

BRUSH PILES

NORTH BRANCH RESTORATION PROJECT FALL 2002

WHAT WAS THAT?

by Eileen Sutter

Early this summer, while I was jogging my usual route on Wilson Avenue (4600 North) in Chicago where Wilson crosses the Chicago River, I saw a funny shaped log floating upstream. Could that be right? On closer inspection, which was time-consuming given my great nature ID skills, I realized I was looking at a beaver — the first beaver I have even seen in the Chicago area, and it was in the city limits of Chicago.



The beaver swam by the bank, pulled down an over-hanging branch of silver maple, and ate its leaves, branches and all. At this point, I was excited but also a little bit sorry for this beaver. How lonely it must be. There were probably no other beavers around for miles. I imagined the beaver swimming up stream to Harms Woods and finding a companion beaver there. And then I saw swimming out from the branches another beaver, about one third the size of the first beaver. This little beaver swam right up to the adult beaver, and tried to climb on its back. At this point, I figured I had probably seen the kit beaver on the back of the adult at first. That was the funny shape of the log. The two beavers swam slowly under the bridge up stream. On their way together to Harms....

AND THEN . . .

Much to my surprise, my summer has been full of beaver sightings. So far I have seen beavers on four different occasions at Wilson and the Chicago River.

The last time was the best. I saw four beavers. There were 2 adults, and 2 young beavers. They were all close by the bank of the river eating various woody materials (sticks, leaves, branches).

This was early in the morning around 6:15. At one point, when all the cars had passed, I could hear the sound of their teeth crunching.

One time at this same spot there was a beaver in the water, and a ground hog walking along the bank of the river. Another time there was a black crowned night heron in this same area, but no beavers. When it flew away I had a good view of the markings of its back. So this is a surprisingly good wildlife viewing spot.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Saturday, September 28

Miami Woods Prairie Forest Preserve

9am - Noon and 1pm - 4pm

Would you like to join a multitude of folks and have some fun doing something powerful? National Public Lands Day is an annual event where volunteers gather to care for our public lands. This year the North Branch Restoration Project will observe the day at Miami Woods Prairie. We'll be cutting brush and collecting some priority seeds to use in restoring native plants.

We expect to get good press coverage, do great work, and introduce large numbers of new people to restoration. Mighty oaks, some great birds, a prairie and a savanna.

Lots of North Branch help will be needed in planning and carrying off this great event. Can you help with refreshments lead interpretative tours, be small-group work-crew leaders, or contribute great ideas to make this day special? To sign up to help, contact Kent & Jerry Fuller at 847-729-4642 or send an email to kjfullergv@attbi.com.

NBRP Workday Schedule - Fall 2002

September

1	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
8	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Woods
15	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Nature Preserve
21	Saturday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
22	Sunday	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
28	Saturday	9:00-noon	NPLD - Miami Woods Prairie
		1:00-4:00	NPLD - Miami Woods Prairie
29	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Woods

October

6	Sunday	9:00-noon	Harms Woods
		1:00-4:00	Harms Woods
12	Saturday	9:00-noon	Somme Woods
13	Sunday	9:00-noon	Bunker Hill Savanna/Oxbow
20	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Nature Preserve
26	Saturday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
27	Sunday	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove

November

3	Sunday	9:00-noon	Wayside Woods Prairie/RR Prairie
9	Saturday	9:00-noon	Somme Woods
10	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
16	Saturday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
17	Sunday	9:00-noon	Air Station Prairie
23	Saturday	9:00-?	Seed Processing Day
24	Sunday	9:00-noon	Harms Flatwoods

December

1	Sunday	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
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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.

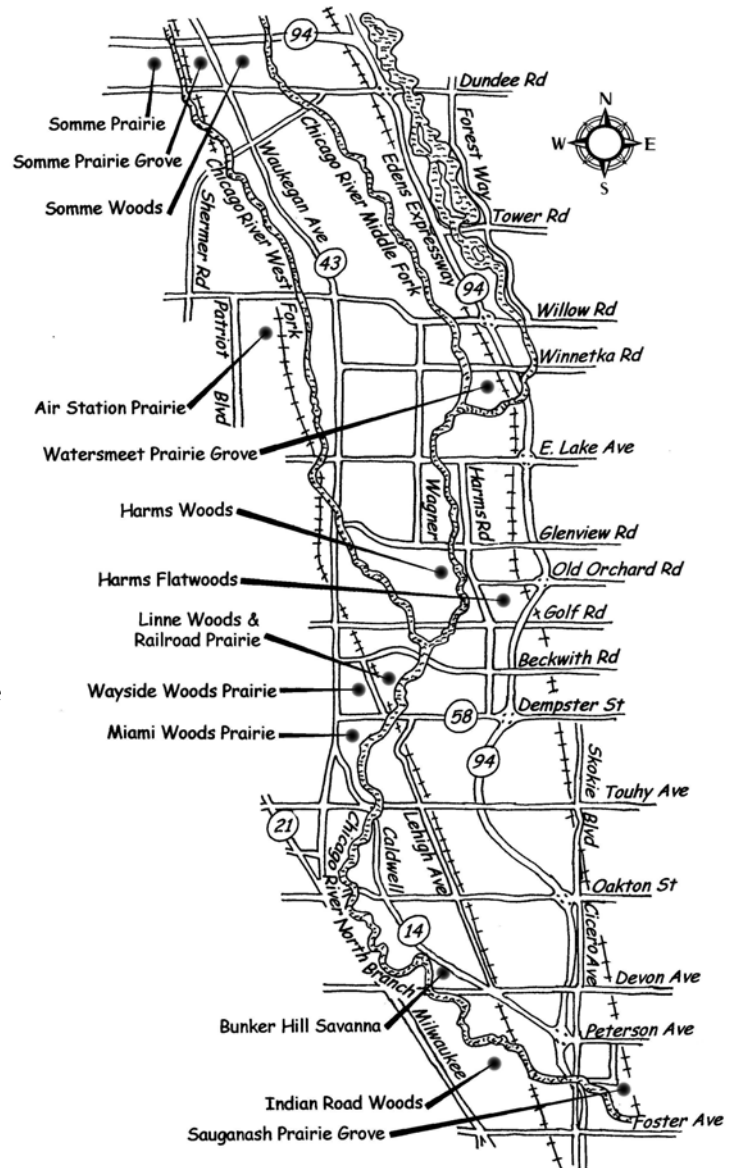
Harms Flatwoods, Glenview – Meet at the Forest Preserve Grove parking lot on the west side of Harms Road, directly west of Old Orchard Road.

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

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 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 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 the Edens Expressway, take Lake Avenue west to 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

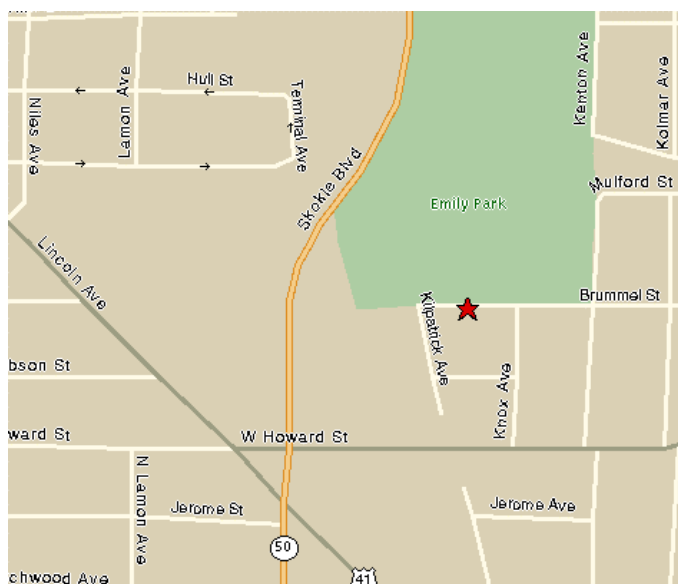
ANNUAL NORTH BRANCH SEED PROCESSING DAY

Saturday, November 23
Emily Oaks Nature Center, Skokie, IL
9:00 am until mid-afternoon

Join us as we process the vital seeds that have been collected over the summer and fall. Carefully gathered and stored by knowledgeable volunteers, the seed of over a hundred native species will be readied for return to the Forest Preserves, where populations of native grasses, sedges and wildflowers will be reestablished.

Drinks are provided, but many of us also bring a dish to share during breaks from the work. The activities start at 9:00am and continue until the seed has been processed, usually by mid-afternoon.

Directions to Emily Oaks Nature Center:
from Skokie Boulevard/Cicero, go east on Howard St. to Knox Ave. Turn north on Knox, go two blocks to Brummel St. Turn west and go one block to the parking area at the Nature Center, on the north side of Brummel. Follow the signs to the processing area.



CANOE THE SKOKIE LAGOONS WITH SEEDING THE SNOW

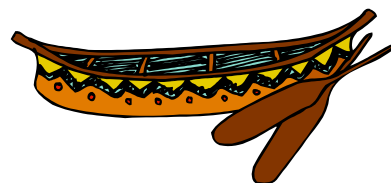
On September 8, between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m., we invite you to bring your family and friends to paddle, picnic, walk, and watch birds at the Skokie Lagoons.

This is a fund-raising party to finance the launching of the Seeding the Snow website.
\$25 for an individual/ \$40 for a family

To register, please send a check to 2534 N. St Louis, Chicago, IL 60647 by September 2. Please indicate your phone number and how many adults and children are in your group.

For more information, please call Nancy Freehafer at 773.342.6665 or Karen Rodriguez at 219.762.3319.

SEEDING THE SNOW, a journal of women's writing and artwork that celebrates the Midwestern landscape.



SKOKIE LAGOONS WORKDAYS

Saturdays - Sep 14, Oct 12, Nov 9, Dec 14
10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Meet at the Tower Road parking lot (east of the lagoon bridge - not the boat launch). For late arrivals, 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 when appropriate. For more information contact Jerry Garden at 773.545.4632 or jerrygarden@sprynet.com.

BUFFALO GROVE PRAIRIE WORKDAYS

Sundays - Sep 1, Oct 13, Nov 10, Dec 8
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 passing 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.



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

**ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED**

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

Hotline: 312-409-5831
