

the VOYAGEUR

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GROSSE ILE NATURE & LAND CONSERVANCY



VOLUME 23 ■ NUMBER 3

"All of our wisdom is stored in the trees." — Santosh Kalwar

UPCOMING EVENTS

LAST OPEN HOUSE FOR 2015

Sunday, Oct. 25th
From 1 pm to 4 pm
Refuge/Airport
28820 East River,
Grosse Ile



ANNUAL MEETING

November 14th
10 am at
Grosse Ile Golf &
Country Club



KIDS' DISCOVERY

OWL PROWL
Friday, Nov. 20th
7:00 pm at
Centennial Farm

Registration Required
Call Natalie Cypher
734-624-7993

Native Species of Grosse Ile Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*)

BY DOUG THIEL

CHARACTERISTICS: Shagbark hickory is a medium-sized tree averaging 70-80 feet tall and 12-24 inches in diameter although it may reach heights of 130 feet with a diameter of 48" on favorable sites. The Shagbark hickory is one of the fastest growing hickories, but grows more slowly than oaks. It can live up to 200-300 years. It is probably the most distinctive of all of the hickories because of its loose-plated bark. It takes approximately 40 years for a tree to reach seed bearing age.

The Shagbark hickory is probably the most distinctive of all the hickories.

SITES: Shagbark hickory can grow on a great variety of sites, but prefers well-drained soils. They quite often grow in proximity to oak trees. It is relatively common on Grosse Ile. It has intermediate shade tolerance.

RANGE: It is found throughout most of the Eastern United States from southeastern Nebraska and southeastern Minnesota through southern Ontario and southern Quebec to southern Maine southward to Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and eastern Texas. It is mostly absent from the southeastern and Gulf coastal plains and lower Mississippi delta areas.



— Continued on page 7

PHOTO BY RIALYNN63



Our mission is to protect and preserve our treasured open spaces, green corridors, and natural areas found throughout Southeast Michigan. From farm lands, creeks and rivers, to open fields, parks and recreation lands, each of these wild places is critical to our everyday quality of life. Join us to help protect our true nature, now and forever.

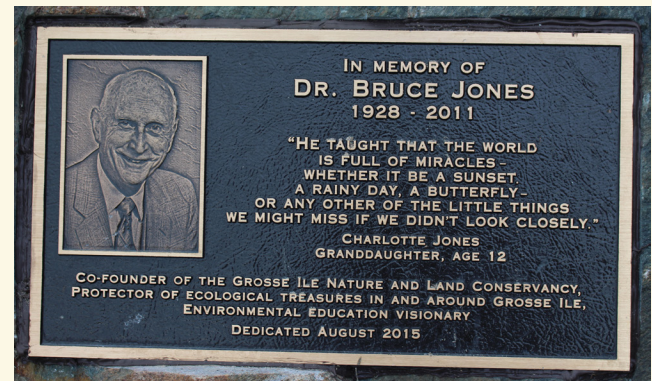


Reflections From the President

BY LIZ HUGEL

Fall has arrived and we're busy as ever finishing up projects and starting to plan for new ones. We hope that you'll respond to our membership renewal letter with a donation to support our conservation efforts and future projects on Grosse Ile. Please take the opportunity to join us at our upcoming annual meeting on Saturday, November 14th to learn more. Although we've accomplished a lot this year, there's still so much to be done, and as always "too little time"! We have several projects in mind for 2016 and once we get through our fall chores, membership and stewardship activities, we'll be able to start planning.

In August we were delighted to host the family of the late Dr. Bruce Jones for a dedication at the memorial constructed in his honor at Sunrise Park, the small waterfront park at the east end of Grosse Ile Parkway. It was a joy to hear more stories about Dr. Jones and to be reminded of his passion and dedication in preserving the natural beauty of Grosse Ile for future generations.



In addition to our stewardship and open house activities at the refuge this September, Conservancy volunteers partnered with the Grosse Ile Rotary to assist with their Tour de Ile fundraising event. Our board member Carol Machuga worked diligently on the Rotary committee to put together a terrific event where a half dozen "nature highlights" were stopping stations for the bicyclists on the tour. There were over 300 cyclists and many of them visited both our Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve at the north end as well as the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Wildlife Refuge at the southern end.



PHOTOS BY PHIL PELLETT

Left top: "Bruce's Rock" was unveiled by Liz Hugel. **Left bottom:** Congresswoman Dingell told us that John Dingell and Bruce were comrades in arms, working for decades to protect the environment. She spoke of Bruce's passion and commitment, and his belief that we should leave the earth in better shape than when we found it, for the sake of future generations. **Center:** Dr. Jones's family. **Right:** Reverend Conley prayed that Bruce's memory live on within us and that visitors to the park experience the spirit he left with us.



Heritage Tree Project Underway

BY PAMELA A. FRUCCI

The GINLC Committee to Identify and Protect Heritage Trees asked residents to submit the forms that identify historic, endangered, memorial, and big trees on their property by Oct. 1, but the forms can be turned in to chair Pam Frucci at 24531 Hickory Circle throughout the year. Those trees on forms already collected will be presented to the township board to be listed in the Tree Ordinance as protected trees. Listed trees cannot be cut down unless there is a compelling reason, and then there is a stipulation that replacement trees must be planted in their place.

At the suggestion of Ted Fournier, who heads the Cable Department for the township, the Committee was asked to line up an Eagle Scout candidate to do a documentary that involves the 350-year-old oak tree that was cut down on Fifth Street. TNT, the tree company which handles maintenance of Open Space on the Island, has equipment to cut a three-inch slice off the top of the remaining stump. The Scout would mark on the rings of the tree events in Grosse Ile's history. Then the segment of the historic tree would be mounted where it would be visual to the public. Wayne Sawka, an Island Boy Scout, has volunteered to handle the project and at this writing is attempting to secure permission from the property owner so that the project can go forward.

Heritage Trees on You Tube

BY BERT URBANI

*Grosse Ile's talented Cable TV director, Ted Fournier, and crew worked with Heritage Trees Committee members this summer to create a short YouTube video about the Heritage Tree Program. Members and friends measured a mammoth Cottonwood tree on Hickory Island to demonstrate the measuring technique and urge residents to nominate their tree(s) for protection. **Go to our website at www.ginlc.org and click on the Heritage Tree button to find program information, the video link and the tree nomination form.***



Healthy Lawns & Gardens F is for Fall and Fertilizer

BY BERT URBANI

FALL IS FERTILIZER TIME! If a soil test has shown that your soil is deficient in nutrients, now is the time to apply an environmentally friendly fertilizer. Do not apply fertilizer willy nilly, and do not allow your lawn care company to dump chemicals on your lawn unless they are needed.

Slow-release fertilizer:

- Natural Organic fertilizer; or
- Synthetic fertilizer with 40% slow release nitrogen
- Free of all pesticides.

Low or No phosphorus fertilizer:

- Ratio of nitrogen-to-phosphorus (N-P) which is equal to or greater than 5:1

Is not a weed and feed type product:

- Spot treatment of weeds is recommended



Kathy Levillier and Frank Moore stand by their impressive Hackberry tree, a candidate for protection under the Heritage Tree Program.

EDUCATION CORNER



Delray Visitors Enjoy Nature

The Conservancy once again hosted the summer campers from the Delray Community Center. Board member Art Payette worked with Refuge Ranger Jennie Braatz and lots of volunteers to present the children with a memorable outing in nature.



GINLC Now on VolunteerMatch

The Monday GBU Stewardship events are now posted as a volunteer opportunity on VolunteerMatch.org. The website is a great way to find ways to make our communities better! **Tell your friends!**



BRUCE MARLIN

A Recap of Summer Fun at the Gibraltar Bay Unit

BY NATALIE CYPHER

This past summer was a great year for GINLC programs at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. Beginning with our early June program, “Nature of the Bay,” we learned about the characteristics and importance of Cattails, Dogwood, and Map Turtles, just to name a few, through riddles and puzzles. We were especially lucky to watch a pair of Eastern Phoebe, a local bird species in the Flycatcher family, feed their young in the nest they built on the kiosk at the trailhead.

In July, we focused specifically on the habitats found in Gibraltar Bay during our evening Habitat Hike. We learned that “sedges have edges,” in our vernal pond, compared some scat specimens left behind on the trail, and had spectacular views of two summer Gibraltar Bay residents – an Osprey, sometimes called a “fish hawk” because of its eating habits, and the seldom seen but often heard Pied-billed Grebe, a duck-like bird that frequents the Bay. Early in August, we focused on the “mosquito hawk,” more commonly known as the Dragonfly. We learned about and observed their amazing flight capabilities as well as their voracious appetites for small, biting insects. A beautiful, freshly molted Green Darner dragonfly posed nicely for photographs.



GABRIEL GONZÁLEZ



Later in August we took our annual walk down to the American Lotus Bed to observe this beautiful flower during its peak bloom time (though they were a tad late this year!). We learned the importance of the Lotus to the habitat and the characteristics of the plants' leaves that create the "lotus effect", which scientists are learning to mimic to create new innovative materials. Although the program focused on plants, we could not pass up the opportunity to observe a female Monarch while she laid her eggs on the underside of Milkweed leaves that grow along the path.

Finally in early September we had some fun observing and catching the insect life found along the trails. There was certainly no shortage of grasshoppers, and no shortage of children enjoying the age old activity of "catching bugs". Come join us for our fall Owl Prowl, and stay tuned for next year's programs as well!

Top left: Observers saw a Green darner dragonfly during the Mosquito Hawk program. **Right:** Walkers on the way to the Lotus saw a Monarch lay an egg on a Milkweed leaf. **Center:** Visitors gathered around Nature Interpreter Natalie Cypher at the start of our Incredible Insects program. **Bottom:** The grasshoppers were plentiful and cooperative in the meadow!

Stewardship Summary

BY PETER KANTZ

Macomb Observation Platform has a new addition. GINLC recently installed a new sign on the observation platform at the east end of Macomb Street. The sign details the islands, coast-lines and river channels that are viewable from the platform.



Rock Gardens at the Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge were originally constructed by now-retired board member Margarete Hasserodt in the 2000s with limestone rocks excavated during the island's sewer construction. Over the years they became overgrown, lost and forgotten. This summer, restoration of the rock gardens was begun with removal of the overgrowth and



cultivation of the soil, preparing it for planting with native species.

Next spring should see the gardens returned to their former glory, thanks to volunteers such as the Dubnicka family. The Dubnickas are new residents of Grosse Ile. Welcome and thank you for volunteering!

Andy and Dawn Dubnicka, worked on the GBU rock gardens with their 3 children, Joshua, Adilyn, and Ryan.

Sunrise Park, at the eastern end of Grosse Ile Parkway, was enjoyed by residents of all ages this past summer. The park offers beautiful views and a place to picnic or just sit and enjoy nature. A viewing scope, wildlife signage, bench, patio, memorial boulders, trees, native vegetation and flowers have been added to the park over the past 2 years by GINLC. High water levels and the ever increasing number of people using the park have created erosion issues caused by wave action and foot traffic. GINLC will assist the Township in addressing these issues to ensure that the park remains a viable community asset.



The Dr. Bruce Jones memorial plaque on a boulder during high water (left) and low water (right).

2016 GINLC Nature & Wildlife Photo Contest for local high school students is underway

New categories for 2016:

- Patterns in Nature
- Waterways
- Strength & Fragility in Nature

Get the teenagers outdoors to tune their observation skills, enjoy nature, make memories & take some pictures to share with us!

Do you want to be a GINLC Board Member?

The GINLC is always looking for interested, active members with fresh ideas to join the board of directors. Elections will be held for the 2016 board at the Annual Meeting on November 14. If you are interested in taking that step for greater involvement and participation in your Conservancy, contact Peter Kantz, Nominations Committee chair, at peterkantz@sbcglobal.net or 734-676-8370. Or if you're interested in getting more involved, but not quite at the board level, consider joining one of our committees – Stewardship, Membership, Education, Communications, Heritage Trees, Healthy Lawns & Gardens, or Land Acquisition – and email info@ginlc.org.

Nature's Pesticide

BY INGO HASSERODT

Although we may think that pesticides are a human invention, the fact is, many plants contain pesticides to protect themselves from insects and herbivores.

Our main food staple, the potato, produces the powerful pesticide solanine. Large amounts of it are lethal to humans. Potatoes are actually marketed with the least content of solanine in mind. The solanine is mostly directly under the skin, so peeling the potato removes most of it. Boiling the potatoes removes most of the remaining solanine; the water should be discarded and not used further to prepare vegetables.

Under no circumstances should potatoes that turn green in storage be eaten without removing all the green parts; they are loaded with solanine. French-frying also removes the solanine, since it is absorbed by the grease.

Of course solanine should not prevent us from enjoying one of our most nutritious foods, our beloved potatoes.



Tomato-Potato?

BY RICHARD JAURON, *Iowa State University Department of Horticulture*

Occasionally gardeners are surprised to find small, round, green, tomato-like fruit on their potato plants. These fruit are not the result of cross-pollination with tomatoes. They are the true fruit of the potato plant. The edible tubers are actually enlarged, underground stems. Normally, most potato flowers dry up and fall off the plants without setting fruit. A few flowers do produce fruit. The variety 'Yukon Gold' produces fruit more heavily than most varieties.

The potato fruit are of no value to the gardener. Potato fruit, as well as the plant itself, contain relatively large amounts of solanine. Solanine is a poisonous alkaloid. The small fruit should not be eaten. Since potatoes don't come true from seed, no effort should be made to save the seed.

<http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/hortnews/2004/7-2-2004/tomatopotato.html>



Paul Gloor snapped this photo of the DIA reproduction, Solitude by Jean-Leon Gerome, at the St. Anne's Chapel parking lot on E. River Rd. The painting was on display along with 6 other DIA Reproductions from August through September. Great job lining up the horizons! Do you have a cool photo to share?

Donations Received October 2014 – September 2015

BASF Corporation	Sylvia Elm	Patricia Lukasik	Barbara Rateick
Grosse Ile Garden Club	Jane Emmerich	Rosie Luxa	Lynn Raubolt
LifeLong Family Dentistry	Shaun & Krista Ewbank	Carol Machuga	John & Nancy Repp
PricewaterhouseCooper	Susan Filkins	Mary Manners	Peter & Anne-Marie Rock
Ralph's Lawn Equipment	Jack & Pam Frucci	Bruce & Dorene Markwardt	Gregory Roginski
Sav-On Drugs	Keith & Kelly Fusinski	Myra McInerney	Jon & Lori Rumley
Frank & Mary Agosti	James & Phyllis Gandol	Ray & Courtney McNeill	John & Mary Ellen Sanok
Marvin & Elaine Aho	Walt & Phyllis Geist	Meyer Family Foundation	Armando & Barbara Sardanopoli
Gail Albin	Chris Gierczak	Eric & Jean Michael	Ann Schiebner
Edward & Judith Allard	Paul Gloor	Douglas & Janine Milkins	Ron & Yi-Chia Schmaeman
Josephine & John Altstetter	Dr.'s Greg Goyert & Marcie Treadwell	Eric & Paige Miller	A. John Schweickart
Marcia Anderson	Valerie Grant	Ronald & Gayle Mitchell	Tony & Rhonda Severyn
Eugene & Ann Anderson	JoAnne Gronlund	Dr. Frank & Deborah Mitek	Mike & Kathy Shields
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Ronald & Cynthia Baird	Dr. Brian & Katie Hartwell	David & Carol Morse	Patricia Smart
Brian & Michelle Bartlett	Don & Mildred Hartwell	William Morse	Richard & Marie Snyder
Egidio Basso	Ingo & Margarete Hasserodt	Victoria Murphy	Clyde & Ilene Starks
Dianne Batch	Stacee Heim	Robert & Elizabeth Myrick	Wanda Stevenson
Drs. John & Marilyn Belamaric	Bill & Pat Heinrich	Jan Nagel	Katherine Strain-Benton
Jim & Patti Bennett	Joan Hemsworth	Daniel Novrocki	Joan & Chuck Strickler
Joseph Berkey	Jagdish & Rekha Hodarkar	Dennis & Pat O'Brien	Joe & Lena Susin
Adam & Joyce Bickel	Collie Hooper-Yan	Anne O'Connell	Barbara & Ralph Thayer
Lola Boyd	David Howell	Vincent Odom	Doug & Cari Thiel
Jennifer & Scott Brown	Charles & Dolores Howey	Matthew & Elizabeth O'Donnell	Y.C. & Hema Trivedi
Kathleen Campbell & Robert Summers	Ed & Hannelore Hughes	Kara & Kevin O'Reilly	Joyce Turin
Wayne & Damayanti Chambers	Jim & Teri Hunter	Peter & Mary Ann Owens	Roberta Urbani & John Leon
Nancy Clark	Doug & Jodi Hura	Cheryl Pachuta	Ted & June Van Os
Deedie & Bill Clauss	John Jackson	Gerry Page	Timothy Vellmure
Patrick & Barbara Coakley, Sr.	Emily & Jim Jackson	Dominic & Liz Palazzolo	Jack & Jo Wood
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James & Marjory Conley	Blair & Gordon Jones	James & Elaine Parker	Scott & Wendy Wright
Joseph & Janet Connors	Peter Kantz	Arthur & Doreene Payette	Doug Yardley
Margaret Cook	Ted & Nancy Karmazin	Philip & Marie Pellett	Christopher & Sheena Zawistowicz
Natalie Cypher	Katherine Kerr	Fred Pepper	Keith & Lois Zook
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Elizabeth Hugel & Manfred Egerer	Barbara Leeper & Frank LeFeuvre	Bob & Karen Ranka	Ryan Robinson
	David Lixey	Erik & Carey Ranka	

THANK YOU! Please advise if your name was omitted or misspelled so that we may correct our records.

Shagbark Hickory, continued from cover

HUMAN USES: The wood is heavy, hard and strong, making it perfect for tool handles, furniture and flooring. It is also used to give smoked flavor to meats. Historic uses included bow-wood and wheel spokes for carriages and carts. Native Americans crushed the nut, using the oil for cooking and the resulting flour for bread. Hickory is a favored fuel wood as it has a high heat value, burns evenly and produces long-lasting steady heat. The bark can also be used to make a syrup.

WILDLIFE USES: The sweet, delicious nuts of the shagbark hickory are an important form of mast for many types of forest wildlife, including squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, turkeys, mallards, wood ducks, grosbeaks, woodpeckers, blue jays and nuthatches.

VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES ON GROSSE ILE: Look for shagbark hickory trees on many of the Grosse Ile Open Spaces and Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy parcels.



GINLC ANNUAL MEETING is NOVEMBER 14th

**SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 14th**
10 am to noon
Grosse Ile Golf &
Country Club

PRESENTATION
by **Bob Burns**
Detroit River Keeper
Friends of the
Detroit River



The Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy will hold its annual membership meeting on Saturday, November 14th from 10 – 12 noon at the Grosse Ile Golf and Country Club. Conservancy members will review progress on a wide variety of projects that have been undertaken and will discuss some that are planned for the future.

Bob Burns, the Detroit River Keeper will be the guest speaker. Bob will give a general overview of the projects that the Friends of the Detroit River and the Detroit River Public Advisory Council are working on in the Detroit River with emphasis on the upcoming Stony and Celeron Island projects in the lower river and plans envisioned for the South Hennepin Marsh.

*All residents of Grosse Ile are cordially invited.
A complimentary continental breakfast will be available.
This is your chance to learn about the various
projects & activities that the Conservancy is working
on to improve the quality of life on Grosse Ile.*

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

To make a
donation call,
JOHN LEON
734-671-0125

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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*

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