

Your Voices, Your Actions



Photo by Vanderbilt student



Volunteers from the Petoskey Home Builders Association built a new bridge over the Minnehaha Creek at the McCune Preserve - IN ONE DAY!



Volunteers Bruce Booth and Bernie Aulgar get ready to treat invasive honeysuckle at Offield Family Nature Preserve.



Photo by Jim and Frances Paris, Preserve Stewards at Horton Creek Wetlands, Horton Creek, and Undine preserves

Nature Preserves by County (as of March 2017)

County	# Preserves	Acres
Charlevoix	86	3,032
Cheboygan	48	3,038
Chippewa	42	3,758
Emmet	147	5,333
Mackinac	37	3,579
TOTAL	360	18,740



Dan Dueweke, Preserve Steward at Susan Creek clear trails last spring.

Stew Crew 2017



Graham Peters Stewardship Technician
 Caitlin Donnelly Land Protection and Stewardship Specialist
 Derek Shiels Conservation Easement Specialist
 Mike Lynch Preserve Specialist
 Cacia Lesh Volunteer Coordinator
 Charles Dawley Preserve/GIS Specialist

Volunteer Steward Newsletter

Spring 2017

A newsletter for stewardship and EcoStewards volunteers



John Baker

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Fred and Mary Clinton



Preserve Stewards at McCune Nature Preserve, Frog and Toad Surveyors, Trailblazers, LTC Ambassadors, and Tuesday Trudgers

Hanging out with Fred and Mary means you are going to enjoy some laughs while doing something meaningful. Raised in Petoskey, Fred has a deep appreciation for giving back to the community. At a young age, he experienced a mother who became a hard working widow when her husband passed away at 44 years old. To this day, Fred remembers not having resources to attend summer camps that many kids in the area were fortunate to do. However, one year was different: an anonymous community member sponsored him to attend Camp Daggett, meaning he could experience what he had only heard many kids talk of.

This experience speaks to Fred's desire to volunteer wherever he lives. From volunteering as a driver for Meals on Wheels in Lansing and Petoskey, and doing many volunteer duties for LTC over the past five years, Fred explains, "it just feels good to give back and be of service in the community."

Mary expresses her feeling that when times are hard, volunteering "can enable one person to make a difference in a meaningful way." She feels that everyone benefits. She and Fred are helping LTC maintain trails so that they and others can enjoy them, and it gets them outside. "Trail clearing forces us to slow down," Mary reflects. A fast hiker, Mary finds enjoyment in noticing the spring flowers and micro-habitats along the trails. Originally their dog, Barley, led them to the trails at the McCune Preserve, and once they unfolded the LTC trail map, their (and Barley's) worlds were open to a plethora of adventures.

The Woollam Family Preserve has become a place of

spiritual connection for them both. Fred helped build the trail there, and after making many trips hauling split rail fence, had still not seen the view of the lake. On the final hauling trip, he crested the hill and stopped in his tracks. "Wow, was it beautiful," he remarks. "It is hard to put into words what it is about that preserve, but it is unique."

Fred retired from a career in the Lansing office of the DNR. As a semi-retired lawyer, Mary still practices via satellite. When not out with Barley hiking or picnicing at a preserve, they are gardening, and they joke that in winter they represent half of the local curling "team," for which they are avidly recruiting.

As local legislation sets more limits on the DNR's ability to preserve land, they see a more desperate need for the work land conservancies do. "It is our responsibility to care for the land," Mary shares. "There is an inherent value in wilderness, and there is an economic value to it by bringing people out into nature as the development arounds us continues to expand."

Speaking about an upcoming visit to see the Redwoods in California, Fred and Mary understand why ancient people worshipped trees. "There is a larger energy out there, one to which places like the Woollam Family and McCune nature preserves help us connect, and it is our moral obligation to care for those places."

2016 Volunteer Statistics

- 307 Volunteers gave 3587 hours organization wide, valued at \$84,500!
- More than 100 miles of trails were maintained by 158 Preserve Stewards
- 82 volunteers monitor 74 kestrel nest boxes
- 43 EcoStewards worked over 400 hours on citizen science projects



EcoStewards Volunteer Kick Off

Saturday, April 8 1-4pm
Charlevoix Library

Interested in learning more about the natural world around you? Want to get involved in citizen science? Join us for a special presentation on butterflies and learn how you can become a citizen scientist. An amazing Aussie pie lunch catered by Harwood Gold will be offered at no cost, and an optional guided hike will follow.

Vernal Pool Adoption

Tuesday, April 19 1-3pm
Chaboiganing Nature Preserve

Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands that become dry later in the summer. They are hotspots of biodiversity and provide ideal breeding habitat for a variety of amphibians, invertebrates, and other wildlife. We'll learn about vernal pools and the monitoring procedure, and conduct a field training session.



**Document Your Adventures:
How to Use iNaturalist**

Wednesday, April 26 4-6pm
Charlevoix Hospital Meeting Room

Anyone who likes to take photos can be a citizen scientist! You can join in the data collection effort and play an important role by joining iNaturalist.org and adding observations to the Little Traverse Conservancy Preserve Life database. You do not need a smartphone to participate and adding observations is a cinch!

Butterfly Monitoring

Tuesday May 16 5-8pm and Saturday May 20 1-3pm
Grass River Natural Area, Bellaire

Be trained to identify and monitor our local butterfly populations with the help of Duke Elsner, MSU Extension educator and butterfly expert! Help to protect these sensitive environmental indicator species by mapping their location. Light refreshments will be served during the evening session on Tuesday. \$10 per participant covers both days.

"I was born and raised in the 'wilds' of northern Minnesota and loved spending much of my youth tromping around in the woods there. Preserve monitoring provides me opportunities to continue to tromp around and reminisce, while contributing in the present to LTC's mission to preserve the 'wilds' of northern Michigan."

~ Gary Barfknecht, Preserve Steward at Watson-Schott, MacDonald, Huffman & Kuebler-Trippe preserves

Nature Photography Workshop

May 24 6-7:30pm
Resort Township East Park Pavilion, Petoskey

Join LTC educator Sarah Mayhew for this fun and inspiring workshop designed to spark your creativity and expand your technical knowledge of photography. This workshop will equip you with basic knowledge of camera settings and a creative approach to start photographing nature with confidence! All devices and abilities are welcome.

Invasive Plant Identification Workshop

June 19 5:30pm
Location TBD

Spent an evening learning what to do about those pesky invasives that crowd out native plants and limit biodiversity. Volunteers can also learn how to map invasive species using iNaturalist (see event to left).



2nd Annual BioBlitz

July 1, 2017 All Day
Philip J. Braun Nature Preserve, Pellston

Join us for our second annual BIOBLITZ! A bioblitz is a one-day blitz to identify as many plants and animals as we can at one location! Last year we identified more than 230 species at Susan Creek Preserve. The BioBlitz is a great opportunity to learn from experienced naturalists, expand your own identification skills, and grow in wonder at our natural world!



Photo by Mary Jane Ulrich, Preserve Steward at the Martha Cameron and Clark preserves



365 days, 204 Nature Preserves

Notes from the excursions of Sue Irish Stewart, John Texter, and Dave Irish (by Sue Irish Stewart)



Top: Sue and John goof off on their last preserve visit of the year; Above: Trekker the Fox made it on every adventure.

In 2016, I and my brother-in-law John Texter and father Dave Irish, tried to visit all the preserves that LTC owns. What a year! We had so many adventures and so much fun, it's hard to know where to start. Briefly, here are three things:

Perhaps the biggest lesson is that the preserves vary widely. If you've seen one – well, you've seen one. The differences from one landscape to another are sometimes surprising, as are the similarities. Recently we visited Mackinaw Bay Preserve, hoping we could walk out onto that wide, shallow wetland and bay while it was frozen. Once at the lake's edge, we tried to recall where we'd been that was so similar – it was Duncan Bay, near Cheboygan. Different season, county, and lake; same shallow flowing water of variable depth, rough (and wet) walking through hummocks of grasses and sedges, same muskrat lodges.

On a practical level, planning and especially reviewing maps is useful. It's not always clear from information on the web what you're in for; no trails, steep terrain, all manner of wetlands, close neighbors, tricky navigation, or primitive (or very busy) roads. Dirt/seasonal roads can be sketchy any season, especially in Charlevoix County. Cell coverage is hard to predict and best not relied upon. Redundancy, in the form of various paper maps plus phone (with coverage, for seeing your location on a map; without, the compass is still useful) and even a hand-held GPS are all useful. I love reading management files (with permission from LTC staff) so I know the history and current concerns at each site. That also tells me what problems staff are and are not aware of. I take photos with my phone as a reminder to report back. Unless you have opted to turn off location services, the digital photos taken with your phone include the GPS coordinates of where it was taken, making the photo that much more useful (see <http://www.digital-photo-secrets.com/tip/1401/how-do-you-find-the-gps-coordinates-of-your-photos/>).

Finally, for us, eating together added a lot to preserve visits. My companions are not talkative and we all walk at our own speed and with our own focus and interests. When it's time for lunch, everyone stops walking, gathers around, shares food, talks about what they've noticed, and soaks in the setting. The picnic is always the best part of the day - especially when there are cookies.



Preserve Steward Tom O'Halleran clears trails at the Cedarville Bay Preserve on LaSalle Island.

Wilderness is not a luxury, but a necessity of the human spirit.
-Edward Abbey

Save the Date: Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

Pond Hill Farm, Harbor Springs
Saturday, June 17th
10am - 1pm
Invitations in the mail soon!