



the VOYAGEUR

SPRING 2015

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GROSSE ILE NATURE & LAND CONSERVANCY

VOLUME 23 ■ NUMBER 1

"The more high-tech we become, the more nature we need." — Richard Louv

UPCOMING EVENTS

FROG & TOAD SURVEY TRAINING GBU

Thurs, Apr 9 @ 7 pm

ANNUAL GINLC PROPERTY CLEAN-UP

Meet at Centennial Farm
Sat, Apr 18 @ 9 am

EARTH DAY! HEALTHY LAWNS w/GARY EICHEN

St. James Church
Wed, Apr 22 @ 6:30 pm

GARLIC MUSTARD PULL

Meet at Meridian Elementary parking lot
Sat, May 2 @ 9am

GBU / AIRPORT

Nature Area Open
Sundays, May 3 – Oct 25
1:00 – 4:00 pm

BIRDS OF THE BAY

Gibraltar Bay Unit
Sat, May 16 @ 9am

KIDS DISCOVERY

"Un-Natural" Exploration
Learn about plants & animals of the Gibraltar Bay Unit!
Sat, June 13 @ 10am

HABITAT HIKE

Gibraltar Bay Unit
Sat, July 11 @ 7pm



It's Time to Get Outside: GINLC Photo Contest

BY BARBARA THAYER

Eastern Fox Snake and Mallard by Barbara Thayer, Center Image by Joslyn LaCroix, Carlson High School 2014 entry.

Yes, it is time to get outside. Breathe deeply. Look around. Take a walk. Take a picture.

And encourage any young person you know to get out there, too. If that young person is a Downriver high school student, he or she can enter a picture in the GINLC photo contest, Take It Outside. Our goal with this contest is to encourage young people to appreciate our environment.

This year the categories for the contest are Waterways, Pollinators, and Wildlife. The deadline for entries is Wednesday, May 13 at

5:00 pm. Last year 55 students from seven area high schools submitted 104 photos. More will enter this year.

Last year's winning and honorable mention photos were displayed at Kroger and at IslandFest on Grosse Ile, Veterans Memorial Library in Trenton, Bacon Memorial Library in Wyandotte, and World Wetlands Day at Carlson High School in Gibraltar.

Look for the 2014-2015 winning photos on display this spring and beyond. Let's see each other out there!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTEST GO TO www.ginlc.org





Do You Have a Big Tree?

BY PAMELA A. FRUCCI

The GINLC and the Grosse Ile Historical Society are resurrecting a 50+ year old project for a new generation of Grosse Ile families – to survey and measure the major trees growing on the Island.

In 1963 Howard Harvey, then president of the Historical Society and one of its founders in 1959, wrote a letter to fellow founder Isabella Swan, which read: “It could be that the oldest living inhabitants of the Island are some of our forest trees. An inventory of some of the oldest might be of historical interest and their location and size could be reported to the society.”

The society enlisted the help of residents to send in information on the large trees growing on their property. A list was compiled in 1964 along with a map showing the trees’ locations. The list gave the species and circumference of the trunk four and a half feet from the ground. Twenty-two big trees were identified.

Some of the 1964 heritage trees are now gone but remaining is the champion Downy Hawthorn on Macomb and a Honey Locust on East River. And, fifty years later, some of the then-medium sized trees could be whoppers now, and worthy of being registered as heritage trees. Historic or heritage trees are recognized by the Township when they are registered by a viable organization such as the Conservancy or the Historical Society and meet the criteria. There are four possible categories: a memorial tree – a tree planted in honor of an individual or event; a historical tree – a tree deemed by the Historical Society to be of historical significance; an endangered tree – a tree that is on the state or federal threatened or endangered list; and a Grosse Ile Big Tree – a tree whose dbh (diameter measured at 4 ½ feet above existing grade) is 75% or more of the dbh of a designated Michigan Big



Family Math Fun — How Big is Your Tree?

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY KEITH FUSINSKI

The “Diameter at breast height,” or DBH, is the standard way to measure a tree’s diameter at 4 1/2 feet above the ground. Here’s how to measure the diameter:

You will need a measuring tape, a thumb tack, string, and some paper and a pencil.

1. With a measuring tape, measure 4 1/2 feet up the trunk of the tree from the ground. Use the thumb tack to mark the height on the tree.
2. Wrap a string around the tree trunk at 4 1/2 feet. Make sure the string is straight and tight around the trunk, and mark or cut the circumference, “C,” on the string.
3. Measure the length of string to get the circumference of the tree.
4. The formula for diameter is $D = C / \pi$ (Remember π is approximately 3.1415. Did everyone celebrate “pi day” last month?) Use the paper and pencil to do the long division — no calculators!

For more detail, and for complicated trees, visit <http://www.phytosphere.com/treeord/measuringdbh.htm>

Big Tree, continued

Tree of the same species.

The Township's Tree Ordinance allows homeowners to remove two trees per year on their property. The only way to save a historic or heritage tree is if it's registered with the township. Sadly, a 350-year-old oak was cut down on Fifth Street. Despite the efforts of concerned neighbors, only the tree stump remains. There was no way to save that tree because it was not registered. Registration protects heritage trees from destruction "unless and until the person has demonstrated that no other practical options exist," and then some form of replacement is required.

To reignite community passion about our heritage trees, the GINLC and GI Historical Society are teaming up to again survey the island. A Heritage Tree Committee has been formed to ID and protect historic trees. The plan is to again enlist the community to identify trees that should be saved from the chain saw.

Information on how interested residents can be involved in this project will be presented at the April 22 GINLC Earth Day program as well as posted on the Conservancy website: www.ginlc.org. The process to ID major trees is also posted there. Residents are encouraged to ID a tree that fits any of the four categories: historical, endangered, memorial, or a Grosse Ile Big Tree. Once identified, residents should take a photo of the tree or contact GINLC board member Eric Michael at 313- 995-6580 who will take the photo. These photos will be featured on the GINLC website in the future.

On Earth Day, Learn About Healthy Lawns!

BY BERT URBANI



Many dyed-in-the-wool environmentalists think that "environmentally friendly lawn" is an oxymoron, and, generally speaking, they're right. The typical American lawn receives a staggering amount of chemicals, most of them unnecessary, many of them toxic to species other than the target species (and humans!), and frequently at the wrong time and/or in the wrong quantities. What to do?

Never fear – the answer is here! The GINLC is happy to announce its 2015 Earth Day program on Healthy Lawns. The speaker will be Gary Eichen, a manager at Mike's Tree Surgeons in Troy, Michigan, and an expert in the field. Mr. Eichen will explain how, with proper practices, a healthy green lawn can be achieved while reducing or even eliminating the use of fertilizers and weed control chemicals. While this is important information for all homeowners, it is particularly critical for those of us on Grosse Ile and in the Downriver area, with the Detroit River so near. Last summer's drinking water crisis in the Monroe and Toledo areas should have been a wake-up call for all of us to redouble our efforts to protect our natural resources and especially

the world's largest supply of fresh water, the Great Lakes.

Mr. Eichen is a certified arborist with 25 years experience in plant health care and lawn care, an accredited trainer with the Michigan Dept. of Agriculture & Rural Development's Certified Pesticide Applicator Core Program, and an instructor in Plant Health Care and Lawn Care for the Michigan Green Industry Association (MGIA). As a member of the MGIA Technical Advisory Committee for the Healthy Lawn Care Program for Watershed Protection, he helped develop the program and will present it for our benefit. His remarks will help do-it-yourselfers, and also homeowners who hire a lawn service by advising what to look for in a lawn care company.

The evening will also include a presentation by the GINLC Heritage Tree Committee about the renewed effort to identify and register Grosse Ile's most majestic trees. Is one in your yard?

Join us at the Earth Day Healthy Lawns meeting on Wednesday April 22, at 6:30pm, at St. James Church on East River Road. For more information, contact info@ginlc.org or call 734-671-0125.

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In memory of
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The Meyer Family
Foundation

In memory of
Dr. Bruce Jones
The Jones Family

In memory of
Dave Coakley
Jane Emmerich

GINLC
Lifetime Membership
John Jackson

**Thank you for your
contributions!**



Kroger Cards

Remember to re-enroll your Kroger Plus card to benefit the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy! It's simple; it's painless; and it helps a lot! **Go to www.kroger.com/communityrewards** to enroll or re-enroll (you have to renew every year). Thanks!

Amazon-Smile

Don't forget to click on GINLC in Amazon-Smile when shopping on-line!

Reflections From the President

BY LIZ HUGEL

Spring is here and our volunteers have been working daily on GINLC projects. I can't thank them enough for all the detailed planning and work that has already been accomplished to meet our 2015 goals. To learn more, be sure to come to our Earth Day event on 4/22. Members will receive a small complimentary gift, along with lots of good information and discussion. We have a beautiful vision of a nature-rich island with nature-smart islanders who understand, in the words of author Richard Louv, "the transformative power of the natural world, and who balance the virtual with the real."

I am reminded frequently how inventions mimic or use bio-chemical or bio-physical features seen in nature, whether it's for water and dirt repellency that we see in the American lotus morphology, or the echolocation used by bats for high tech assistive devices for the blind. So let's take the time to get outdoors to enjoy those natural resources we have around us. And let's take the kids outdoors with us to get inspired, learn from Mother Nature and create some of those amazing memories we have at our doorstep. For a good article to prepare you, google "How to be a good digital citizen outdoors."

<http://blog.childrenandnature.org/2015/03/07/respecting-nature-how-to-be-a-good-digital-citizen-outdoors/>

Avoid Microbead Products — PROTECT THE DETROIT RIVER!

BY BERT URBANI

Usually Kroger is spot-on with the personalized coupons they send us in the mail, but recently one was WAY OFF. They sent us a coupon for a skin cleanser that contains microbeads, those tiny little balls of plastic that exfoliate your skin and then go down the drain, through the wastewater



treatment plant, into the river and into the fish and ducks that mistake them for food. Those microbeads that aren't eaten locally continue ever downstream where they become part of the plastic pollution that is threatening the oceans.

Recently U.S. Rep. Fred Upton (R-St. Joseph MI) and U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone (D-New Jersey) proposed bipartisan federal legislation to ban the sale and distribution of personal care products containing synthetic plastic microbeads, effective Jan. 1, 2018. Several states have already passed such legislation and there is an international effort to ban those items as well. More information is available at www.beatthemicrobead.org.

Many companies such as Unilever, Colgate-Palmolive, Johnson and Johnson and Crest have already stopped or are planning to stop using them in the future.

You can help by not buying these products. Look for "polyethylene" in the ingredients. You can also let the manufacturers know that you do not want microbeads in products you purchase, and ask your local retailers to stop selling these polluting products. There are plenty of other alternatives.

Spring Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ



It's a great way to get outside, enjoy your natural resources and contribute to the community

Spring marks the beginning of our work in the field and this Spring is a busy one.

Wetlands restoration work at the Hennepin Marsh Gateway will be completed by the middle of May with the planting of native grasses, flowers and trees. Invasive species such as phragmites, honeysuckle, buckthorn and garlic mustard will be removed.

Interpretive signage will be added to the observation platform at Hennepin Marsh Gateway and at the boardwalk traversing the Hennepin Marsh Gateway wetlands. Signs on the observation platform at the east end of Macomb, showing the islands in the Detroit River, will be replaced with new multi-colored signs. A sign relating the historical significance of the area east of Grosse Ile Parkway will be added to the waterfront park and a memorial plaque in honor of Dr. Bruce Jones, will be affixed to one of the boulders lining the shoreline at the park.

A general clean-up of all GINLC properties will take place on April 18th in conjunction with the Island-Wide Clean-up.

Spring also marks the beginning of our stewardship work at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. You can expect a number of significant changes to take place at the wildlife refuge this Spring and Summer (see article on Refuge Update).

We are always looking for volunteers to help with these projects. It's a great way to get outside, enjoy our natural resources and contribute to the community. If you would like to participate in these GINLC stewardship events, please email Peter Kantz at peterkantz@sbcglobal.net

Hennepin Marsh Wetlands NCS

Hennepin Marsh is home to several natural wetland communities including the Great Lakes marsh, wet-mesic flatwoods, and the one you are currently standing in, southern wet-meadow. These wetlands provide habitat for a variety of plant and animal life and are players in the water and nutrient cycles.

Habitat
Wetlands are home to plant and animal species that flourish in being in such wet conditions and provide important water storage and filtering services. Wetlands are home to many species of birds, including waterfowl, and fish. Many wetlands are also important areas for breeding ground.

Hydric Soils
Hydric soils, found almost exclusively in wetlands, are soils that are saturated with water and richly derived of organic. They have heavy rills and other wetlands in their history and contribute to the retention of water. The high levels of nutrients in the soil can be used for plant growth or they can escape back into the atmosphere in gaseous form, eventually returning the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles.

Wetlands and Water Quality
How wetlands work
Wetlands also play an important part in the quality of our water. They act as large sponges that store the flow of water towards rivers and lakes. As water flows from the wetlands, it accumulates many pollutants such as silt, pesticides, and herbicides. These water bodies then filter out pollutants, ensuring that our rivers and Great Lakes are clear and safe to drink.

Above: Grosse Ile High School students planted a crabapple tree in the science alcove last fall under the direction of GINLC Stewardship volunteers. Center & Right: Informational signs will be going up at Hennepin Marsh Gateway

NCS NATURAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

Native Design for Grosse Ile Nature Conservancy

Native Wetland Planting

Native Wetland Planting and Tree Screen

Key

Blue and Red (SOS)	Blue (SOS)	Red (SOS)
Blue (SOS)	Blue (SOS)	Red (SOS)
Blue (SOS)	Blue (SOS)	Red (SOS)
Blue (SOS)	Blue (SOS)	Red (SOS)

Plant List - Herbaceous

Plant List - Woody (Live Stake)



Winter Ways of the Bay

BY NATALIE RAY CYPHER, Interpretive Naturalist for GINLC

This past February 8 we held our “Winter Ways of the Bay” walk at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Even though the snow was up to our knees, we had an unusually “balmy” day in our “winteriest” of winters, with the temperature near 40 degrees F! Through our exploration we found many visible signs of wildlife, whether active or dormant. Rabbit tracks and scat were plenty, their trails leading to brush piles and burrows. Though rarely seen, winter is a great time to see the activities of our common and important local rodent, the Meadow Vole. We found and observed many of their tunnel networks through the snow and discussed how the meadow vole benefits from the snowpack.

Though insects are not active, their activities can still be observed in winter. We found several Praying Mantis egg cases along the trail, full of eggs and waiting for the arrival of summer. And while the calendar reads as winter until March, days have been getting longer since December, and the birds notice! We had several sightings of close-up, singing Black-capped Chickadees getting ready for spring – a welcomed surprise for a winter day. We are not the only ones looking forward to the warmer weather ahead!

There is always something to see at Gibraltar Bay – come explore this fascinating habitat with us on one (or all) of our spring and summer programs!

Naturalist Natalie Ray Cypher held the attention of a group of youngsters by showing how wildlife survives in harsh winter conditions.

Frog and Toad Survey – 2014 Results & 2015 Plans

BY NATALIE RAY CYPHER

Beginning in April and running through June 2014, GINLC held our second annual Frog and Toad survey. Ten sites within Grosse Ile were surveyed which were identified as potential frog habitat, with habitat types varying from marsh to pond to flooded woodland. Several types of habitats are surveyed, because different species of frogs are found in different types of habitat, with varying amounts of water. For example, the common American Bullfrog is usually found in a permanent body of water such as a pond or marsh, while the American Toad spends most of its life in moist woodlands or gardens.

Dedicated volunteers identify frog species at each site based on the breeding call given by the male attempting to attract a female. Last year, of the ten survey sites, four species of frog were identified at six sites. Species included the Western Chorus Frog in early spring, American Toad in later spring and early summer, and both the American Bullfrog and Green Frog in later summer. These results were similar to our 2013 survey, except that Gray Treefrog was not identified in 2014. In addition to frogs, observations of reptile species can be submitted as “extra” data for the survey. Reptile species observed in 2014 included Musk Turtle, Painted Turtle, Common Map Turtle, and Eastern Fox Snake (a threatened species in Michigan). Special thanks to our 2014 volunteers – our Frogs and Toads need folks like you!

We will continue to survey frogs and toads this season; however, we will focus our efforts mainly on the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (DRIWR). The training session for volunteers is currently scheduled for Thursday, April 9 at 7:00 pm, at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the DRIWR, subject to weather conditions. Registration required. For more information or to register contact Natalie Cypher, 734-624-7993 or natalieray27@gmail.com. HAPPY FROGGING!

Michigan is home to 13 native species of anurans (frogs and toads). There is concern about apparent declines and other population changes of several of these species. The Michigan Frog and Toad Survey was initiated in 1988 to increase our knowledge of anuran abundance and distribution and to monitor populations over the long term. — *Michigan Department of Natural Resources*



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FROGS AND TOADS?

Most frogs have long legs and smooth skins covered in mucus. Toads generally have shorter legs and rougher, thicker skins. And while toads generally lay their eggs in long strands, frogs lay their eggs in a cluster that resembles a bunch of grapes.

Check out: www.livescience.com/34432-frog-or-toad.html

COME TO THE TRAINING ON APRIL 9th TO LEARN MORE!



BASF Scientist Guest Speaker at GINLC Annual Meeting

BY DOUG THIEL

Michael Gerdenich, Senior Remediation Specialist at BASF Corporation was the featured guest speakers at the GINLC Annual Meeting in November 2014. His presentation, "Point Hennepin: Past, Present, and Future" was of great interest to many islanders. Mr. Gerdenich reviewed the history of legacy industrial operations at Point Hennepin, remediation and restoration activities undertaken by BASF Corporation over the past 20 years, and reviewed future planned property improvements and wildlife features. After completing his presentation, Mr. Gerdenich fielded numerous questions from the audience, which was highly appreciative of the opportunity to learn more about the site.

Special Thanks to
Our Corporate Sponsor
BASF Corporation

Conservationist of the Year

BY BERT URBANI

Peter Kantz was named the 2014 Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy Conservationist of the Year. It is always a difficult decision for the recognition committee because Grosse Ile is blessed to have many active people engaged in the preservation of nature and the education of our fellow citizens. While the 2014 Conservationist of the Year is a familiar face on Grosse Ile, his back may be even more familiar, as he is constantly laboring on some task that makes our physical surroundings greener and more accessible for all of us.

Perhaps Peter is best known and appreciated for "cracking the nut" that has stymied residents for decades – waterfront access. He was primarily responsible for the development of the Waterfront Park on East River Road at the foot of Grosse Ile Parkway, thereby creating the first official scenic public water access on the island, which is now enjoyed by residents throughout its season of use. He also was one of the prime organizers of and workers at the Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve on Meridian north of Bridge Road, which provides a waterfront observation deck on the west side of the island. Peter also guided the efforts of Eagle Scout Cody Docherty who installed the woodchip trail and educational signs at Intrepid Pond on Meridian, and he is very active in the ongoing habitat restoration efforts at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Refuge and the Airport Property.

Not content with awarding Peter the COTY award, we also elected him Vice President of the Conservancy, adding to the amount of time and effort he donates for the protection and improvement of Grosse Ile. Congratulations, Peter, on being recognized as the 2014 Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy Conservationist of the Year, and many thanks for your many contributions.



Grosse Ile is blessed to have many active people engaged in the preservation of nature and the education of our fellow citizens

ISLANDfest IS COMING!



Grosse Ile's famous family fun event, IslandFest, is right around the corner, May 29, 20 & 31. As always, GINLC is planning to be a part of this community tradition. Right now we are planning our "float" and our booth, and members and friends are welcome to join us. You are welcome to help work on the float, march with us in the parade on Saturday, and help staff the booth during the festival. Contact Eric Michael by phone 313-995-6580 or email info@ginlc.org for more information about participating.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Pamela A. Frucci is active in her community having been a township trustee or clerk for 20 years. She co-founded the Ile Camera in 1945 at age 13 and still writes a column for the paper. In 1974 she founded the Island Beautification Committee and still serves on the committee. As vice-president of the G.I. Alliance for the Arts, she has planned the summer Concerts on the Commons for the past 10 years. She's a volunteer at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Wildlife Refuge, the G.I. Historical Society, serves on the statewide board of both Scenic Michigan and Keep Michigan Beautiful. She is also secretary/treasurer of the Wayne Co. Council for Arts, History, and Humanities, and secretary of the G.I. Musicale. An avid recycler, Pam founded the Downriver Recycling Center in 1983, has had her last five old cars recycled, has given over 100 talks on environmental issues. The Fruccis put out almost no garbage on trash day!



Keith Fusinski is a toxicologist / human health risk assessor for the US EPA Superfund program. He is adjunct faculty for the Department of Clinical Laboratory Science at Wayne State University (WSU), where he did his undergraduate work. Keith has a PhD in Microbiology/Immunology from WSU. He also currently serves as the Junior Vice Commander at VFW Post 7310 on Grosse Ile.

Keith has been working on the island for almost seven years, but has only lived here for a little over three years. Keith and wife Kelly have two teenage children. Once they saw what Grosse Ile had to offer, they began looking for new ways to be involved in the community. They have always had a love of nature and feel that it should be protected, The Fusinskis appreciate that Grosse Ile gives them an opportunity to be involved, and GINLC is very grateful that Keith has chosen our organization as an outlet for his community service energy.



Jim Kenyon and his family have lived on the island for 20 years. Jim is an avid birder and gardener. He has been involved with his church (GI Presbyterian) in various leadership roles so he is familiar with volunteer organizations. He works for Michigan OSHA and is therefore interested in worker safety, and the well-being of people. He recently became a GINLC member and volunteer.



Greg Roginski moved to Grosse Ile 20 years after being born and raised in the Detroit area. He has a doctorate in chemical engineering from Wayne State University. He has worked at Chrysler as an automotive test engineer and for the last 33 years at BASF where he does process engineering. Ten years ago we invited him to join the Conservancy board to assist us with our website. He became our membership chairperson and served 3 full terms (9 years) and has had a sabbatical this past year. In his own words, Greg says he's "like one of the guys from The Big Bang Theory" a tv sitcom, but instead of reading comic books in his free time he helps the Conservancy. We're delighted that he has agreed to be nominated to return to the board.



Refuge Update

BY BERT URBANI & JODY DEMEYERE

The GINLC has long stewarded the property now known as the Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and continues to do so today in cooperation with the US Fish & Wildlife Service staff. GINLC coordinates the volunteers who work on invasive species removal and other projects at the GBU during most of the year, and Natalie Cypher (formerly Natalie Ray, congrats to Natalie and Paul on their recent wedding!) leads many nature programs there.

With the intense construction work limiting some of the events at the Refuge Gateway across the river, more attention and activity will be focused on the GBU this year. The US Fish & Wildlife Service staff of the DRIWR will be making some changes including adding split rail fencing along the southern shoreline, a spotting scope overlooking the bay, removing chain link fencing throughout the unit, replacing dilapidated birdhouses, rerouting the trail system – and in 2016, updating the observation deck and



“Creating a world-class destination of choice in southeast Michigan that will help make nature part of everyday urban life.”

informational kiosk to federal standards. Monthly Open Houses are still planned at the GBU on Sundays (May – October, weather permitting) from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. In addition, many public programs will be held at the GBU. Three programs are currently planned and additional ones will be added to the refuge calendar in the

coming weeks. Check the calendars on the Conservancy and DRIWR websites for info about events happening on East River Rd. (www.fws.gov/refuge/detroit_river/ - then click in Visit – Events Calendar)

The construction going on at the Refuge Gateway includes

OTHER REFUGE EVENTS...

ASIAN CARP FILM
Trenton Movie Theatre
Tues, Apr 28 @ 7pm

**OPEN HOUSE
AT HUMBUG MARSH**
Sun, May 2
7:30am – 3:00pm

**10th ANNUAL IWRA
BENEFIT DINNER**
Silver Shores, Wyandotte
Fri, May 8 @ 5-10 pm

**INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATORY BIRD DAY**
Lake Erie Metropark
Sat & Sun, May 9 & 10



Refuge, continued

the new Visitor Center, scheduled to open in fall 2016, and the world-class fishing pier and school ship dock, slated for fall 2015. Refuge Manager, Dr. John Hartig noted, "As the future site of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge's Visitor Center, the Refuge Gateway will welcome thousands of projected annual visitors and serve as a hub for outdoor recreation, including, fishing, birding, hunting, kayaking/canoeing, wildlife observation, environmental education, and interpretation in southeast Michigan."

These nature-focused amenities are "creating a world-class destination of choice in southeast Michigan that will help make nature part of everyday urban life." How lucky we are Downriver to have this in our own backyard!

Starving Ducks

BY BERT URBANI

Most Michigan residents agree this was another tough winter, but it was really tough for wildlife, particularly diving ducks. For the second year in a row, extreme cold caused rivers and lakes to freeze further into their centers, reducing the open water that ducks need to find food and survive. Diving ducks such as canvas-backs, redheads, scoters, long-tailed ducks and mergansers, as well as mute swans, are turning up dead in areas around the state and more will probably appear as the ice disappears. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is warning people not to go out onto any remaining ice to try and rescue the ducks as it could be dangerous, and also not to feed diving ducks bread or popcorn. That is not their natural food, which is zebra mussels and fish. Dabbling ducks such as mallards will eat those items, which are not healthy for them either, but they do not seem to be dying off.

The DNR does not expect this to make a significant dent in the population of diving ducks, and any reduction in mute swans would be beneficial since they are an invasive species.

If you find an injured animal, check the DNR's list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators to find someone to consult with, and receive the animal for rehabilitation. The website is <http://www.michigandnr.com/dlr/>.



LONG-TAILED DUCK BY WOLFGANG WANDER



"Land is the only thing worth workin' for, worth fightin' for, worth dyin' for, because it's the only thing that lasts."

Scarlett O'Hara's father, "Gone With The Wind"

MORE PROPERTIES FOR THE CONSERVANCY

BY INGO HASSERODT,
Vice President for Land Acquisitions

The Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy recently obtained three wooded properties from an estate on Gregory Drive on the west side of the Thorofare Canal. These properties are adjacent to two lots donated by Mr. and Mrs. Morse in 2002. The Conservancy now owns 1,154 feet of mostly wooded land on the west side of the Thorofare Canal, measuring a total of 2.36 acres.

Our properties on the east side of the Thorofare Canal total 790 feet with 1.77 acres. These properties include a remnant of a relatively rare sedge marsh, probably not existing anymore anywhere on the Detroit River, with the exception of another small remnant within the Grosse Ile Airport property.

Generally, these properties are not suitable for development, but are ecologically very valuable, serving the mission of the Conservancy, "to promote for public benefit the preservation, stewardship, and understanding of the natural resources in the Township of Grosse Ile and surrounding area."

For more information about donating or selling land to be protected, please email info@ginlc.org.



Earth Day

Celebrate our beautiful planet and learn how to grow a **Healthy, Green and Environmentally-friendly Lawn!**

Wednesday, April 22, 2015 (Earth Day), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

[Healthy Lawn Care Program for Watershed Protection](#)

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



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



To sign up for a work party call, PETER KANTZ
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