



Lake Bluff Open Lands Association

PRESERVATION, RESTORATION, AND EDUCATION SINCE 1981

www.lbola.org

Winter 2013-14

LBOLA Warmline 847-234-2860

President's Letter

...and dust to dust.

I get the impression that many of us are just beginning to tune into the fact that **ash trees are going away**. The message has been coming from The Village, every arborist out there and certainly from the press in general, but I suspect that the reality of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) won't really hit home until next spring when an awful lot of trees will fail to answer the bell. At this point, there is little that can be done. Treatments exist, but they really should have started this past spring; or earlier. It's time to move on. **Thanks to the efforts of the Lake Bluff Garden Club**, more than \$14,000 will be added to the Village's coffers dedicated to the replacement of some 700 ash trees to be removed – **just from Village property**. Do an assessment of ash trees on your own property to determine the impact of EAB on your lot. Then stay tuned for next spring's **14th annual LBOLA Native Tree and Shrub Sale**. When choosing plant material, native typically outperforms non-native and diversity is the key to surviving diseases like EAB and Dutch Elm Disease – and whatever is next.

LBOLA's efforts to tone down plans for developments at **Sunrise Beach** are on hiatus as the expected grant money to pay for many of the proposed changes has not materialized. Like so many Lake Bluffers, we have high hopes for upgraded bathrooms and safer stairways, but find the existing beach pretty nice as it is.

Land Management efforts move forward as volunteers in the Skokie River Prairie Reserve continue to open up riverine vistas along the Mighty Skokie River and to improve habitat for many unusual wet prairie species such as the beautiful **Michigan Lily**. Read editor Anne Gilbert's wonderful description inside.

Volunteer efforts continue at LBOLA preserves, from **Eagle Scout projects**, to Red Hat volunteer days to LFHS independent science projects - the 225 acres managed by LBOLA continue to provide the Village with the many benefits of open space, wildlife habitat, educational opportunities and recreation. We appreciate **YOUR contributions** to this wonderful experiment in community volunteerism.

– *Larry McCotter*

News from the Rockland Wetlands!

LBOLA continued its climb to stratospheric popularity this summer when it was mentioned in the GazeboNews by a local passerby. When LBOLA volunteers cleared out the dense buckthorn at the corner of 176 and Greenbay in 2011 and 2012 they had no idea that they were allowing a colony of long-suppressed Shooting Stars (Dodecathion meadia) to bloom in its place. This eruption of wildflowers was appreciated enough to be praised in the GazeboNews this past June! The article thanks the volunteers who worked to clear the woods and then calls on others to follow LBOLA's lead and re-create beauty around them. Thanks Romy Lopat, and Thanks GazeboNews!

The article can be found at: <http://gazebonews.com/2013/06/11/minus-invasive-buckthorn-native-beauty-thriving-at-rockland-wetlands-in-lake-bluff/>



Resurgent Shooting Stars at Rockland Wetlands this spring.

Save the Date!

Join Us For Our Annual Winter Solstice
Celebration at the

LAKE BLUFF BEACH!

Saturday, December 21st at 4:15 pm

The Winter Solstice marks the year's shortest day, its longest night, and the beginning of winter. Whether you fear the oncoming cold or welcome the warmth of the fire, there could be few better places to spend the longest night than at the Lake Bluff Beach. Join us on Saturday, December 21st, just before sundown at 4:15. Dress for the weather. BYO. For additional information, please call the LBOLA warmline at (847) 234-2860, or go to lbola.org.

Lake Michigan Update

By Carol Russ

The “State of the Lake” conference in Sheboygan this fall addressed concerns with water quality, beach health, and sustainable communities – and not just sustainable human communities. I am no scientist, but on the working theory that a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing I will provide three talking points for you.

First, what’s your watershed? Most of us are in the Great Lakes Basin or the Des Plaines watershed farther west. For example, imagine a drop of water along our local sub-continental divide; this highpoint is generally along the old Green Bay Trail. That drop of water would either go downhill east into the Great Lakes watershed or downhill west toward the Skokie River’s watershed – which, since the reversal of the Chicago River, now leads to the Mississippi. The river’s flow was rerouted to St Louis in 1900 just to send our pollution somewhere else.

There’s a new Fed in town: The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a consortium of 13 federal agencies formed in 2010 to effectively concentrate action. Locally, GLRI has funded a just-completed ravine restoration in Lake Bluff, and two recent projects at Fort Sheridan were in partnership with the Army Corps to restore damaged habitat. This group also targets AOC’s, “areas of concern”, which include the Waukegan Harbor superfund site.

Have you heard of gullherders? A couple Chicago beaches are now using border collies to chase seagulls - with great results. The gulls are fleeing to calmer perches, and the dogs are ecstatic about their working conditions. The seagulls’ fecal deposits on the beach are reduced and the beach closings caused by E. coli bacteria have plummeted. So don’t ever feed the gulls, and feel free to chase a few yourself.



Eagle Scout Project

By Duncan Michaelis

If you take a stroll in the Carolyn Goetz Wetlands Preserve, you may find some new avian friends flying to and fro. Colorful wood ducks are native to this area but moved further south due to the development of their natural habitats. A local Scout, Duncan Michaelis of Lake Bluff Troop 42, wanted to change that. Duncan built and installed 15 cedar wood duck houses in the Carolyn Goetz Wetlands for his Eagle Scout project. These large wooden boxes are attached to aluminum poles 5 feet off the ground and stuffed with cedar bedding for nesting ducks. These boxes provide the ideal nesting environment as wood ducks prefer to nest in the insides of hollowed out trees. With luck you may yet see a resurgence of these beautiful waterfowl as they return to their restored habitat!

Treasurer’s Report

By Al Trefts

Our financial position is stronger this year than last year at this time. Thanks primarily to a generous donation from the Robert Sierks Charitable Trust, donations to LBOLA have increased this year. Our year-to-date expenses are slightly lower than last year. Our summer interns worked 1,094 hours in the preserves this summer, about the same as last summer’s 1,120 hours. Our volunteers, including Lake Forest High School student volunteers, so far have worked a total of more than 700 hours! Hopefully we will be able to burn the many brush piles we have collected in the Skokie River Prairie Reserve this winter and open up the vistas along the river banks even more.

As always, fundraising remains a high priority. So if anyone has ideas or suggestions for fundraising activities or for improving our communications efforts or would like to assist in these activities, please do not hesitate to contact Larry McCotter or myself at treasurer@lbola.org.

**Special Bluff Workday
December 29 at 9:00 am
at the top of the Bluff**

The LBOLA Board...

includes the following volunteers: Janet Murphy Ryan, Christabel Frederick, Liz Leutwiler, Al Trefts, Bill Nordeen, George Russell, Cyn Sansing Mycoskie, Janna Nugent, Karen Crotty, Nan Wick, Scott Gulson, Bo Harper and Larry McCotter

Intriguing Invasives at Inovasi

By Nan Wick

My husband, Ron and I spent an entertaining evening recently with an old friend visiting from out of town. We had previously known Mike Ielmini as the husband of the National Park Ranger who organized and ran several of our Sierra Club service trips at Big Bend Park in Texas. We knew Mike worked with the Forest Service concentrating on invasive species but had no idea that his august title was “National Invasive Species Program Manager”.

Over dinner at Inovasi we ticked off our favorite list of naughty plants around here, most of which he certainly agreed with. In addition to his work in the U.S., he has recently been abroad recommending policies to combat some very serious situations. In Kenya, where the presence of wildlife is essential to the economy, the habitat is being overrun by invasive species, some of which are poisonous and interfering with farming.

In Peru where there are no conservation laws, the U.S. is trying to help the government establish laws and regulations. Poaching meat for needed protein is one problem. Politics hinders conservation efforts, illegal logging persists, illegal mining creates mercury pollution, and the country lacks the resources to police the area.



Mike Ielmini of the U.S. Forest Service

Closer to home, Mike recommended a couple of sites for more information: www.invasives.org and www.bugwood.org.

Prairie Forb Profile – Michigan Lily

By Anne Gilbert

The Skokie River Prairie is home to an unusual wet-prairie forb (native wildflower) by the name of Michigan Lily (*Lilium michigense*) which is locally rare.

This summer the LBOLA interns were asked to protect the lilies in the Skokie Reserve from voracious deer and voles. Last summer, we were surprised and pleased to find 12 lilies in the Reserve. But this summer we were simply thrilled to see more than 30 lilies brightening up the Skokie view.

While we previously referred to these lilies as “Upside-down Tiger Lilies” and then by their now politically incorrect common name “Turk’s Cap Lilies”, we finally discovered that these were actually “Michigan Lilies”. It turns out that they are endangered in a couple states, and fairly rare in Illinois. So you can imagine how exciting it was to see these flowers multiplying in the Skokie.

Bright orange in color, the lilies were also unfortunately appealing as food to local deer. In an effort to promote these wet-prairie beauties the interns began caging the lilies. After hours of cage making, we are thrilled to say that many lilies survived the hungry wildlife.

At the rate they are multiplying, it could be that we have twice as many lilies next year as we did this year. On top of that, LBOLA volunteers recently began collecting their seeds to be spread elsewhere in our preserves. With a little patience we can make this rare forb a staple in our wet prairies.



LBOLA summer interns Anne Gilbert and Beep Trefts caged rare Michigan lilies to protect them from hungry marauding critters.

Go Shopping!!! And Benefit Open Lands in LB at LBOLA.ORG!

Shop from West Marine, Bass Pro Shops, Life is Good, Lionel Trains, Joseph A. Bank, Golfsmith, GameStop, Crocs, Corkeicle, Tractor Supply, and more.

From our home page at lbola.org, hit the Donate button, then shop online as you are already, no doubt, planning to do. This way you can benefit LBOLA without even thinking about it!

It’s a Win-Win!

Support the Efforts of Lake Bluff Open Lands!

Please use the enclosed remittance envelope to make your tax-deductible contribution today!



Lake Bluff Open Lands Association
P.O. Box 449
Lake Bluff, Illinois 60044
(847)234-2860

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LBOLA WINTER 2013-2014 VOLUNTEER WORKDAY SCHEDULE

Volunteer workdays are Saturdays or Sundays from 9:00 AM -12:00 Noon. Skokie Reserve & Lake Bluff Forest Preserve (LCFPD) dates begin at our parking lot on Hwy. 176, west of the water plant and east of Mariani. For details, call the LBOLA warmline 847-234-2860 or visit LBOLA.org for preserve locations.

Sunday	December 8	Skokie Reserve – meet at the Skokie Reserve parking lot
Saturday	December 21	LCFPD workday – meet at the Skokie Reserve parking lot
Saturday	December 21	Winter Solstice Celebration at the Lake Bluff Beach – 4:15 pm
Sunday	December 29	Lake Bluff bluff – Park at east end of E. Scranton or E. Center Ave.
Sunday	January 12	Skokie Reserve – meet at the Skokie Reserve parking lot
Saturday	January 18	LCFPD workday – meet at the Skokie Reserve parking lot
Sunday	January 26	Prairie Preserve at the western end of Belle Foret Drive
Sunday	February 9	Carolyn Goetz Wetlands Preserve
Sunday	February 23	Skokie River Prairie Reserve
Sunday	March 9	Skokie River Prairie Reserve
Sunday	March 23	Carolyn Goetz Wetlands Preserve
Sunday	April 13	Skokie River Prairie Reserve
Sunday	April 27	Earth Day Plantings – Rockland Wetlands