

CALENDAR

GIBRALTAR BAY UNIT (GBU) DETROIT RIVER INT'L WILDLIFE REFUGE

28820 E. River Rd.
Open to the Public Daily,
Dawn to Dusk

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION: CLIMATE CHANGE IN YOUR BACKYARD

Thurs, Apr 22 @ 7-8:30pm
Zoom Mtg (see page 12)

ISLAND-WIDE CLEAN-UP

Sat, April 24 @ 10:00am
Meet at Centennial Farm

AIRPORT NATURAL AREA OPEN, HOSTED BY GINLC

Sundays, May 2 – Oct 31
1:00 – 4:00pm

Enter through the GBU

TAKE IT OUTSIDE PHOTO CONTEST DEADLINE

Thurs, May 6 @ 11:59pm

MIGRANTS ON THE MOVE

Sat, May 15 @ 8:00am
Meridian Woods

WETLANDS WANDER

Sun, June 13 @ 1:00pm
GBU or
Airport Natural Area

Goodbye, Winter! Hello, Spring!

BY ERIN PARKER

Phenology, the study of timing of events in the natural world, can give one great inspiration during a long winter. Think of phenology as nature's clock, where annual events such as the first blooming dogwood tree of the year or the first arrival date of migrating ruby-throated hummingbirds back to your feeders have been recorded through generations and can allow us to predict their occurrence each year. Phenological events also dictate our public program schedule timed to focus on enjoying the changing seasons.

Even before spring arrives on our calendars, there are many events taking place outside that can herald the change of seasons, if we know where to look.

APRIL: Spend April looking and listening upwards as our spring-arriving migratory birds are moving back home for the summer in search of summer nest-sites and the bumper crop of food that northern summers provide in insects, berries, nectar, and more.

If you'd like to have the flashy orange and black of Baltimore Orioles visiting your feeders, start putting out grape jelly and/or oranges around April 15th. These fruit treats may be visited by a variety of spring arrivals, but seem to call in the orioles more than anything else. Specialized feeders are fine, but a re-purposed suet feeder can be a great fit for oranges.

Nest boxes for Eastern bluebirds, wood ducks, and other birds can be a great addition to your backyard. Make sure they're cleaned of mouse debris from the winter. New boxes should be made to the specifications of our

– continued on Page 11

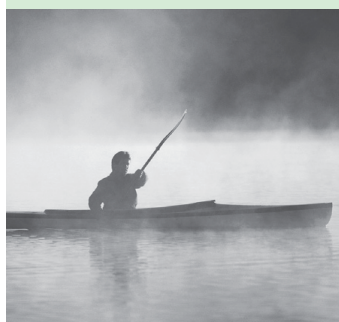


BERT URBANI



JOHN LEON

Top: Hickory Island experienced another delightful Hoar Frost on Feb. 17, when the conditions were right for the cold, moist atmosphere to condense and freeze on tree branches and other objects. For more pics and info, look for the Spring 2014 newsletter at ginlc.org/news.html Bottom: A hummingbird visits a Cardinal Flower.



Thank You TO OUR SPECIAL DONORS

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*for their lifetime
memberships*

Reflections From the President

BY PETER KANTZ

Spring is a time of renewal and optimism. We have reason to be optimistic. The days are getting longer and warmer and there is light at the end of the pandemic tunnel.

The Conservancy is planning for a brighter future. Last year we cancelled most of our educational programs because we did not know how to hold them during the pandemic. This year we have already conducted several highly successful educational events, incorporating all the COVID-19 safety protocols. A full schedule of educational events is scheduled for the rest of the year. Stewardship, community outreach and celebratory events that were cancelled last year will be making a comeback. GINLC has adapted to the "new normal."

High water levels may also be part of a new normal. Areas that were once dry or vernal (springtime) wetlands at our waterfront nature preserves are now underwater year-round. The Conservancy will be addressing this challenge on a short-term and long-term basis. Some areas will need to be closed to the public until corrective actions are taken.

The most ardent deniers are beginning to realize that the pandemic was not a hoax and that climate change is real. These issues affect all of us and must be dealt with. Fortunately, GINLC's membership is up to the challenge. Our members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, work experiences, and education. They step up and volunteer when called upon. Working together, over the years, the membership has completed many projects that have greatly improved and protected the environment, making Grosse Ile a better place to live.

Please email me at info@ginlc.org if you would like to become active in the Conservancy and share your talents.



*"The Conservancy
is planning for a
brighter future."*



TRAIL CAM PHOTOS (No Contest)



Left: GINLC trail cam at the Airport Natural Area captured a coyote jumping next to a beaver-chomped tree. Right: GINLC member Myra McInerney sent this photo of a buck who shed an antler about a week after this photo was taken. Her son added the Groucho glasses.

LEFT: JOHN LEON, RIGHT: MYRA MCINERNEY

In Memory of John C. Jackson

BY JOHN LEON

The Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy and all Grosse Ile residents recently lost a great friend. John C. Jackson passed away in early February. A private person, little is known about John beyond these few facts. He grew up in Trenton and played on the high school football team. John worked at and retired from the Ford Motor Co. He built his home on Grosse Ile 40 years ago. At some point he became a farm owner whose land produced soy beans and corn.

John Jackson received the Conservancy's highest honor, the Conservationist of the Year, at the 2019 Annual Meeting. John was recognized for his unparalleled generosity that has resulted in the implementation of many important conservation projects. These projects enhance the enjoyment of nature for all Grosse Ile residents, present and future. He began with the Photo Blind and bench at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the International Wildlife Refuge in 2016.

Next was the Salmon in the Classroom project at GIHS and supporting the Sturgeon Project at Shumate Middle School in 2017. Then Phase 1 of constructing the beautiful North retaining wall at Sunrise Park in 2018 and the building of the kayak slide. This was followed by Phase 2 in 2019 with the construction of the South retaining wall. These important and attractive structures, with Boxwood and Little Henry Sweetspire bushes above the walls, now protect the slopes on each side of the stairway which descends into the park. In 2020, the installation of a sewer and waterline to the park was the next step laid for Phase 3. John committed to Phase 3 improvements to the park, including an outlook and water fountain, with the hopeful completion in 2021. All of this work has and will continue to enhance the quality of life on Grosse Ile.

John enjoyed having a beer with Peter Kantz and me to discuss the Conservancy projects he so enthusiastically funded. We in the Conservancy will miss working with John, and Grosse Ile residents will miss John's quiet manner and generosity.



JOHN LEON

“These projects enhance the enjoyment of nature for all Grosse Ile residents, present and future.”

GINLC Photo Contest — DEADLINE: May 6

All local high school students are eligible. Cash prizes.

CATEGORIES: (all digital)

- Flora (plants)
- Fauna (animals)
- Fascinating

Visit www.ginlc.org & click on
PHOTO CONTEST for entry form & details.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE
Nature & Wildlife
Photo Contest
2020-2021
Enter throughout school year
Deadline: Thurs, May 6th, 2021

ALL DIGITAL
\$445 Cash Prizes
1 photo per category
3 photos max per student

Enter at www.ginlc.org
Click on "Photo Contest" for entry form and complete details

3 CATEGORIES
Flora (plants)
Fauna (animals)
Fascinating

Photos Credit: Alyssa D'Amico/parents.com

Sponsored by the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy



The GINLC offers monthly outdoor environmental education programs around the island, posted in the newsletter, on our website and Facebook page, and in local media and GI Connect.



PHOTOS BY BERT URBANI

Winter Education Programs

BY BERT URBANI

Wearing masks and social distancing, fans of nature came out on January 20 and February 28 to enjoy “Winter Ways of the Bay” and a “Winter Bird Walk.” So many people were eager to get outside and commune with nature that we were lucky to have two naturalists at each program. We split up into two groups for each program. Griffin Bray and board member Erin Parker led the January groups and Erin and her husband Pete Blank led the February event. Thank you, Griffin, Erin, and Pete!

Left: Binoculars enabled attendees to observe swans on the bay (mostly invasive non-native Mute Swans), Canada geese in the air, and a large number of male Red-winged Blackbirds getting ready to welcome their females back to Michigan.

Right: This little bird-watcher took a break at the observation deck at the Airport Natural Area.

EARTH DAY 51st Anniversary & Some History

Like most celebrations in 2020, the celebrations planned for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day were postponed, rescheduled, cancelled, or held on Zoom. The GINLC’s plans were no exception and our events were cancelled. This year, on April 22 we are planning a Zoom celebration (see page 12).

For those of us who were around back then, we remember that on Earth Day, April 22, 1970, 20 million people came out onto the streets across America, an event that to this day remains the largest civic event in human history.

Here is GINLC board member Phil Pellett’s recollection of the first Earth day:

1970. Ninth grade. New junior high school building that year (Smith Junior High School, Dayton, Ohio). Walked about a mile to meet some friends (guys and girls). Maybe six of us walked the rest of the way to school, which was about a 3.5 mile walk from my house. We had trash bags and picked up trash along the way. I don’t recall there being a plan, but a bunch of other people did the same thing. A car-sized pile of trash accumulated in front of the school. Mr. Palumbo, the Assistant Principal, was cheerful about it. He seems to have made a call and the trash disappeared. We walked home. I think I recall walking to school the next day, too.

Today, Philip Pellett, Ph.D., is the chair of the Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Biochemistry for the Wayne State University School of Medicine.

Where you there for the first Earth Day? If so, tell us YOUR story. We hope to see you on Earth Day this year!

GINLC Update on McLouth Steel Site Remediation & Redevelopment

BY DOUG THIEL, GINLC board member and representative on the Community Advisory Group

The following is an update on progress at the McLouth Steel Site over the past four months.

Northern Portion of the Site

The investigation and clean-up of the 76-acre northern portion of the site owned by Riverview-Trenton Railroad Co. has continued. Work on the first phase of the process has largely consisted of groundwater sampling from 12 wells scattered across the property and determination of the hydraulic properties of the aquifer present under that portion of the site. The first phase will be completed by April 12, 2021. The data generated will be issued in a single report. The course of action taken in Phase 2 will be determined by the findings in Phase 1.

Southern Portion of the Site

- The demolition of the Mill Building was completed in late October. All other field work has been suspended until spring due to the winter weather.
- The two remaining stoves near the southeast corner of the property are likely to be demolished in spring, 2021. A detailed procedure for completing this activity is being developed by the Moroun family business subsidiary MSC Land Co. LLC (MSC) with oversight by the Michigan Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The demolition work will not commence until this procedure is agreed upon and published.
- Torch cutting of the skulls (molten steel-holding vessels) on the property will also resume in the spring. The skulls have to be cut up into legally shippable pieces. The orange smoke that has been periodically observed from this activity has been a concern to a number of Community Advisory Group (CAG) members and the general public. EGLE will be notified seven days prior to resumption of this activity and the CAG will then be promptly informed by EGLE. In order to control the dispersion of these contaminants the contractor will spray the smoke that is generated with water and limit the activity to low wind periods. Contaminant sampling will also be conducted during these operations and the sampling results will be shared with the public.
- The Trenton City Council approved a new zoning designation for the site which is referred to as a Waterfront Revitalization District (W-R District) which was effective in late December. The revised ordinance significantly reduces the permitted intensity of industrial development by prohibiting certain heavy industrial operations at the site and changing other uses from "permitted by right" to "permitted subject to special conditions." This zoning allows a commercial-industrial mixed-use district that allows certain commercial uses to co-exist with uses permitted in the I-1 Light Industrial District. As part of the revised zoning designation, the developers are required to provide an Impact Assessment for uses in the W-R District. As part of the assessment, the developer must describe the effect the proposed use will have on the city's environment, utilities, tax base, traffic, and population.
- A public health assessment for the site will be starting soon. It will be conducted via a cooperative agreement between the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The public health assessment will explore and identify data gaps to see if the site contains an unknown exposure pathway that could adversely affect the community and therefore needs to be addressed. This is separate from the EPA's Remedial Investigation of the site which is scheduled to start in the late summer or fall of 2021.
- The only meeting of the CAG since the last newsletter update was held in January. This meeting focused on the update items discussed above. The schedule of the meetings in 2021 will be changed to quarterly due to the reduced activity at the site. The next CAG meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 8, 2021.



HEALTHY LAWNS FOR WATERSHED PROTECTION

BY BERT URBANI

For years, the GINLC has been urging residents to adopt healthy lawn care practices, whether Do It Yourself, or from lawn care companies. The Michigan Green Industry Association (MGIA) has developed the Healthy Lawn Care Program for Watershed Protection™ and trains and certifies lawn care companies in this approach. The basics of the program are:

1. **FERTILIZER:** Soil test. No one should put fertilizer on a lawn unless a soil test has determined that the soil is deficient in nutrients. If fertilizer is needed, only the proper type (no or low phosphorus), the proper amount (according to directions!), at the proper time (spring or fall – not 4 or 5 applications!). No weed & feed. Sweep spilled fertilizer off paved surfaces onto the lawn. Leave a 15-25 ft buffer from any water body. Water after the application for best results.
2. **PROPER MOWING:** Cut high, 2.5" in spring and fall, 2.5-3.5" in summer. Let the clippings fall. Never mow when grass is wet.
3. **PROPER WATERING:** Water 0.5-1.5" per week. Don't overwater. Water between 10am and 2pm.
4. **CONTROLLING WEEDS:** Hand-dig where possible. Spot treat with herbicide if necessary, follow directions!
5. **CORE AERATION:** Very beneficial. Increases oxygen levels in soil for beneficial microorganisms. Reduces excess thatch (thatch up to one inch is good). Do not use dethatching devices; they thin out the lawn.

Following these practices with a turf lawn will reduce pollution as well as the expense and time spent on the lawn. Even better is to reduce the amount of lawn by turning swaths into native plants, vegetable garden or other. Or consider a lawn composed partially, or completely, of CLOVER!

For the Love of Clover

BY AMANDA PHILLIPS

Every evening in summer I watch our little bunny munch on the clover in our lawn. It is so sweet to watch, his white cotton tail jumping around the yard, munching away. Watching this evening ritual got me thinking about clover, why I love it in the yard, and I wonder why more yards do not have any in their pristine green lawns.

Clovers – specifically *Trifolium repens* – have for centuries been domesticated ground cover plants or livestock forage plants. Clover is a legume, in the same plant family as peas, beans and peanuts. Its common names include white clover, white Dutch clover, Dutch clover and ladino clover. It is native to the Mediterranean and was introduced to the U.S. in colonial days. By 1747, it was common enough that Benjamin Franklin noted red clover's value in improving pastures. Presently it grows from Alaska to Texas.

As Tod Perry notes in an article in "Upworthy," to many people, their idea of the American dream involves "a house in the suburbs...with a lush, green lawn." Lawns can even give a homeowner a certain status in the neighborhood. But there are downsides. There's the cost in time and money to maintain that green carpet. The frequent use and overuse of fertilizers and herbicides which pollute the environment and can be harmful for people, pets and wildlife. And then there are the mowing and blowing rituals that play out in my neighborhood every day, which seem to take FOREVER.

The article lists 11 reasons why he feels clover makes a much better lawn than grass:

1. A 100% clover lawn requires zero fertilizer; a grass lawn that includes clover requires less.
2. Clover grows well in both partial shade and sun.
3. The white flowers produced by clover attract beneficial pollinators like bees and butterflies.
4. Clover kills weeds so there's no need to break your back weeding or to use harmful herbicides.
5. It doesn't turn yellow when dogs pee on it.
6. Clover stays green all summer, with little to no watering.
7. It requires little or no mowing and white clover grows just two to eight inches tall.
8. Clover tolerates a wide variety of soil conditions.
9. Seed is really cheap. The average cost is about \$4 per 4,000 square feet.
10. It feels great on your feet.
11. Clover eliminates the need to aerate.





Perry concludes, “The idea that somehow a grass lawn is superior to a clover lawn is more suburban myth than anything backed by reality. So why not switch to clover and save yourself time, money, and a little piece of the planet?”

Comments on the Clover article from Lillian Dean, an environmental educator in Oakland County

- Clover is an aggressive “non-native” — but so is turfgrass.
- Removing a grass lawn is not as easy as one might think. Usually the only way is herbicide, or smothering for a year or so.
- Clover lawns are an alternative with many environmental benefits. I agree — they should be considered as an alternative, especially in a rural or semi-rural location.
- Mixed clover and grass lawns also offer many environmental benefits.

Looking @ Lawns

THE HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF LAWNS

The website peoplepoweredmachines.com nicely summarizes many EPA reports about the environmental impact of Americans' obsession with their lawns. The terranovalandscaping.com website compiles information from the California Air Resources board to discuss leaf blowers.

EPA statistics for Replacing Gas Power Lawn Mowers

Well over 5 million gas powered mowers are still sold in the U.S. every year. A typical gas mower, for instance, can emit the same amount of VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) and NOx (Nitrogen Oxides) — key precursors to smog — in an hour as a typical car driven 45 miles, according to the EPA.

FACT: Americans burn 800 million gallons of gas each year trimming their grassy yards, according to the EPA

FACT: One gas mower running for an hour emits the same amount of pollutants as eight new cars driving 55 mph for the same amount of time, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists.

California Air Resources Board Health and Environmental Impacts of Leaf Blowers

Leaf blowers have a significant impact on health and the environment through the incredible noise they produce as well as their emissions.

Leaf blowers are loud, but even at a distance, their noise raises levels of **stress hormones** like cortisol, increasing **anxiety, cognitive impairment**, and the **propensity for hostile behavior**, elevating blood pressure and the risk of **cardiovascular diseases**, and compromising the **immune system**. Many communities ban the use of leaf blowers.

How about on Grosse Ile?!?!?

Hearing loss is a big risk for anyone who operates a gas-powered leaf blower, but anyone else in an area where leaf blowers are used is also at risk because hearing loss is a function of both noise intensity and its duration.

Gas powered leaf blower exhaust is worse than a truck's in many ways. Much of the fuel/oil mixture gets emitted incompletely or totally unburned. It disperses a host of **hydrocarbons, fine particulates, toxins, and carcinogens**.



NATIVE SPECIES OF GROSSE ILE

Ruby-Throated Hummingbird

(*Archilochus colubris*)

BY BERT URBANI

What is one of, if not the, most delightful bird in Michigan? The Ruby-throated hummingbird gets my vote! These tiny feathered flying sprites are Nature's Fairies!



CHARACTERISTICS: Ruby-throated hummingbirds (I'm calling them RuTHs) get their name from the male's throat, which looks dark until you see it in the right light at the right angle, when it flashes bright red, and also from the whirring sound their fast-beating wings make in flight. They are amazing flyers, flying straight and fast, but they can stop in an instant, hover, and move up or down or backwards. RuTHs max out at 3.5 inches in length, with a wingspan of 4 inches, and weigh about as much as a penny (3-4 grams).

RANGE, HABITAT & DIET: Like all 325 species of hummingbirds, RuTHs are found only in the Western Hemisphere. They have a large range, breeding in the USA east of the 100th Meridian (which runs from North Dakota through central Texas), and in south-central and southeastern Canada. Their habitat is broad as well, ranging from deciduous and pine forests to orchards and gardens. They migrate and winter in Florida, Mexico, and throughout Central America. Some hummingbirds will undertake the entire 20-hour flight from the Yucatan Peninsula over the Gulf of Mexico to Louisiana or Florida in one trip!



DIET: They consume nectar from flowers, sugar water from feeders, and small insects and spiders. Their metabolism is so high that they must consume half of their body weight in sugar every day. Both males and females are very aggressive, defending their territories and chasing off other hummingbirds.

LIFESTYLE & REPRODUCTION: Hummingbirds are solitary creatures. The male spends time and effort in a courting display, then mating lasts a few seconds, and the male takes off. The female makes the nest herself, which is truly a fairy-like dwelling. Great description from a Wikipedia article: "The nest is composed of bud scales, with lichen on the exterior, bound with spider's silk, and lined with fibers such as plant down (often dandelion or thistledown) and animal hair." She lays 1-3 eggs once or twice per summer, and cares for the chicks alone until they fledge at around 3 weeks old.



VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES: You can attract RuTHs on Grosse Ile if you put out well-tended feeders and/or plant flowers they like, including Cardinal flowers, Butterfly Bush, Zinnias, Petunias, Salvia, and Trumpet Vine. Do not use purchased red nectar in feeders; they shouldn't be given food coloring. Use a ratio of 1 part refined (table) sugar to 4 parts water. Clean and refill your feeders every other day in hot weather; don't let mold grow in your feeder! Praying Mantises have been known to catch hummingbirds on feeders, so be on the lookout!



Daffodil

DEER-RESISTANT PLANTS FOR GROSSE ILE



Japanese
Flowering
Cherry



Oakleaf
Hydrangea

Everyone on Grosse Ile has had the disheartening experience of walking outside and discovering that their lovingly planted something became somebody's dinner during the night. That's the price we pay for living on an island in the Detroit River (Grosse Ile) and not on the Hudson River (Manhattan). But, it is not entirely hopeless. Board member Doug Thiel has compiled a list of plants that are less appetizing to deer. Selecting deer (and rabbit) resistant plants and protecting plants with physical barriers and chemical repellents are two of the tools to be able to live in a wildlife refuge with real landscaping. The third tool is how we manage ourselves and the animals in our midst (more on that in the next newsletter).

GINLC always recommends installing native plants that have evolved to grow in our region. Those native plants are indicated by an asterisk. For more options, we have also included deer resistant plants that are non-native but are not considered to be invasive.

BUSHES

- American Barberry Bush (*Berberis canadensis*) *
- American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) *
- Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
- Common Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*)
- Dwarf Bush Honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*)
- Forsythia (*Forsythia* spp.)
- Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) *
- Inkberry (*Ilex gabra*) *
- Ninebark (*Physocarpus diablo*) *
- Oakleaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) *
- Red Chokeberry (*Photinia arbutifolia*) *
- Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) *
- Silver Buffaloberry Bush (*Shepherdia argentea*) *
- Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) *
- Western Green Giant Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) *
- Winter Gem Boxwood (*Buxus micophylla*)

FLOWERS (Perennials)

- Autumn Joy (*Sedum spectabile*) *
- Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*) *
- Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalia*) *
- Columbine (*Aquilegia* spp.) *
- Coneflower (*Rudbeckia* spp.) *
- Catmint (*Nepeta cataria*)
- Daffodils (*Narcissus* spp.)
- Eastern Bee Balm (*Monarda bradburiana*) *
- Foxglove (*Digitalis* spp.)
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema thiphylum*) *
- Joe-Pye Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*) *
- Lavender (*Lavandula* spp.)
- Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*)
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) *

TREES

- European White Birch (*Betula pendula*)
- European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
- Japanese Flowering Cherry (*Prunus serrulate*)
- Red Pine (*Pinus resinosa*) *
- White Spruce (*Picea glauca*) *

*Native species denoted by asterisk



2021 Spring Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ

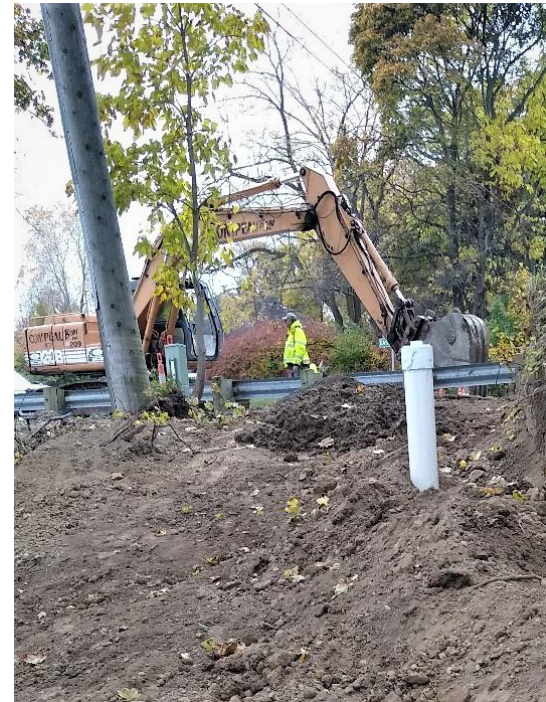
With the arrival of Spring, GINLC's stewardship efforts swing into high gear. High water levels will again be an issue that prevents us from accessing certain areas of our nature preserves. We will post signs requesting the public to keep out of these areas to protect the vegetation and wildlife and to ensure the public's safety. Areas affected by high water can be unstable and easily damaged by foot traffic.

There are two areas that the Conservancy stewards for Grosse Ile Township that will receive special attention this year. Both are adversely affected by high water. Sunrise Park was prepped last Fall for future improvements. The storm drain outfall at the northern portion of the park was repaired by Wayne County and the Township. GINLC then paid to have sewer and water lines installed just west of the old bridge trestle. These actions are in line with suggestions received during community input sessions and an engineering study that the Township commissioned to develop a plan for the park. GINLC, with the help of a very generous donor, has used this plan and the residents' input to make improvements to the park such as retaining walls, kayak slide, spotting scope, and landscaping. The next phase will develop the upper portion of the park, making it more family friendly and accessible to those who find the stairway too challenging. This phase will allow everyone to enjoy the park, even in times of high water.

The second area that will receive special attention is the Airport Natural Area. Last year we rebuilt an observation platform at the refuge on high ground to escape the rising water. Once the platform was constructed it became obvious that the area east of the Airport Lagoon required a massive clean up effort. The area was once used as a non-toxic dump by the Navy and then covered with dirt and planted with trees. The site was eroding, exposing the dumped materials, mostly metal parts, and tires. Working with the Airport Commerce Park Commission, which has allocated funding to help with the cleanup, GINLC volunteers have been working at removing the exposed materials from the site. Several GINLC Board Members have volunteered to be on a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Restoration Advisory Board for the former Naval Air Station. We hope we can convince the Federal Government to get involved in the restoration project.



"Several GINLC Board Members have volunteered to be on a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Restoration Advisory Board for the former Naval Air Station"



Top left: One of the junk piles assembled by the GINLC volunteers at the former Navy dump in the Airport Natural Area. Top right: A wet, icy area is partially cleaned up, with more to follow. Above: Sewer and water lines are installed at Sunrise Park.

PHENOLOGY, continued from cover

native birds, otherwise, you may find house sparrows and European starlings outcompeting your desired species for space. This is a good time to put out natural materials such as straw that birds may incorporate into their nesting materials - but please don't put out synthetic materials such as ribbons or acrylic yarns, these non-biodegradable materials may look pretty but they can get caught on bird feet or necks, causing unnecessary harm, including death, as birds get strangled on these materials.

MAY: May is peak bird migration season in southeastern Michigan and many birds are moving through on their way to northern breeding grounds. This is the time of year for rose-breasted grosbeaks and indigo buntings to make brief stopovers at our seed feeders and for woods dripping with colorful warblers and their songs. It's also time to put up hummingbird feeders to attract ruby-throated hummingbirds.

The first spring and summer butterflies begin to emerge. Butterflies may look delicate, but they love to gather in muddy places where they sip minerals from the wet soil. We have a number of different species that can be found in habitats ranging from sunny open meadows to darker, cooler woods.

Some phenological records date back thousands of years, such as the first date of the cherry blossoms opening in Japan. Thomas Jefferson was a noted phenologist, although the word phenology wasn't coined until 1850. He kept a "Garden Book" from 1766-1824, recording the temperature, frogs singing, first blossoming of dogwoods, and many other observations. Phenological records continue to teach modern scientists about changes in climate, weather, and the timing of events such as bird migration and insect hatch-outs. Taking note each year of natural events in your backyard, favorite park, or greenspace can be a way to connect you to the subtle changes of the seasons.



Indigo
Bunting



Pipevine
Swallowtail

TIPS ON BEING GREEN: PART 2

FROM PAM FRUCCI



GINLC Board member Pam Frucci is Grosse Ile's Queen of Green. In this installment, Pam continues to share some of her practices that have served her well over many years – practices that we can all adopt to save \$ and the planet!

- 1** A lace pant suit I bought in 1970 for Grosse Ile High School's Class of '50 reunion, I've redone to wear for President Reagan's inaugural in 1981, our son's wedding in 1991, our daughter's wedding in 1999, and our Class of 50's 50th reunion in 2000.
- 2** I've been giving my husband Jack a haircut with \$10 scissors I bought 40 years ago.
- 3** I carry to meetings a mug sack I made so I don't have to use throwaway foam cups.

Wonder how Climate Change will affect life on Grosse Ile?

The GINLC is celebrating the 51st Anniversary of Earth Day with conversations with a variety of experts to give us a picture of how Climate Change will affect each and every one of us!

Join us on Zoom on Thursday, April 22, from 7:00 – 8:30pm

Short talks with experts on:

1. What's the Science?
2. Is the weather really changing?
3. Water levels – higher or lower?
4. Who's at my Bird Feeder?
5. How will fishing change?
6. Is our planting zone changing and what does that mean?
7. Who's planning for these changes?
8. Q&A

Climate Change isn't something that's only happening somewhere else!

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EARTHRISE: Taken aboard Apollo 8 by Bill Anders, this iconic picture shows Earth peeking out from beyond the lunar surface as the first crewed spacecraft circumnavigated the Moon. Grosse Ile is a blue and green island on a blue and white planet-island, floating in a sea of stars, vulnerable and in need of protection.

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OUR MISSION:
To Promote for the public benefit the preservation,
stewardship and understanding of the natural resources in
the Township of Grosse Ile and surrounding area

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