

BRUSH PILES

NORTH BRANCH RESTORATION PROJECT

SPRING 2005

ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER

By Karen Rodriguez

The Bullfrog Singers sang delightful tunes to an audience of old and new ecological restoration volunteers. The congenial atmosphere was cheered by a crackling fire, foot tapping, and plenty of smiles. Empty plates attested to the variety of food satisfactorily consumed. The annual North Branch Restoration Project potluck dinner was in full swing.

On January 29th, about 80 people gathered to celebrate the good work of the previous year. A North Branch tradition that began 25 years ago in people's homes, this year's event was held in the Forest Preserve District of Cook County's newly designated Volunteers Resource Center in Edgebrook.

In addition to the music, shy kids from "From the Ground Up" told the group about their interfaith program of urban agriculture and ecological education for youth. The small pots of herbs the kids had grown were a big hit.

A big part of the potluck dinner was the awards ceremony. Mistress of ceremonies Laurel Ross officiated this year with help from Jerry Fuller, Jane Balaban, and Linda Masters.

Congratulations to Rett Donnelly for working hard; John and Marian Thill for their passion and dedication to Linne North; Dorien (Duke) Rigger as the "resurrected" volunteer; Bobby Sutton for illustrating the Jerry Sullivan book; Pete Leki for his original County Board testimony; Jane Balaban for reviving the volunteer burn crew and, Bill Koenig for being the volunteer coordinator and opening the new Volunteer Resource Center.

Thanks to all of the volunteers who organized this year's potluck dinner. It was a warm blend of fun and appreciation for North Branch Restoration Project brush cutters, seed collectors and sowers, and monitors.

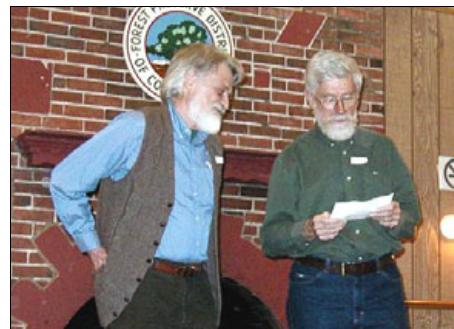
AWARD RECIPIENTS



Rett Donnelly & Laurel Ross



John & Marian Thill



Dorien "Duke" Rigger & Kent Fuller



Pete Leki & Laurel Ross



Bobby Sutton & Laurel Ross



Linda Masters & Jane Balaban



Bill Koenig & Jerry Fuller

All photos thanks to Herbert Carl Meyer.

NBRP Workday Schedule – Spring 2005

MARCH

6	Sunday	9am - noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
12	Saturday	9am - 2pm	Somme Nature Preserve
13	Sunday	9am - noon	Harms Woods
13	Sunday	1pm - 4pm	Harms Woods
19	Saturday	9am - noon	Linne North
20	Sunday	9am - noon	Wayside/Linne South
26	Saturday	9am - noon	Harms Flatwoods
27	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Woods

APRIL

2	Saturday	9am - noon	Linne Prairie
3	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Prairie Grove
9	Saturday	9am - noon	Harms Flatwoods
10	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Nature Preserve
16	Saturday	9am - noon	Somme Prairie Grove
17	Sunday	9am - noon	Miami Woods
23	Saturday	9am - noon	Linne North
24	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Woods
30	Saturday	9am - noon	Somme Prairie Grove

MAY

1	Sunday	9am - noon	Watersmeet Prairie Gove
7	Saturday	9am - noon	Linne North
8	Sunday	9am - noon	Harms Woods
8	Sunday	1pm - 4pm	Harms Woods
14	Saturday	9am - noon	Somme Woods
15	Sunday	9am - noon	Miami Woods Prairie
21	Saturday	9am - noon	Bunker Hill/Oxbow
22	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Prairie Grove
25	Wednesday	6pm - dusk	Somme Woods
28	Saturday	9am - noon	Somme Nature Preserve
29	Sunday	9am - noon	Harms Flatwoods
30	Mon	9am - noon	Harms Woods

JUNE

1	Wednesday	6pm - dusk	Somme Woods
5	Sunday	9am - noon	Somme Woods

TREE AND SHRUB ID CLASS

Sunday, May 15, 1-3:00 p.m.

Meet at the usual parking lot at Harms Woods. Learn to identify 15-20 important trees and shrubs and practice your field identification skills. For new and continuing volunteers. Registration is required and class is limited to 15 participants. Register by emailing Rinda West at rindaw@ameritech.net.

THE AMAZING WORLD OF DRAGONFLIES

Thursday, May 12, 7-9:30pm

With names like Orange Shadowdragon, Emerald Spreadwing, Blue-tipped Dancer, Gilded River Cruiser and American Rubyspot, dragonflies are among the glittering jewels of the insect world! Learn about this fascinating order of creatures whose fossils date back to 300 million years ago. North Branch Restoration Project volunteers, John and Jane Balaban, will introduce our local dragonflies and damselflies by group or family, showing slides of the different species and highlighting their field marks for identification. Preferred habitat, life history from aquatic nymph to winged adult, and a dragonfly's appetite for insects will be covered.

Please Register

Emily Oaks Nature Center
4650 Brummel Street
Skokie IL 60076
(847) 677-7001
\$16 R / \$20 NR
Class #143951-01

BUFFALO GROVE PRAIRIE

**Sundays – Mar 13, Apr 10, May 15
9:00 am – Noon.**

Work on Sundays at this piece of virgin prairie located on Hastings Road. It is off Lake-Cook about a mile west of Milwaukee (watch for Hastings on the north after going under the railroad overpass). Turn north on Hastings, then right into the second parking lot. The prairie is under the Com Ed power lines. Call Bev Hansen at 847-272-6211 for more information.

SKOKIE LAGOONS

**Saturdays – Mar 12, Apr 9, May 14
10:00 am – 1:00 pm.**

Meet at the Tower Road parking lot (east of the lagoon bridge – not the boat launch). There will be a sign with directions to the work site in the picnic field adjacent to the parking lot. Come dressed for the weather. We will provide waders, gloves and tools. For more information contact Jerry Garden at 773-545-4632 or jerrygarden@sprynet.com.

GLENBROOK PRAIRIE

**Thursdays - Mar 10, Apr 7, May 19
6:00 until dark**

Remarkable changes have occurred at the preserve. It is located at the northwest corner of the Glenbrook North HS, west of Shermer and north of Willow Roads. Park in the north parking lot by the tennis courts and walk along the north side of the football field until you see us. Call Rob on his cell phone (847-337-0471) if you're running late or get lost finding the place.

NBRP Site Directions and Map

DIRECTIONS:

Air Station Prairie, Glenview – From the Edens expressway; go west on Willow Road, past Waukegan Road and over the RR overpass. Turn south at the new traffic signals for Patriot Blvd. (The new main road through the redeveloped Naval Air Station). Turn east on Compass to the gate at the south end of the prairie. Patriot Blvd. is also accessible from the south via Lake Ave.

Bunker Hill Savanna/Oxbow, Chicago – Off Caldwell between Devon and Touhy; entrance located just opposite Tonty Street. For Bunker Hill Meet in first section of parking lot; for Oxbow, follow road until it turns north, then park along the west side.

Harms Flatwoods, Glenview – Meet at the Forest Preserve Grove parking lot on the west side of Harms Road, directly west of Old Orchard Road.

Harms Woods, Glenview – Meet at the Forest Preserve Grove parking lot on the west side of Harms Road, just south of Glenview Road and north of Old Orchard Road.

Indian Road Woods, Chicago – Enter at the Indian Road Forest Preserve drive, on the east side of Central Ave, just north of Indian Road (approximately ½ mile south of Caldwell). Meet in the parking area at the far east end of the drive.

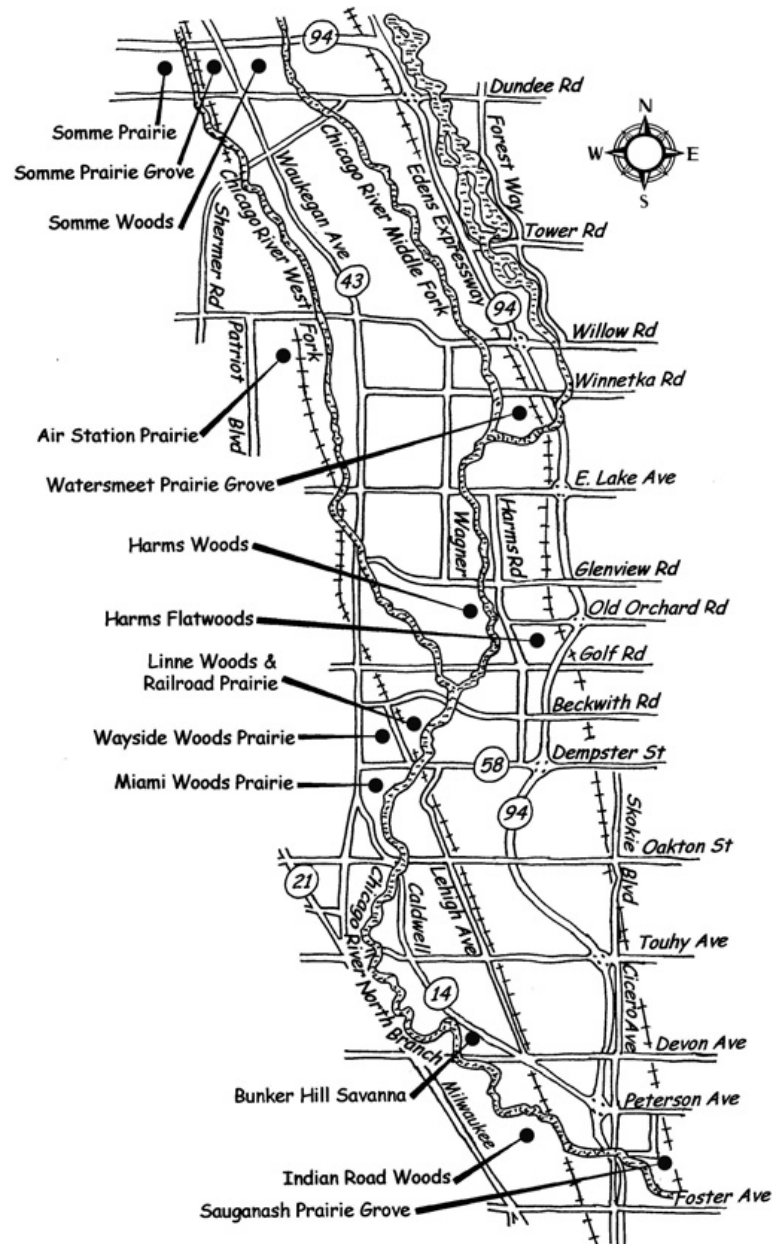
Linne Prairie, Morton Grove – Meet at the Wayside Woods Prairie parking lot. (See Wayside for directions.)

Linne Woods North, Morton Grove - From Edens go west on Dempster street about 1.5 miles. The forest preserve entrance will be on the north side of the street directly across from McDonalds. Follow the winding road all the way back until it dead-ends at the turn-around circle.

Miami Woods Prairie, Niles/Morton Grove – Located on the east side of Caldwell, two blocks north of Oakton. Meet in the parking lot for Miami Woods.

Sauganash Prairie Grove, Chicago – Meet at the edge of the Forest Preserve along the south side of Bryn Mawr at Kilbourn, which is south of Peterson and east of Cicero.

Somme Prairie Grove, Northbrook – From the Edens Expressway, take Dundee Road two miles west to Waukegan Road. Go north a few hundred feet on Waukegan and turn left into the unpaved parking area by the sign “Somme Woods Prairie.”



Somme Prairie Nature Preserve, Northbrook – From the Edens Expressway, take Dundee Road 2½ miles west (past Waukegan) to Western. Turn north and park in the post office parking lot.

Somme Woods, Northbrook – From the Edens Expressway, take Dundee Road two miles west and turn right into Somme Woods parking lot (just before the light at Waukegan Road).

Watersmeet Prairie Grove, Northfield – From Lake Avenue and Wagner Road, turn north on Wagner to Winnetka Road. Turn east on Winnetka for ¾ mile. Park on the north side of the street or a side street.

Wayside Woods Prairie/Linne RR Prairie, Morton Grove – Meet at Wayside Woods Prairie parking lot on Lehigh Ave, a few blocks east of Waukegan Road and just north of Dempster.

A PRACTICAL HERBICIDE WORKSHOP

Saturday, March 19, 9am – 2pm
Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Volunteer Resource Center
6100 N. Central, Chicago

Many topics that are important to the practical application of herbicide in restoration will be covered. From the methods of application, to effectiveness, to timing, to the integration with other strategies will be discussed.

This workshop is intended for licensed applicators and operators, master stewards and site stewards. Space is limited so reserve a space by calling Bill Koenig at 773-631-1790 or email at wkoenig@cookcounty.gov. ***Lunch will be provided!***

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

The very important Volunteer Resource Center needs some help! Do you have web page design experience? Are you facile with databases? Are you a computer geek, an organized secretary? Then we are looking for you! Please call or email Bill Koenig at wkoenig@cookcounty.gov or 773-631-0237.

SIGNS OF THE SEASON

None of our familiar birds endear themselves to us more than does the bluebird. The first bluebird in the spring is as welcome as the blue sky itself. The season seems softened and tempered as soon as we hear his note and see his warm breast and azure wing. His gentle manners, his soft, appealing voice, not less than his pleasing hues, seem born of the bright and genial skies. He is the spirit of the April days incarnated in a bird. He has the quality of winsomeness, like the violet and speedwell among the flowers. Not strictly a songster, yet his every note and call is from out the soul of harmony.



Eastern Bluebird

*from John Burrough's America,
Selections from the Writings of the Naturalist*

North Branch Restoration Project
P.O. Box 2154
Northbrook, IL 60062-3707

The North Branch Restoration Project is a cooperative effort involving the Nature Conservancy, the Chicago Audubon Society, and the Sierra Club. We manage the sites as volunteers for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and other local agencies. The Project works to restore and manage the few remaining woodlands and prairies along the North Branch of the Chicago River. Our goal is to restore conditions that will allow these natural wild communities to flourish as a permanent part of the metropolitan area.

www.northbranchrestoration.org

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