



# BRUSH PILES

NORTH BRANCH RESTORATION PROJECT

SUMMER 2008

## Earthday at Bunker Hill

A great outpouring of neighbors and friends celebrated Earth Day at Bunker Hill forest preserve this April. Although the North Branch Restoration Project has been working to support and restore ecological health to this area since 1977, this celebration introduced a whole new generation to the beautiful and fragile woodlands and oak savannas that make this area so important. Rare and endangered plants and animals will thrive a little more

thanks to this day's education, clean-up and brush control.

The event was co-sponsored by the Forest Preserve District including Commissioner Pete Silvestri (in the orange-red shirt) and Larry Suffredin (in the earth-tones cap). It was food, fun, hard work, and good spirits. Thanks, all.



Photos by Joe Walsh





---

## RESTORATION OF MIAMI WOODS AND PRAIRIE

by Kent and Jerry Fuller

During 2007 more than 2,800 hours of volunteer work effort were added to the more than 8,500 hours already invested since 2001 when ecological restoration resumed in Miami Woods. With 11,000 hours of work, much of the buckthorn and other invasive brush has been removed from the Preserve. The mile long area between the river and bike path is now virtually free of buckthorn as is much of the area to the west. Corporate workdays and large events such as National Public Lands Day cleared much of the southern half while students from five schools cleared the southern half mile. Mop-up work continues in this area as does control of garlic mustard and other invasives.

In the prairie, work prior to 2007 pushed back encroaching brush from the edges, but its quality declined during a decade without burning. With the promise of resumed management using fire, increased restoration work began in the fall of 2006 and continued during 2007. In the open area, the lack of fire was partially compensated during 2007 by the mowing of brush by summer interns and stewards using power brush cutters and herbicide. Brush removal was concentrated in the Tunnel Access Area and the Northwest corner of the prairie.

The Tunnel Access Area is a roughly rectangular area of about 4 acres between the previously open prairie and the access drive that extends from Caldwell avenue to the Deep Tunnel Access structure adjacent to the bike path near the river. Until 2007 it was covered with dense thickets of invasive brush and fire intolerant tree species that had grown since it was a farm field in 1925. During the fall of 2006 and during 2007 all of the invasive brush was removed by volunteers, primarily students from Wright Col-

lege. During early winter 2007 the remaining trees were removed by a Forest Preserve District contractor.

In the Tunnel Access Area the existing herbaceous plant community is extremely degraded. Some prairie plants have survived, but much of the area is covered with creeping Charlie and other weeds. Now that full sunlight has returned, we expect that the existing and newly seeded prairie plants will suppress the weeds during the coming years.

The northwest corner of the prairie contained a similar area of unassociated woody growth which is being removed to expand the prairie. The portion of the approximately one acre area that was solid brush has been cleared and added to the prairie. The portion closest to the north property line contains heavy brush with old hawthorn trees. These hawthorns are being retained to provide a savanna like ecology and the foundation for a buffer screen.

During 2007 substantial amounts of seed were gathered from the prairie and either sown directly into the Tunnel Access Area or added to North Branch seed mixes, some of which were sown back into the prairie.

Also during 2007 a deer enclosure area was constructed in the prairie before the growing season to demonstrate the impact by deer and to preserve the last remnant population of wild indigo to provide a continuing source of local seed. The enclosure is a 60 foot diameter circle of 6 foot high fence. Although deer are known to jump higher than 6 feet in emergencies, the height is sufficient to exclude them in normal circumstances. Observable results of excluding the deer during this first year include vegetative



recovery of the remaining wild indigo (*Baptisia leucantha*) plants although they are still too diminished to produce flowers or seeds. (All *Baptisia* plants outside the fence were eaten to the ground.) Also, lead plant (*Amorpha canescens*) showed new growth and produced flowers, unlike the plants

---

## ***GARLIC MUSTARD RECIPES***

### ***"FROM PEST TO PESTO, A CULINARY GUIDE"***

#### **Spring Pesto**

3 cups garlic mustard greens with the stems  
 2/3 cup extra virgin olive oil  
 1 teaspoon chopped garlic mustard root  
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
 1/4 cup pine nuts  
 Salt to taste

Put everything into a food processor and blend until smooth. Cook your favorite pasta and toss with pesto mixture while the pasta is hot. Garnish lightly with parmigiano reggiano cheese if desired. Add salt to taste. Enjoy!

**Olinda Sadoval** Just Good Food

#### **Red Beans, Garlic Greens, and Rice**

Makes 4 servings (about 1 cup each)

3 slices bacon, diced  
 4 oz smoked sausage  
 3/4 cup chopped onion  
 3/4 cup chopped green bell pepper  
 1 teaspoon minced jalapeno chili  
 1/2 teaspoons minced garlic  
 1/3 cup cider vinegar  
 3 tablespoons sugar  
 1 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1/2 tsp pepper  
 1 can (15 ounces) red beans, rinsed, drained  
 2 cups sliced garlic mustard greens  
 2 cups cooked rice, warm

Cook bacon in large skillet until beginning to brown, about 5 minutes; add smoked sausage and cook until browned, about 3 minutes. Add onion, bell pepper, jalapeno chili, and garlic; sauté 2 to 3 minutes, until vegetables are crisp-tender. Stir in vinegar, sugar, oil, salt, and pepper; heat to simmering. Stir in beans and cook until warm, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in garlic mustard

outside the fence where virtually all new growth was eaten.

Work effort in the prairie during 2007 amounted to 455 volunteer visits which resulted in 1,392 hours of hands-on work. This included the very large Earth Day workday sponsored by Forest Preserve District commissioners Greg Goslin and Larry Suffredin which involved 101 volunteers.

Seed gathering in both the prairie and woodlands was very productive during 2007 because of favorable growing conditions. Seed was gathered by students,

greens and cook until wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon rice onto serving plates; spoon bean mixture over rice.

**Eric Gillish** The Union - Caberet & Grill

#### **Hummus**

6 cups canned or cooked and cooled garbanzo beans  
 5 cloves garlic  
 1/2 cup chopped garlic mustard  
 1/2 cup tahini sauce  
 1/2 cup lemon juice  
 1/4 cup olive oil  
 1 1/2 teaspoons salt  
 2 teaspoons cumin

Drain and place garbanzo beans in a food processor and puree with garlic and garlic mustard until smooth. Scrape sides of processor with rubber spatula then continue to puree. Add remaining ingredients while continuing to puree making a smooth paste for dipping. Serve chilled, with warm pita bread and/or fresh vegetables.

**Shawn Hagen** BRAVO!



KALAMAZOO NATURE CENTER, [WWW.NATURECENTER.ORG](http://WWW.NATURECENTER.ORG)

### ***SEED COLLECTING***

You are invited to join the North Branch seed collecting crew on Thursday mornings. They meet at 9am and collect until about noon.

Call Joan Meersman on Wednesday to find out the meeting location. You can reach Joan at (773) 763-5055.

during North Branch workdays, and by the North Branch Wednesday Seed Team.

Total number of volunteer visits and hours during 31 volunteer work events in 2007 were:

	<b>Volunteer Work</b>		<b>Education</b>
	<b>Visits</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Hours</b>
North Branch	294	995	
Chicago City Day School	246	763	416
Other Elementary/Middle	14	30	
Carl Shurz High School	159	409	145
<b>Total</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>2828</b>	<b>712</b>



# Earthday at Somme Prairie Grove



North Branch volunteers were joined by a spirited group from the Dan Seals for Congress Campaign for a day of brush cutting and plug planting. Dan is running for Congress in the 10th District.

Photos by Mike Beeftink



## 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 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](http://www.northbranchrestoration.org)

Paperless option - If you would like to download a pdf version of Brush Piles from our website, we will send you an email letting you know when it is posted. Sign up by sending an email to: [northbranch@comcast.net](mailto:northbranch@comcast.net).

To contribute notes and photos to Brush Piles:

Email: [masters2001@comcast.net](mailto:masters2001@comcast.net)

Snail Mail: P.O. Box 2154, Northbrook, IL 60062

Deadlines: November 1, February 1, May 1, August 1

Linda Masters, editor

# NBRP Workday Schedule - Summer 2008

## JUNE

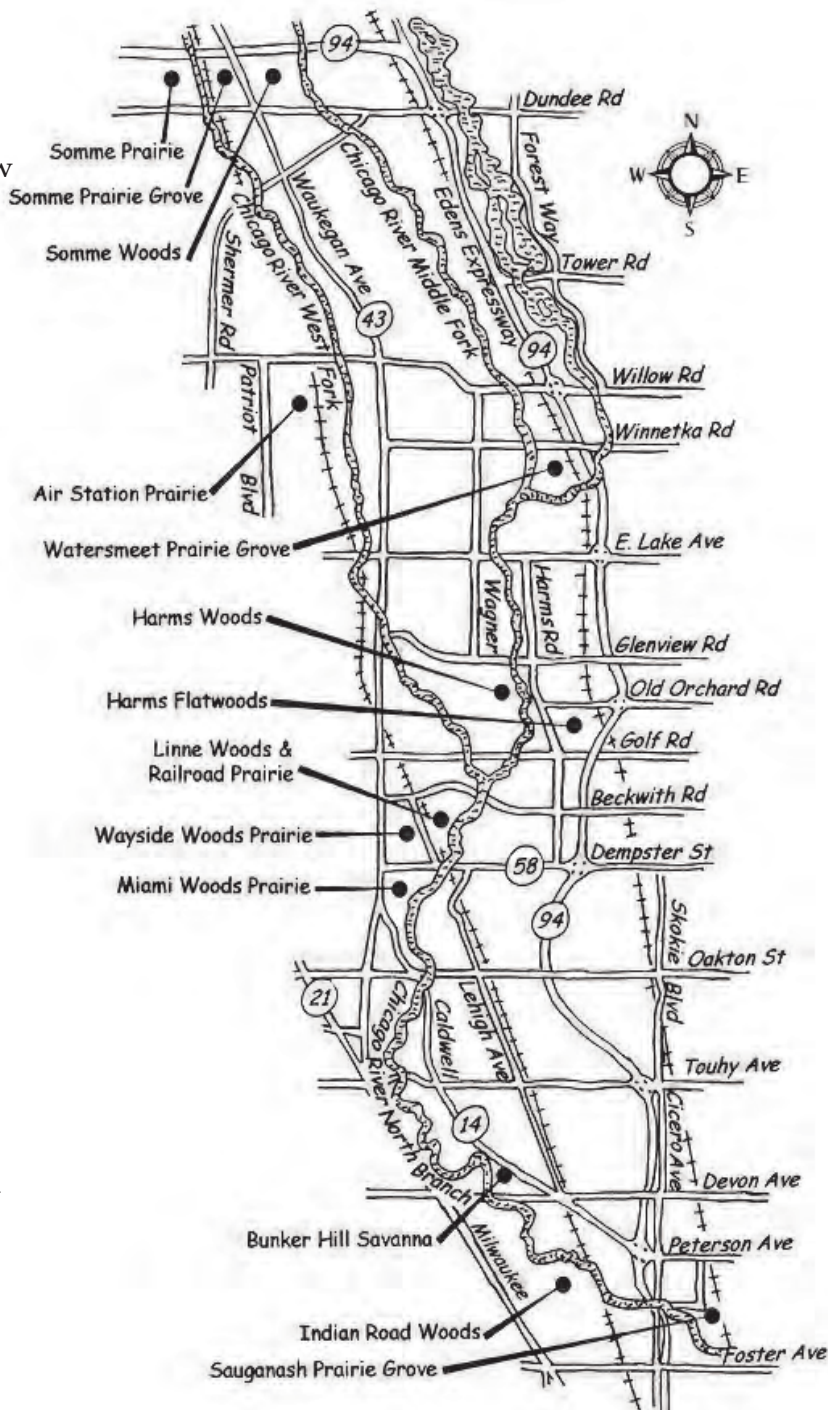
Sun	1	9:00-noon	Miami Woods & Prairie
Sat	7	9:00-noon	Bunker Hill Savanna/Oxbow
Sun	8	9:00-noon	Wayside Woods Prairie
Sat	14	9:00-noon	Linne Woods North
Sun	15	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove
Sat	21	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
Sun	22	9:00-noon	Sauganash Prairie Grove
Sun	29	9:00-noon	Harms Woods

## JULY

Sun	6	9:00-noon	Somme Nature Preserve
Sat	12	9:00-noon	Linne Prairie
Sun	13	9:00-noon	Air Station Prairie
Sat	19	9:00-noon	Miami Woods & Prairie
Sat	19	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
Sun	20	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
Sun	27	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove

## AUGUST

Sun	3	9:00-noon	Miami Woods & Prairie
Sat	16	9:00-noon	Watersmeet Prairie Grove
Sat	23	9:00-noon	Somme Nature Preserve
Sun	24	9:00-noon	Bunker Hill Savanna/Oxbow
Sun	31	9:00-noon	Somme Prairie Grove



**BUFFALO GROVE PRAIRIE**  
Sundays, 9:00 am - Noon  
Jun 1, Jul 6, Aug 10  
Bev Hansen, 847-272-6211

Meet on Hastings Road off Lake-Cook about a mile west of Milwaukee. Turn north on Hastings, then right into the second parking lot. The prairie is under the ComEd power lines.

**SKOKIE LAGOONS**  
Saturdays, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Jun 14, Jul 12, Aug 9  
Jerry Garden, 773-545-4632, [jerrygarden@sprynet.com](mailto:jerrygarden@sprynet.com)

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.



# NBRP Site Directions and Stewards

## *Air Station Prairie, Glenview*

**Kent & Jerry Fuller**

From the Edens Expressway; go west on Willow Road, past Waukegan Road and over the RR overpass. Turn left (south) at the traffic signals for Patriot Blvd. Turn left on Compass Road (second light from Willow). At the end of Compass, park along Lehigh Avenue or in the METRA lot. Meet at the Tyner Interpretive Center on the south end of the prairie. Patriot Blvd. is also accessible from Lake Avenue.

## *Bunker Hill Savanna/Oxbow, Chicago*

**Jane & John Balaban, Marianne Kozlowski**  
(m.kozlowski@comcast.net)

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*

**Neil Peck & Jette Thomassen**

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

## *Harms Woods, Glenview*

**Jane & John Balaban**

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.

## *Linne Prairie, Morton Grove*

**Mary Busch & John Thill (847-966-0231)**

Meet at the Wayside Woods Prairie parking lot on Lehigh Ave, a few blocks east of Waukegan Road and just north of Dempster.

## *Linne Woods North, Morton Grove*

**John & Marian Thill (847-966-0231, mjthill@icsp.net)**

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, Morton Grove*

**Kent & Jerry Fuller**

East of Caldwell between Oakton and Dempster. Meet in the parking lot two blocks north of Oakton.

## *Morton Grove Prairie Nature Preserve, Morton Grove* **Kent Fuller**

From Dempster, 2 blocks east of Waukegan, turn north on Oak Park Ave. Turn left on Churchill and drive to the end.

## *Sauganash Prairie Grove, Chicago*

**Larry Hodak & Pete Leki (watersschool@yahoo.com)**

Meet at the Forest Preserve parking lot at the Irene Hernandez Picnic Area off Foster Avenue across from Kilbourne Avenue. We will walk north along the railroad tracks and cross the river on the bridge.

## *Somme Prairie Grove, Northbrook*

**Stephen Packard (847-509-0431, spackard@audubon.org )**

**WE NOW PARK AT SOMME WOODS.** Park on the left, near the entrance and follow the new trail. 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).

## *Somme Prairie Nature Preserve, Northbrook*

**Laurel Ross (312-665-7432, lross@fieldmuseum.org) & Christiane Rey (773-478-2019)**

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*

**Linda Masters (847-509-0431, masters2001@comcast.net)**

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*

**John Berg (815-919-4916, Kerg111@aol.com)**

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*

**Gladys Bryer & Larry Hodak**

Meet at Wayside Woods Prairie parking lot on Lehigh Ave, a few blocks east of Waukegan Road and just north of Dempster.