



the

VOYAGEUR

SUMMER 2014

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GROSSE ILE NATURE & LAND CONSERVANCY

VOLUME 22 • NO. 2

"There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We are all crew."
- Marshall McLuhan, Canadian philosopher

SUMMER EVENTS AT THE REFUGE

GOOD NIGHT MARSH!

Saturday, July 26th
8 p.m.

WALK TO THE LOVELY LOTUS

Sunday, August 17th
2 p.m.

KIDS DISCOVERY: INCREDIBLE INSECTS

Sunday, September 7th
2 p.m.

REFUGE/AIRPORT NATURE AREA OPEN

28820 E. River Road
Sundays
From 1 to 4 p.m.

STEWARDSHIP DAYS (9 A.M. - NOON)

Waterfront Park
August 2

Intrepid Pond
August 16

**Waterfront Park
& Intrepid Pond**
September 27

**Thorofare &
Hennepin
Marsh Properties**
October 11



NATIVE SPECIES ON GROSSE ILE

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)

BY BERT URBANI

LIFESTYLE

Monarchs have an interesting lifestyle. Four generations are hatched from eggs each year. In February and March, the last year's butterflies come out of hibernation (in California or Mexico) and head north and east, looking for a mate and a place to lay their eggs. Each female lays around 200 eggs, one at a time. In March and April the first generation of eggs are laid and hatch about four days later. The baby caterpillar or larva eats milkweed leaves and grows rapidly in five stages for about two weeks. Then it attaches itself to a leaf or stem and its body transforms into a beautiful green chrysalis with gold spots. It almost looks like a Christmas ornament. For about 10 days nothing happens on the outside, but on the inside, the caterpillar's body is undergoing metamorphosis, or transformation, into the adult butterfly. The chrysalis becomes grey and transparent and the butterfly breaks through, its wings wet and shriveled, and it hangs on the shredded chrysalis, drying out and pumping blood into its wings and throughout its remodeled body. It takes its first flight as a new being and goes off in search of a mate to

Continued on Page 7

From President Liz Hugel

Another GINLC action packed spring has flown by; we're deep into summer and many projects are nearing the completion/maintenance phase. Have you stopped at the Waterfront Park on E. River Rd. at Grosse Ile Parkway recently to try out the spotting scope and bench that were installed there as part of our memorial to Dr. Bruce Jones?

On the north end of the island our Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve has been closed to visitors this spring during construction of a small boardwalk and observation deck, but we will re-open it again soon once construction is complete and we've installed the bike rack, garbage cans, and signage that the township required for the project. We'll have pictures in our next edition for those of you who can't easily get to this site to have a first-hand look.

Many thanks to all of our donors! Your contributions over several years have allowed the Conservancy to fund this project. As always there's still a lot more to do, including fighting invasive plants like phragmites, thistles, and buckthorn, so that we can restore native plants at the site, which will in turn support the amphibians, reptiles and waterfowl in the ecosystem at

Your contributions over several years have allowed the Conservancy to fund many local projects.

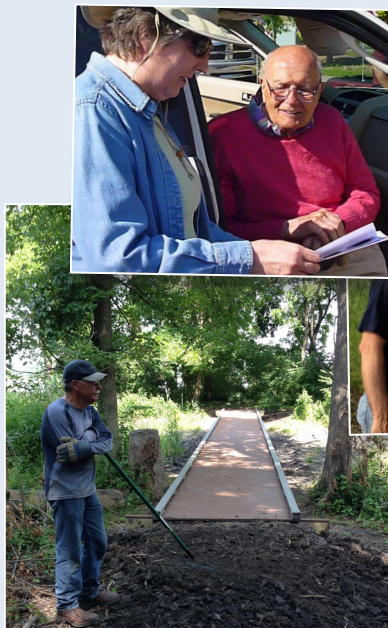
the marsh.

I hope you enjoy reading about the different GINLC activities this spring and the pictures from our successful Take It Outside! photo contest. In addition to that, we want to make sure that you're aware of several

more regional issues: the serious decline of monarch butterflies and the disturbing application of carcinogen-

loaded coal-tar sealants that are used in this part of the country. You can help by becoming more aware of these issues and learning what you can do to improve our ecosystem.

Feel free to contact me at info@ginlc.org with questions, concerns or your interest in volunteering!



ABOVE Doug Thiel and Peter Kantz at the Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve during construction of the observation deck. **LEFT** Peter Kantz coordinated construction of the wetland boardwalk at the Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve. **TOP LEFT** On behalf of the GINLC Board of Directors, Liz Hugel presented Congressman John Dingell with a Lifetime GINLC Membership in appreciation for his many significant contributions.

In memory of Tom & Barbara Woodward
From Tom & Doreen Woodward

In memory of Dr. Bruce Jones
From Liz Hugel & Manfred Egerer

Celebrating Doug Thiel's Retirement!
From GINLC Board of Directors

Lifetime Membership Bestowed Upon: Congressman John Dingell
Tamara & Bruce Ranck
Thank you for your contributions!
From the GINLC Board of Directors

Your financial support for our projects is always appreciated! As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization we depend on the generosity of our donors. The enclosed envelope can be used for membership donations, as well as for memorials, recognitions, or to help with any of our special projects. Keep in mind that donations for "2014" memberships will be accepted until the end of summer. In October, we will start our "2015" donor campaign. Members will receive a formal request for a membership donation along with the invitation to attend the Annual Membership Meeting, to be held Saturday morning, November 8th at the Centennial Farm Recreation Building

WEBSITE ADDITIONS If you missed our Earth Day program "[Naturalizing the Home Garden](#)" by Cyndi Ross, Friends of the Rouge, you can find it on our website under the Education tab. If you missed Jerry Jourdan's presentation on "[Birding the Great Migration in Kenya](#)", we also have a link under our Education tab.



LEFT A park bench at the base of the slope was installed in memory of Dr. Bruce Jones by Art Payette, Phil Pellett, Doug Thiel, Peter Kantz and John Leon.



TOP G.I. National Honor Society students helped haul bricks at the park.

ABOVE Much has been accomplished at the Waterfront Park located at the eastern end of Grosse Ile Parkway.

BOTTOM RIGHT GINLC was well represented during the island wide clean-up in April, when trash that accumulated during the winter months was cleaned up on all GINLC properties. GINLC volunteers gathered at Centennial Farm for the annual Island Clean Up organized by the Kiwanis: Paul Gloor, Doug Thiel, Barbara Thayer, Peter Kantz, Manfred Egerer, Betsy Kantz, Phil Pellett, Ron Schmaeman, Keith Fusinski & Eric Michael (behind the camera).

GINLC Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ

GINLC conducted a number of very successful stewardship events this past Spring, thanks to the hard work of GINLC volunteers. Art Payette and Peter Kantz are maintaining the grass at Intrepid Pond now that the trail building portion of the Intrepid Pond Eagle Scout project has been completed. In July we are concentrating on remediating the Hennepin Marsh Gateway, following boardwalk and observation deck construction. Although stewardship events are generally scheduled during the weekend, stewardship opportunities exist throughout the week. Every Monday, May through October, Art Payette leads a stewardship program from 9 a.m. to Noon at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the International Wildlife Refuge. Individuals are also encouraged to help maintain properties between stewardship events. Waterfront Park and Intrepid Pond are two areas that could use additional attention by any individuals or a small group of volunteers. Contact Peter Kantz (peterkantz@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in helping at these properties.



ABOVE Paul Gloor lugs a barrel of yard waste up the Waterfront Park stairs. Peter and Betsy Kantz, Phil Pellett, Ray Kwiecien, Paul Gloor, Eric Michael, Peter Rock and Jennifer Sinclair got the park in shape for the season. They raked leaves, pulled weeds, mulched around the plants and added wood chips to the trails.



ABOVE Peter Kantz, Keith Fusinski, Cari and Doug Thiel, Phillip Pellett, and Ray and Sue Kwiecien worked on June 7th at the Kobiljak Preserve. The butterfly garden was cleaned up. The grass is cut on a regular basis by Eric Michael.

Take It Outside: 2014 Photo Contest

BY BARBARA THAYER

Take It Outside, the nature and wildlife photo contest sponsored by GINLC was very successful this year. Changing the contest to all digital media encouraged student participation. Fifty-two students from Grosse Ile, Trenton, Wyandotte, Southgate, Riverview, and Gibraltar High Schools entered 104 images. That was an increase in participation of 371%. Wow!! Part of the increase was also due to the contacts we developed at two additional high schools. The biggest change was that for the first time students sent their entries via an email rather than entering a mounted print.

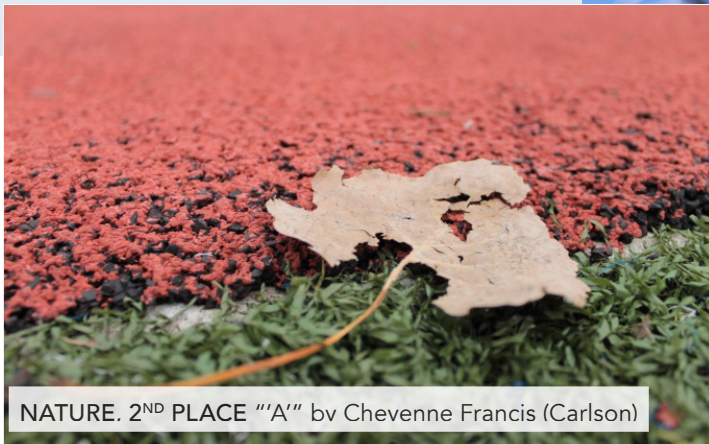
GINLC sponsors the contest to encourage students to get outside, enjoy, and appreciate our fabulous southeastern Michigan environment. With the increased number of entries we were able to have our usual number of winners, and also acknowledge 14 photos in the Honorable Mention category. For the 2015 contest we hope students will find fascinating subjects all four seasons of the year. The Grand Prize photo this year was a winter shot.

We had two guest judges this year, Rick Frye and Patricia Izzo. Last spring Rick Frye retired after 20 years of teaching at Trenton High School. He grew up around photography as his father was a professional photographer from Pontiac. While at Trenton High School, Rick designed the curriculum for teaching photography.

Patricia Izzo is a professional photographer from Wyandotte who has a studio at River's Edge Gallery in Wyandotte. Her work has been featured in exhibits in Ann Arbor, Lansing, Port Huron, Plymouth, and, of course, Wyandotte. She has also exhibited outside of Michigan in Toronto, Chicago, Minneapolis, Monterey, California, and New York City, to name a few.

Thanks to our judges and to the teachers and parents who encouraged students to Take It Outside! That is good advice for all of us. Lastly, *congratulations* to our winners and *thanks* to all the students who entered. We hope to see your work next year!

Take It Outside!
That is good advice
for all of us.



NATURE. 2ND PLACE "'A'" by Chevenne Francis (Carlson)



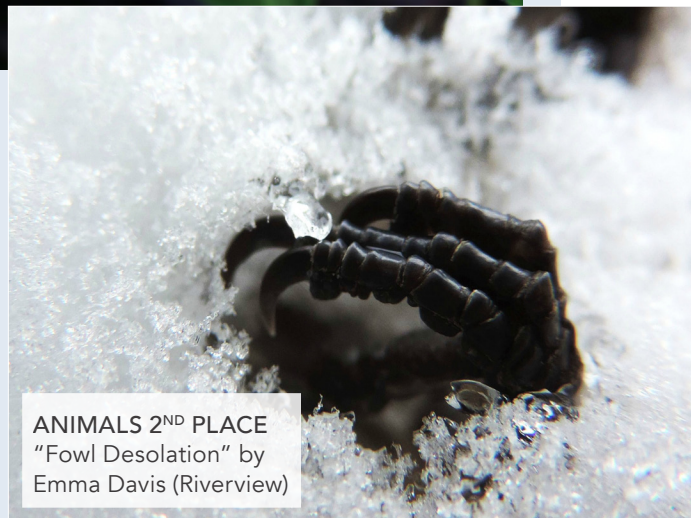
GRAND PRIZE "Frozen Fog" by Alissa Rhode (Grosse Ile)



NATURE, 1ST PLACE "Ivy" by Andrew Carr (Carlson)



NATURE, 3RD PLACE "Icy Reflection" by Erin Gimpel (Grosse Ile)



ANIMALS 2ND PLACE
"Fowl Desolation" by
Emma Davis (Riverview)

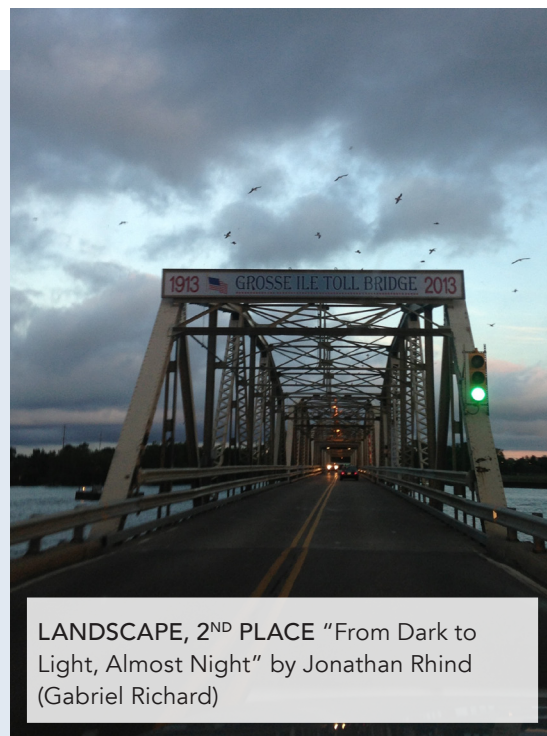


ANIMALS, 3RD PLACE "Oh, Deer" by Halley Eblin (Grosse Ile)

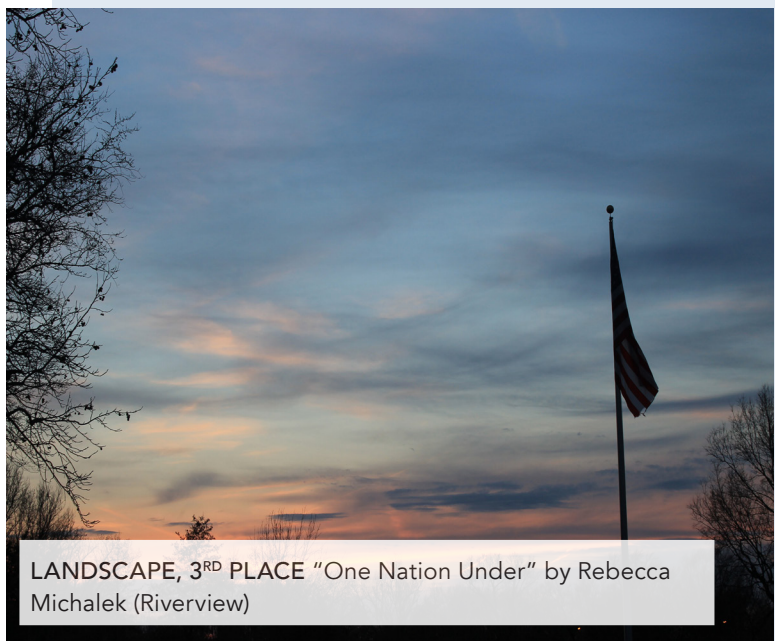
The Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy announced the winners of the Take It Outside! 2014 Nature & Wildlife Photo Contest on May 30th at Islandfest. Students received monetary prizes in the amounts of \$100 for the Grand Prize, \$75 for 1st place, \$50 for 2nd place and \$25 for 3rd place in each category. Certificates of recognition were also presented for Honorable Mention photos. All submitted photos were on display at the GINLC Islandfest booth. The winning photos are on display at the Grosse Ile Kroger during the month of July and will be displayed at the Trenton Library in August. Congrats to all!



ANIMALS, 1ST PLACE "Neighborhood Spy" by Chelsea Barron (Riverview)



LANDSCAPE, 2ND PLACE "From Dark to Light, Almost Night" by Jonathan Rhind (Gabriel Richard)



LANDSCAPE, 3RD PLACE "One Nation Under" by Rebecca Michalek (Riverview)

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the GINLC 2014 Nature & Wildlife Photo contest by the Richard & Rosalind Meyer Family Foundation.



LANDSCAPE, 1ST PLACE "Trails in Time" by Alex Davalos (Riverview)

Continued from Page 1

start the process all over again. Two more generations of butterflies are born, in May/June and July/August, each living only two to six weeks. The fourth generation is hatched in September/October and is the generation that takes on the mighty migration of 2-3,000 miles.

CHARACTERISTICS

Adult monarch males are slightly larger than females, with a wingspan of $3\frac{1}{2}$ - 4 inches. Their wings are similar in color, but the lines or veins in the female's wings are thicker, while the males have a round spot in the center of each hind wing. Monarch caterpillars are striking, with yellow, black and white stripes, and reach a length of 2 inches.

RANGE

Monarch butterflies are native to North America. Monarch populations in the U.S. and Canada east of the Rocky Mountains migrate thousands of miles to Mexico, while those west of the Rockies migrate to California. They are also found in the Caribbean and occasionally in Western Europe. Monarchs have been observed in Australia and New Zealand since 1871 and are called Wanderer butterflies there.

HABITAT

Monarchs can survive in almost any habitat from forests to agricultural lands to prairie remnants to urban and suburban gardens and roadsides. The eastern North American monarchs overwinter in Mexican conifer groves.

DIET

Adult monarchs feed on the nectar of many flowering plants, while the caterpillars dine almost exclusively on the leaves of plants in the Milkweed (*Asclepias*) family. Poisonous chemicals in the milkweed plants called *cardenolides* or cardiac glycosides remain in the caterpillars and even in the adult butterflies. These chemicals taste bad and are poisonous to birds and other potential predators. The conspicuous coloring of the caterpillars and adult butterflies lets predators know to look elsewhere for food.



BEHAVIOR

Monarchs are not creatures that have to hide to avoid predators. Instead, they advertise that they are not good to eat by their coloring.

VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES

Monarchs can be viewed at the gardens at Centennial Farm and in other locations on Grosse Ile where Milkweed, Zinnias, Joe Pye Weed and other flowers bloom. The best way to view monarchs is to create a "Monarch Waystation" at your own home and plant the flowers that they need!

SOURCES:

www.animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/bugs/monarch-butterfly/

www.monarchwatch.org/milkweed/index.htm

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarch_butterfly



Islandfest Update

BY BERT URBANI

The Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy participates in Islandfest every year to raise awareness among Grosse Ile residents of the work that we do to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of our shared island home. Our involvement started on Friday night when the awards for the GINLC Photo Contest (see related article) were presented at our Islandfest booth at the airport and continued on Saturday during the parade and throughout the weekend. This year our parade entry featured a red Ford Mustang convertible and a red pick-up truck that pulled a trailer decorated with the GINLC sign and plants purchased from Westcroft Gardens. Board member Eric Michael orchestrated the truck and trailer decorations. Dan Gaither graciously loaned the convertible and the pick-up truck belonged to and was driven by Jose Sanchez. GINLC members walked behind the vehicles and passed out wildflower seeds and candy, assisted by Girl Scout troops coordinated by board member Carol Machuga. All had a great time and we thank our dedicated members

and friends who made our Islandfest participation a success!

Congressman John D. Dingell once again

Emma Davis of Riverview poses at the GINLC Islandfest booth with her prize-winning photo, "Fowl Desolation."



participated in the Islandfest Parade with the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy, riding in our convertible along with GINLC President Liz Hugel and Board Members Mickey Bartlett and Bert Urbani. In recognition of this, his last year as our congressman before he retires, Liz presented Mr. Dingell with a tribute card signed by many members and

All of us on Grosse Ile benefit from the many environmental laws and associated regulations that Mr. Dingell has initiated during his nearly 59 years in Congress.

an Honorary Life Membership in the GINLC "in appreciation of his many years of devoted service to the people, wildlife, and natural environment of the State of Michigan." We are particularly grateful for his interest in and support of the Conservancy. All of us on Grosse Ile benefit from the many environmental laws and associated regulations that Mr. Dingell has initiated during his nearly 59 years in Congress, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act amendments of 1990 and the legislation that created the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

WARNING: Avoid Coal Tar Sealants!

BY LIZ HUGEL

DID YOU KNOW?

Coal tar sealants sprayed on driveways, bike paths, playgrounds and local parking lots to increase longevity and appearance can contain up to 35% coal tar, which the National Toxicology Program considers a human carcinogen. Many of us have been unaware of the hazardous nature of coal tar sealcoats. Rigorous scientific studies show that coal tar sealants are a major source in the environment of chemicals known collectively as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs. The PAHs are toxic to both plants and animals; seven specific PAH compounds are suspected human carcinogens. PAHs are released into the environment as gases (fumes) after the product has been applied, and are associated with particles that erode and get blown or washed away by wind and rain or adhere to shoes as well as car, bicycle and stroller tires. You should be concerned that these PAHs migrate from the sealcoats to not only our streambeds and Great Lakes sediments, but to dust in our homes and schools. Lifetime cancer risk from exposure is 38 times higher for people who live adjacent to coal-tar-sealed pavement (Baylor Univ. study).

Some of us were shocked recently to learn the details of the scientific studies that through "chemical fingerprinting" prove that the major source of PAH contamination found in Great Lakes sediments comes directly from coal tar sealcoats. The PAH levels in sediments have been increasing dramatically, while PCBs and banned pesticides have been decreasing.

The good news is that awareness of this hazard is growing and since 2005 dozens of cities and counties across the US. have banned the sale and use of coal tar sealcoats. Earlier this year, the state of Minnesota joined their ranks. Unfortunately, industry lobbying has managed to stop restrictive legislation in states like Michigan and Illinois.

Current restrictions in our state are limited to Ann Arbor and Grand Haven. Fortunately, major retailers like Home Depot, Lowe's and Ace Hardware have stopped selling coal tar sealants. Reportedly, there are alternative products available that are not much more costly.

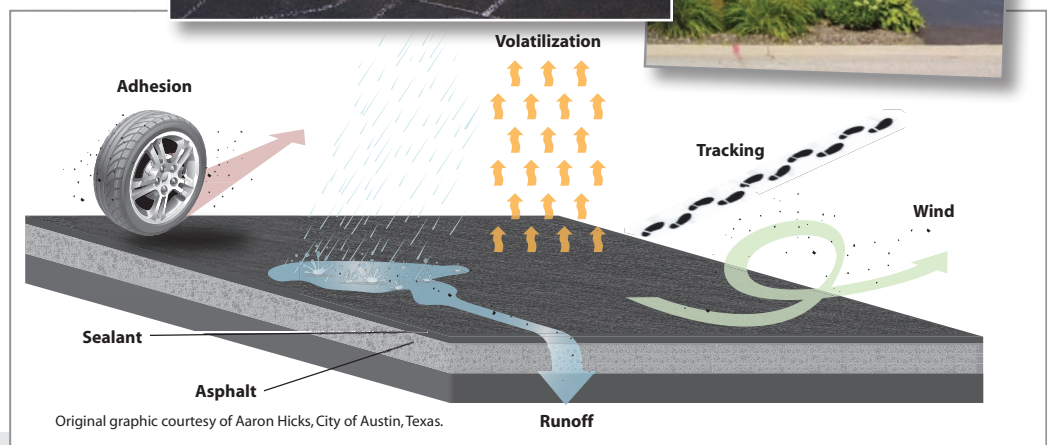
WHAT IS GINLC DOING?

We are partnering with Freshwater Future, a Great Lakes watershed group, to help educate the public and request the reduction or elimination of the use of coal tar sealants. Freshwater Future is compiling a list of contractors who have switched to safer alternative products. We will provide a link to their information and the scientific studies on our website's Education tab.

Information provided here has been condensed from USGS studies and Freshwater Future's material. See the Freshwater Future website for links to detailed information: www.freshwaterfuture.org/coaltar/wp/

Skin contact is one way humans can be exposed to PAHs. Parking lots and driveways with coal-tar-based sealcoat have concentrations of PAHs hundreds of times higher than those with asphalt-based sealcoat or no sealcoat.

Hopscotch photo obtained from Corbis Images, Inc.



Original graphic courtesy of Aaron Hicks, City of Austin, Texas.

What Can You Do?

If you plan to seal your driveway or parking area, **find** a contractor who will use eco-friendly products. **Ask** for the list of ingredients and refuse coal tar products. **Ask** for

a copy of the product's Safety Data Sheet to confirm that it doesn't list the CAS number for coal tar: [65996-93-2]. **Inform** your neighbors of the hazards of using coal tar sealants. **Tell** your

township and school officials that you don't want coal tar sealants used in public areas. **Join** with us and commit to phasing out this hazardous product!

Another Property for the Conservancy

BY INGO HASSERODT

Our inventory of properties has grown a bit. The Conservancy obtained a small wooded lot from the Michigan Land Bank on the north side of Grosse Ile Parkway, about half way between the County Bridge and Meridian. This brings the total of GINLC direct-owned properties and properties under easements to about 156 acres, including about 121 acres of wetlands at the Hennepin Marsh, north of the Toll Bridge.

On another note, occasionally claims are made that properties such as Grosse Ile's Open Space reduce the tax efficiency of the Township. Actually, studies have shown that open space, by reducing the need to build and maintain infrastructure, like sewers, waterlines, and roads (sorry to mention roads), in the long run saves tax dollars, as the taxes on the average single home do not cover the expenses to maintain the needed infrastructure. In addition, open space raises property values and thereby reduces the perceived loss in tax revenues.

So, the next time you walk or drive by one of our beautiful open space woods, you can feel assured that they are a good investment.



Thomas Grady Bennett Receives 2014 GINLC Scholarship

BY JO-ANNE GRONLUND, VICTORIA MURPHY, AND BARBARA THAYER

An annual scholarship was established in 2012 in honor of Dr. Bruce Jones, a founding member of the GINLC and first President. It recognizes Grosse Ile High School graduating students for their involvement in protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The 2014 winner is Thomas Grady Bennett (known to family and friends as Grady). Grady

has been an active volunteer in his community. He supports the Rock CF Foundation to help improve the quality of life of the many people with Cystic Fibrosis. He has been involved with many fund raising and stewardship activities for the Leelanau Land Conservancy while working in Northport during his summers.

Grady will attend Butler University in Indianapolis in the fall, working towards a five year dual degree program in Mechanical Engineering from Purdue and Economics from Butler. Grady notes, "Growing up on Grosse Ile and the Leelanau Peninsula, I have been blessed living in two of the most beautiful areas in Michigan... In college and beyond, I plan on making preservation of our environment a key objective in everything I do."

Congratulations, Grady! We look forward to your continued success and conservation efforts.

LASTING SUPPORT

Have you ever thought about a lasting way to make a difference?

By including GINLC in your will or estate planning, your love of Grosse Ile's natural beauty will remain as a lasting bequest for generations to come.

For more information on making a bequest, please contact your attorney to include GINLC in your will or trust. Let us know of your intentions to include the Conservancy in your estate plan by calling the treasurer at **734-761-0125** or email donate@ginlc.org.



GINLC Education Programs a Great Success!

BY NATALIE RAY

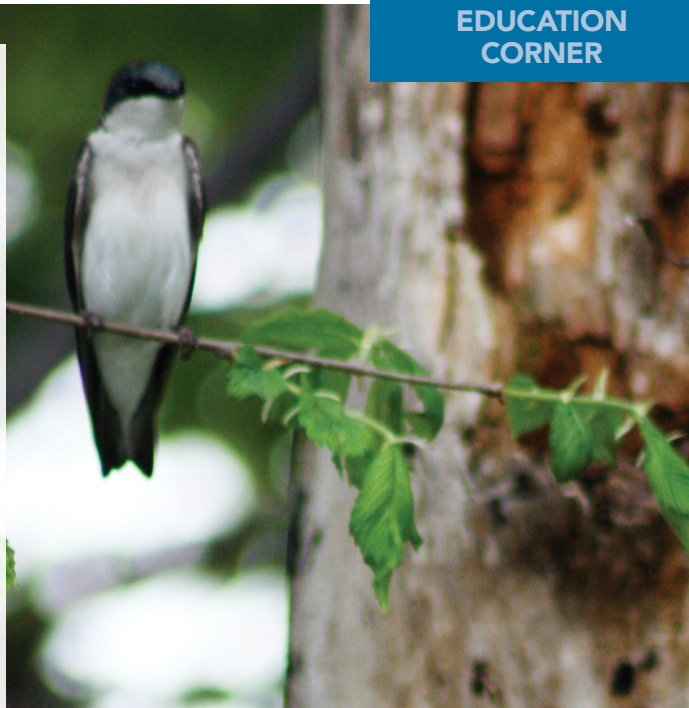
Despite the late start to our spring, GINLC had a great season of programming! On April 5 we held "Birding 101" at Centennial Farm, where attendees learned the basics of one of the fastest growing hobbies in America today. We covered everything from which binoculars to buy, to bird identification, to birding smart-phone apps! On Earth Day, April 22, Cyndi Ross from Friends of the Rouge delivered a great presentation on native plant landscaping – how and why we should incorporate native plants into our gardens. Not only do they require less maintenance and care, but they provide much needed resources for our local insects and birds.

As a part of the Stewardship Network's Garlic Mustard Challenge, on May 10 a group of volunteers, including the Grosse Ile High National Honor Society, worked hard to remove invasive Garlic Mustard from several Open Space and GINLC properties, totaling 30 large bags full of Garlic Mustard by the end of the morning! Thank you to our volunteers, and we will certainly continue our efforts next spring to make Grosse Ile Garlic Mustard-free!

Although the weather was quite chilly, a dedicated group of birdwatchers came out for "Birds of the Bay" on May 17 at Gibraltar Bay. We had many great sightings that morning, including a Baltimore Oriole building a nest, a Northern Flicker at a nest cavity, Forster's Terns hunting over the bay and many good looks at Yellow Warblers, Warbling Vireos, and Great Blue Herons. We also saw Chestnut-sided and Blackpoll Warblers passing through on their northward migration.

Most recently, this past Father's Day we held "Nature's Dads" at Gibraltar Bay – a program focused on the role of dads in nature. We observed many Tree Swallows, both mom and dad, feeding their young in the nest boxes. We also saw many male Red-winged Blackbirds actively defending their territories and discussed their important roles as dads. Plants have dads too, so we observed and learned all about Cattail dads, Cottonwood dads, and Jack-in-the-Pulpit dads!

Come explore Gibraltar Bay with us during one (or all) of our programs this summer, you never know what we might find!



IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

Save the Fave!

BY BERT URBANI

The Monarch Butterfly is the favorite insect of most Americans. The non-profit group **MonarchWatch.org** urges people to plant "Monarch Waystations," pesticide-free flower beds dedicated to native plants that support adult monarchs and caterpillars. MonarchWatch also certifies waystations and provides a weatherproof sign to display by your flower bed to educate visitors.

You can create your own waystation by buying plants or seeds from local suppliers, or you can purchase a Monarch Waystation seed kit from MonarchWatch. The seed kit for our region (east of the Rocky Mountains) contains Common Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed and Butterfly Weed in the *Asclepias* family, as well as Indian Blanket, Purple Coneflower, Joe Pye



Weed, Scarlet Sage, Tithonia Torch, Mexican Sunflower, and Zinnia, Dahlia Mix. (Despite the word "weed" in many of the flower names, these plants are beautiful, sweet-scented additions to any garden that will reward you with the sight of butterflies flitting to and fro among the blooms.)

Point Pelee in Ontario is famous for being a "waystation" for migrating monarchs. Why shouldn't Grosse Ile give them a run for it? How many "Monarch Waystations" can we develop and certify on Grosse Ile to help save our favorite butterfly?

LEND US A HAND!

REFUGE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge is open on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. and occasional evenings during the summer. Volunteers are needed to host each "Open House" Sunday. Contact **Liz Hugel** at liz.hugel@gmail.com for information.

Volunteer work groups are also in the GBU on Mondays from 9 to 12. Call **Art Payette** at **734-671-0540** if you have an hour or so to help.

TO RECEIVE EVENT NOTICES & NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL, CONTACT US AT INFO@GINLC.ORG



To sign up for a work party call
Peter Kantz
734.558.2149
or Art Payette
734.671.0540

To make a donation call
John Leon,
Treasurer
734.671.0125

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