as a necessity. In northern Illinois, one of the most readily available and highly nutritious naturally occurring foods is cattails.

Cattails are found along the edge of marshes, wetlands, and drainage ditches. The young shoots are edible before they get too tough, and the root stock can be eaten like potatoes, boiled or baked. The pollen from the seed heads can also be collected by placing a plastic bag over the seed head and shaking the seed head. This will release the pollen. Pollen is

high in protein and could be added to, or used to make, a kind of meal.

A great advantage to cattails is that they can be found year-round. Old stalks in winter signify where the tubers are. Even though getting to them may require breaking ice or digging frozen dirt, the pay-off is worth it because the tubers are so nutritious. They have to be to provide enough energy for new foliage to grow the following year.

The roots often have a very fibrous quality to them. After boiling them, the inner part can be scraped out, or they can be sliced and fried. They taste somewhat like potatoes, if a bit on the chewy side.



I wouldn't call these as tasty as potatoes, but in a survival situation they are a great source of food.

Always be sure to correctly identify any plant gathered. If there is any doubt about a spe-

cies of plant, you should leave it be. Survival also depends on eating the *right* thing, not something that could be injurious to yourself.

VOLUNTEERS YOU SHOULD KNOW — SUE PALKA

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Do you have a favorite "get-away" location?

I head to the water for a "get-away". I love the Circle Tour of Lake Michigan! The trip around the lake takes you to big cities, to state parks, to beaches and sand dunes, and to wilderness and woods. I love the coastlines in Michigan and Wisconsin. It is a wonderfully relaxing escape without having to drive too far.

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

When I began to garden in my own backyard, I wanted to know more about the flowers and herbs I was planting, the insects I was finding, and the birds that were visiting my feeders. I became an

'explorer' in my own backyard. That quest inspired me to become a Master Gardener, and later, a Master Naturalist, so I could share my interest in gardening and my love of nature with others.

What event or experience concerning nature that you participated in brings you that warm fuzzy feeling?

I get the warm fuzzies every time I see some aspect of life in my garden...a daffodil pushing through the snow, a baby bird peeking out of a birdhouse, a spider web quickly woven at dusk to catch the night flying insects, a swallowtail caterpillar devouring my dill, a goldfinch snatching seeds right out of the sunflower....the life in my garden is

ever-changing! It certainly gives me a warm and fuzzy feeling, I created it!

What natural place you have yet to see and is at the top of your "see before I die" list?

There is so much I haven't seen in the United States, my list is a long one: Niagara Falls, Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills, the Grand Canyon, the Pacific Ocean...my plan is to travel after we retire!



Sue at one of our work days, holding her tool of choice.

DISCOVER LAKE KATHERINE BY JOE MCCLOSKEY

As a long term resident of Palos Heights, it has been interesting to watch the evolution of Lake Katherine. What started as a civic project by a former mayor has evolved and changed in many ways over the years. Lake Katherine has become much more than just a nice place to sit by a lake.

Many of the activities you can enjoy at the lake involve your active participation. Take a hike around the lake (one

mile) or for a more challenging hike try the Eastern preserve (two miles). Check out the many gardens, there is always something in bloom. See if you can spot some of the migratory birds that visit the lake during their travels. Look for all the bird species raising their broods during the Spring. Count the turtles sunning themselves at turtle cove in the Summer. Use all your senses to see, hear, smell, and touch the beauty of nature.

Probably the biggest changes at the lake involve the programs for the residents. There is something for everyone. There are camps and learning activities and hay rides for the children. Festivals, fishing derbies, and civic projects for the adults. Chances to interact with your friends, neighbors, or even become part of the Lake Katherine volunteer network.

Looking forward, Lake Katherine is developing a master

site plan to improve on what has become a valuable city resource. We can look forward to new ideas and activities to enhance our experiences at Lake Katherine in the future. Whether you are an active or passive participant, come join us at the lake to improve your most important sense—your sense of well being.

EDUCATION RESOURCES

Websites

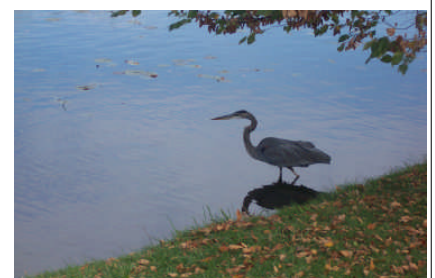
<http://www.chicagowilderness.org/index.php>

For natural areas to visit in and around Chicago, lots of other great information for people who love nature.

Books

The Chicago River: A Natural and Unnatural History by Libby Hill

Great book detailing how Chicago's location as a portage created the city of Chicago. with some pretty good insights into the Cal Sag area.





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The natural resources management committee mission is to promote, improve, and fund-raise in regards to all matters pertaining to Lake Katherine's Natural Resources.

"Nature will not be admired by proxy."
Winston Churchill

WHAT IS THE "LAND ETHIC?"

By Jim Reichel

The term "land ethic" was coined in 1948 by a forester named Aldo Leopold. Leopold was a scientist, poet, and philosopher.

His combination of talents, and a small book called *A Sand County Almanac*, propelled a particular ethic

forward to be adopted by many conservationists and ecologists of today.

"The Land Ethic" was the last piece of the book and sketched out in broad strokes the moral implications of ecology. Leopold said, "That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics. A land ethic, then, reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of land. We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in." These are very powerful words.

Leopold understood that, ultimately, our economic well-being could not be separated from the well-being of our environment. This, I think, is overlooked by many environmentalists and conservationists today. Leopold was a visionary and light-years ahead of his time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Community Recycling Day
August 20th
9am to 11am

Electronic Recycling
Shredding / Recycling
Drugs Drop Off
Latex Paint Drop Off

Monarch Festival
September 18th
11am to 4:30pm

\$5 per person;
children 3 and under
free



Monarch Fest