

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

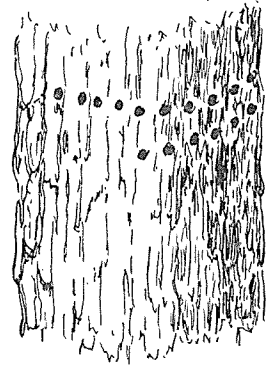
Spring 1972

WHAT TO SEE

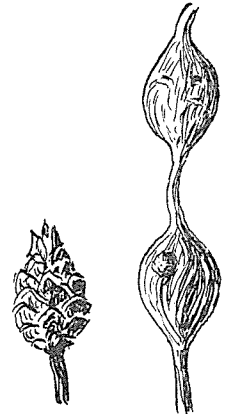
HOLES!!!

Fox holes, worm holes, snake holes; ... holes that are lairs, escape entrances and exits too; ... holes in trees, in mud, in banks, in stems, and leaves; ... holes for winter sleep, for nests, for food; ... holes made by insects, reptiles, mammals; ... holes ... seen along the Path all year. But some are especially associated with spring.

One sign of spring is the appearance of a line of new dripping holes in the trunks of some trees. The *sapsucker* has returned from the South!! He usually drills or picks holes in a row, moves on to another tree, and when the sap has started to flow, returns to the first tree to "suck" the sap. If you see these holes while they are oozing you may get a bonus, a glimpse of the *Mourning cloak butterfly*. It hibernates in protected places such as under old logs (holes?) and comes out very early in spring. It is especially attracted to the sap of the sugar maple.



You do not have to be particularly observant to notice the abnormal plant growths called *galls*. They can be seen all year but it is in spring that the holes appear. The bulbous gall of the goldenrod is caused by a fat grub that lives through the winter inside. In the spring it eats its way out and emerges as a fly. The larger and ragged hole in the illustration was not made by the insect but by a hungry bird. The strange willow gall that resembles a pine cone is the winter home of a gnat. It comes out in the spring as a tiny two-winged insect.



If you are fortunate, you may find a queer-looking bird's nest, roofed over and with a side entrance. This recycled nest is the home of the *white-footed deer mouse*. If he is not in residence and you can investigate his quarters, you will probably find the shells of his food, frequently the pits of the black cherry ... with another hole.



Another spring hole is the "chimney" of mud made by the *crayfish*. This column of mud surrounds the entrance to the burrow in which it lives.



It is with great pride that we announce the honor given to our president *William Nemec*. Following is a quotation from the *United Airlines Cockpit*.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Captain W. S. Nemec - ORD

With the demise of the Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railroad, a group of interested citizens of DuPage County, Illinois banded together to create a walking path over the former right-of-way. The group selected the name "Prairie Path" for this strip of land some 30 miles in length.

Overcoming countless obstacles in the push to industrialize the site, Captain Nemec and his group, the Prairie Path Committee Board of Directors which he served for seven years and directed as its President the last three, succeeded in obtaining national status. In May, 1971, Prairie Path became a National Trail and will be a continuing open area in a rapidly developing metropolitan county.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PATH

1. *The DuPage County Board of Supervisors* has passed an ordinance banning the use of the Path for all motorized vehicles except "The use, operation and parking of authorized emergency motor vehicles, law enforcement motor vehicles, utility company motor vehicles, and motor vehicles of the DuPage County Highway Department or other authorized highway authorities." This means no minibikes, no motorcycles, no snowmobiles! Violators, upon conviction, shall be fined. Please help us by reporting violations to the sheriff's office.
2. *The Status of Kane County*. The State of Illinois has completed the purchase of much of the abandoned C.A.&E. right-of-way in Kane County. A 20-year lease between the State and the Kane County Forest Preserve has been signed by *Erwin Romke*, *Forest Preserve Commission* president, and sent to Springfield. When the State has completed execution of the lease, the Path will extend to the Fox River on the Elgin and Aurora branches and on the old Batavia spur, with the exception of those areas under private ownership. While the County will retain overall supervision of the trail, park districts and the City of Elgin will be granted sub-leases to those tracts lying in their jurisdiction. The Illinois Prairie Path Board will act in an advisory capacity.

ACTIVITIES

Members Walks. Paul Mooring and Bob Irwin have made the plans for four walks this spring. April 1 - A ten-mile hike. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Courthouse parking lot in Wheaton. April 29 - A three-mile nature walk. Meet at Army Trail Road in Wayne at 10:00 a.m. May 20 - A bird walk. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the intersection of Geneva and County Farm Roads. June 11 - A 20-mile bicycle ramble. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Members' Room, 616 Delles Road, Wheaton. *Mark your calendar!*

The winter class held in the Members' Room (see winter *Newsletter*) was attended by ten men and women. We believe that it was a valuable experience. If you think you would like to attend such a class at some time in the future -- a class for leaders, not children -- write to us to express your interest.

As this Newsletter goes to press, we have 999 paid members. We can make it 1,000 if you will get a friend to join.