

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1988

WHAT TO SEE...A POND

There is something beguiling in the term *wilderness*, and in summer many of us make vacation plans to experience one. But need a wilderness be vast and far away? It is defined by Webster as "a tract or region uncultivated...".

Walk northwest along the Path from Lincoln Street in Wheaton and round the curve. From the bridge over a little stream you can look south over extensive lawns and north over a tiny wilderness in "our own back yard". Some call it *Goose Island* and some *Lincoln Marsh*. Geologists might call it a glacial swale, a depression due to irregular deposition by the melting ice. Naturalists call it a filling lake, and the neighborhood children call it a fish-pond.

The area on the other side of the Path, to the north-east, is quite different. It is a wide, peaty marsh and it is probable that the pond we are considering is due, at least in part, to the fill laid for the C.A.&E. railway.

This pond has much to offer.

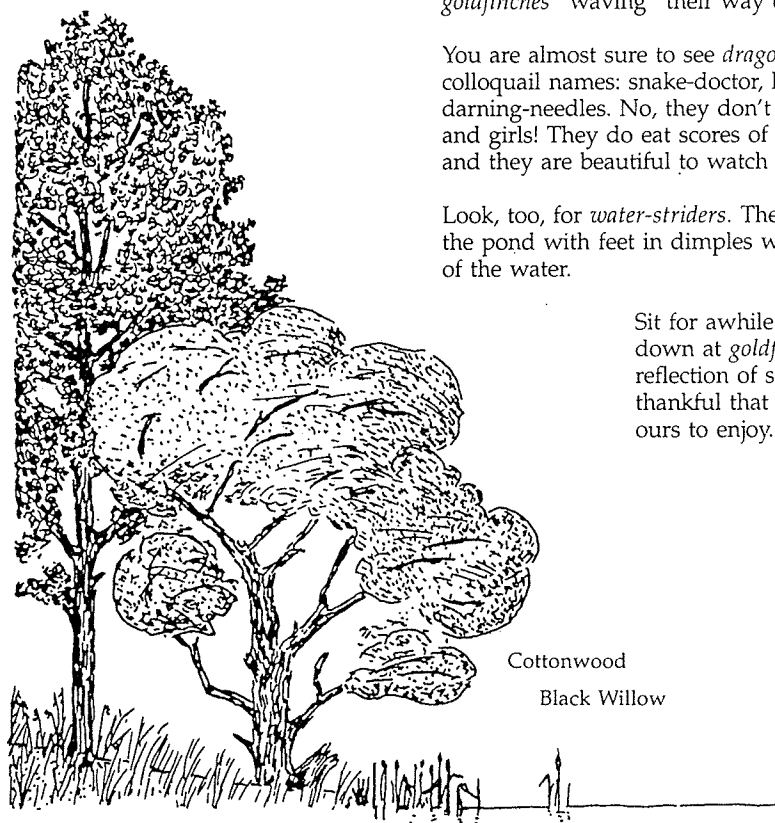
For the naturalist it is a picture of plant succession, outward from the submerged and floating vegetation, through *cattails*, *iris*, and *marsh grass* to *willows* and finally to *trees* that are at home on drier land.

There is full measure here for the bird-watcher. On a day last May it was teeming with birds: many *song-sparrows* and *cardinals*, *robins* and an *oriole* singing, a *mallard duck* splashing, *red-winged blackbirds* in abundance, probably nesting, and *goldfinches* "waving" their way down the Path.

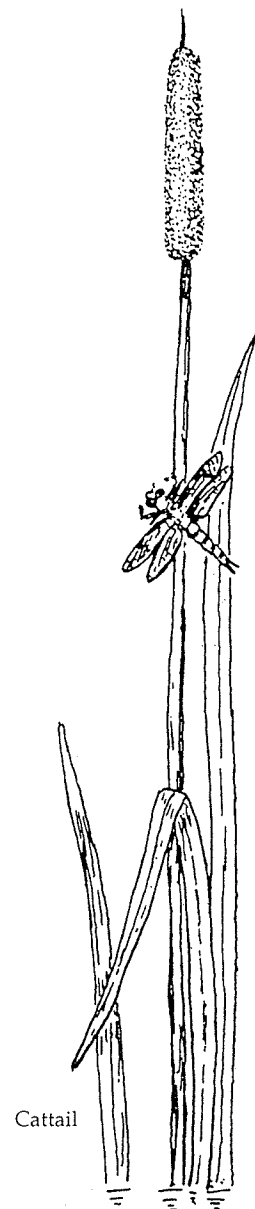
You are almost sure to see *dragon-flies*. They have many colloquial names: snake-doctor, horse-stingers, and Devil's-darning-needles. No, they don't sew up ears of naughty boys and girls! They do eat scores of insects, including mosquitoes, and they are beautiful to watch in their rapid, darting flight.

Look, too, for *water-striders*. They skate over the surface of the pond with feet in dimples without breaking the surface of the water.

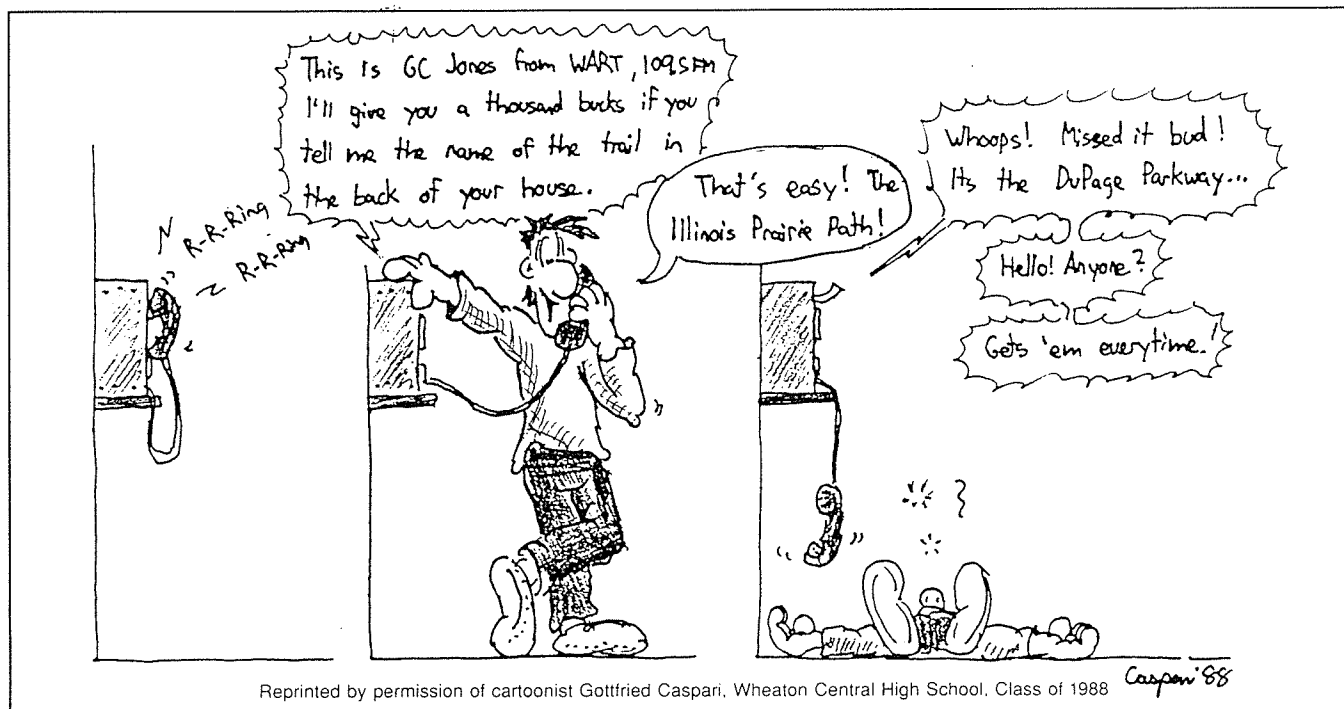
Sit for awhile at the water's edge and look down at *goldfish* and *turtles* and at the reflection of sky and clouds and be thankful that this bit of wilderness is still ours to enjoy.



Cottonwood
Black Willow



Cattail



Letters...We Get Letters...

Friends of the Illinois Prairie Path have been writing letters to certain key DuPage County Board members and sending copies to the IPP office in Wheaton. These letters urge the DuPage County Board to pass a resolution officially recognizing that Illinois Prairie Path, the historic, popular name of the ten-foot-wide trail on the DuPage Parkway, is also the legal name of the trail. To these requests, however, Richard Carlson, chairman of the county board highway committee, continues to reply only in a form letter, several copies of which have been forwarded by our friends to the office in Wheaton. Mr. Carlson writes, "...we do not feel there is a need to change official county legal documents which have been in place since 1969 to reflect a name change from the DuPage Parkway to the Illinois Prairie Path." This curiously unresponsive statement mystifies everyone. It is perfectly true that the name DuPage Parkway was given, by virtue of a 1969 resolution of the DuPage County Board, to those portions of the entire CA&E Railway corridor averaging a hundred feet in width, purchased by DuPage County in 1967. However, it is impossible to understand why Mr. Carlson insists on misstating our friends' request to name *only* the ten-foot-wide trail *on that corridor* and *not* change the name of the DuPage Parkway at all.

Pursuing the name question further, many loyal supporters have also been writing to Jack T. Knuepfer, chairman of the DuPage County Board, to tell him how important the Illinois Prairie Path name is to the people of DuPage County. They, too, have been sending copies to our office. An excellent example is the letter from Lucie Kajiwara, Glen Ellyn, longtime member of Violet Garden Club. Her club holds one of the oldest continuous organizational memberships in The Illinois Prairie Path, dating from 1967. Mrs. Kajiwara and other members of Violet Garden Club helped clean up the Illinois Prairie Path and the entire right-of-way in Glen Ellyn during the early years when the corridor was little more than a community dump. She sums up the feelings of a lot of people when she writes:

Mr. Jack T. Knuepfer, Chairman
DuPage County Board
421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Dear Mr. Knuepfer,

As a member of the Violet Garden Club of Glen Ellyn, I firmly believe that official recognition of the Illinois Prairie Path as the name of the 10-foot-wide trail on the DuPage Parkway is long overdue.

I am in favor of the DuPage County Board passing a resolution officially naming the trail ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH.

The members of our club, as well as other organizations such as Sierra Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church groups, and countless local residents have spent endless hours helping to maintain the path as volunteers.

As the work of May Watts, who founded the trail, is an important legend in the history of this area, we would appreciate your serious consideration and support of the above-mentioned resolution.

Very truly yours,

Lucie Kajiwara

Editor's Note: Many letters to Chairman Knuepfer are needed to save the Illinois Prairie Path name. *Please write* and send a copy to the Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, Illinois 60189.

Miles of Smiles

"It was a fun day," reports Esther Cryderman, Illinois Prairie Path board member who coordinated the local celebration of the first Illinois Trail Appreciation Day on May 7. She handled publicity for the event and also arranged for volunteers to man a booth in Volunteer Park, Wheaton, south of the famous bridge, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The volunteers were: Nancy Becker; Bill and Jean Booth; Esther and Lyn Cryderman and their four children Jesse, Emma, Molly and Eli; Alice Franzone; Steve Hagar; Bob and Bonnie Hargis; and Jean Mooring.

A steady stream of path users stopped to chat, look at the map in the kiosk, or get a drink of water from the new Helen Turner Memorial Fountain. All passers-by received a free guide to thirty-one Illinois bike trails published by the Illinois Department of Conservation. Each guide entitled its holder on Trail Day to various freebies, such as a sundae or soft drink from participating

merchants, including: the White Hen Pantry and the Convenient Store, both located along Liberty Street, Wheaton; Inga's Sweet Shop and Tiffany's Parlor, Glen Ellyn; Prairie Path Delicatessen, Elmhurst; and Triffany's Restaurant, Rte. 59 and IPP, Naperville. Many bikers and hikers also purchased IPP trail maps, patches and T-shirts as well as Helen Turner's informative booklet *The Illinois Prairie Path — A Guide*. The final event of the day was a slide show, "The Story of the Illinois Prairie Path — How Volunteers Built a Trail", presented by Jean Mooring to a small but enthusiastic group seated amid the prairie plants on the embankment at the south end of Volunteer Bridge. All agreed that Illinois residents deserve (and should work for) many more great trails like ours.



Bill and Jean Booth and Steve Hagar at Trail Day information table watch Don Pellico try out new Helen Turner Memorial Fountain.



Esther Cryderman (seated left) answers a father's question while his son gets a cool drink of water.

Helen Turner Memorial Fountain Installed

On April 29, the City of Wheaton Public Works Department put in place the drinking fountain at Volunteer Park, which had been purchased with funds donated to The Illinois Prairie Path by the family and friends of Helen Turner, Path co-founder. The fountain's clean and simple lines harmonize well with the site. Manufactured by Murdock, Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio, the fountain is an anti-freezing model designed for year-round use and easy maintenance. Next to it, flush with the ground, is a key-operated hydrant to which a hose may be attached for watering the flowers in the prairie restoration area.

Extensive preliminary work done by the city included the installation of a storm sewer and manhole to correct a perennial drainage problem and, of course, the installation of the city water line. The DuPage County Division of Transportation provided some piping and stone for back-filling. Still to come are two decorative limestone walls and a new trash container to be donated by the board of directors of The Illinois Prairie Path.

Editor's Note: As a tribute to the life and work of Helen Turner, the front page of this issue is a reprint of the cover she did for the Summer 1974 Newsletter about the Lincoln Marsh. There will be a guided tour of the Lincoln Marsh on Saturday, August 20. (See Summer Activities).

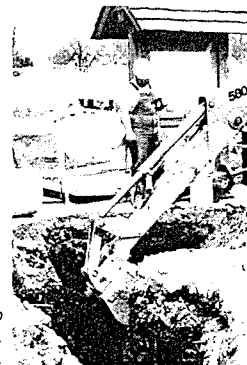


Photo Left: Wheaton Public Works Department digs trench for water line to fountain. Photo Right: City crew installs manhole for storm sewer. (Wheaton Center parking garage is in background).

Path Gets Spring Cleaning

An outstanding cleanup effort on April 23 was organized by Cub Scout leader Rich Richier of Elmhurst. He recruited a total of 243 people, 155 boys and 88 adults, to cover the Path from the Toll Road at the east end of Elmhurst through Villa Park to about Grace Street, Lombard. Garbage bags were donated by the Elmhurst Park District, the Villa Park Recreation Department, and West Chicago Clean and Proud. Besides filling scores of bags with litter, in two hours of work the group also picked up utility poles and cables, concrete, building materials and railroad debris. After the cleanup the boys planted trees at three sites: a pin oak at Spring Road, Elmhurst; a crabapple at Harvard in Villa Park; and a lilac bush in Lombard. Besides a sense of satisfaction in a job well done, each child received a certificate from the U.S. EPA on heavy paper suitable for framing and signed by President Reagan, in appreciation of participation in an important environmental project. The final reward was a free mini-pizza from Enchanted Castle, Lombard! Municipal trucks picked up and hauled away the debris in all three towns.

Glen Ellyn's cleanup crew, though numbering fewer than twenty, did their usual stellar job on April 6. Most were longtime Illinois Prairie Path members and Glen Ellyn residents; but one recruit, Jim "Whitey" Behnke, came from Downers Grove and another, Margaret Mooring, traveled all the way from Madison, Wisconsin, just to help with the cleanup. The village provided a truck and a hardworking driver from the Streets and Sewers Department, who picked up and hauled away six loads of brush, broken concrete, utility poles, old CA&E railway fencing, and bags of litter. Several volunteers spent six backbreaking hours dragging all of the heavy debris out of the underbrush before calling it a day.



Eagle Candidate Rick Wuollet (second from left, rear) and members of Boy Scout troops 54 and 5 installed RR tie mile markers along IPP Batavia Spur on April 23, a cold day. They also cleaned up the area.



Volunteers cut up utility pole in Glen Ellyn.

(continued on page 4)

Spring Cleaning (continued from page 3)

The Wheaton cleanup was organized by Bob Hargis, vice president of The Illinois Prairie Path, and by Mark Smith, Cub Scout leader and member of the Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission. Participating were members of Boy Scout troops 365, 54 and 34; members of Cub Scout packs 63 and 61 plus parents; some Little Friends; and twelve individual volunteers including members of the environmental commission. The Wheaton Public Works Department picked up bags (donated by West Chicago Clean and Proud) which had been placed at intersections in Wheaton; and the DuPage County Division of Transportation picked up the bags in the unincorporated areas.

Summer Activities

(Rain or Shine)

- Saturday, June 4 **Explore Four Bike Trails:** IPP, Fermilab, Kirk Road, and Fox River Trail. Approximately 30-mile loop trip. Leader: Nancy Hesler, 293-1062
- Sunday, June 5 **Spring Hike** to explore a new section of the Fox River Trail. Ten-mile round trip. Meet at 9:00 a.m., Fox River Shores Forest Preserve parking area in Carpentersville. Go approximately one mile west of Rte. 25 on Lake Marion Road to Williams Road; then turn north to entrance. Bring lunch and drink. Leader: Dick Wilson, 299-7882 (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 18 **Work Day.** Leader: Paul Mooring, 469-4289.
- Saturday, June 25 **Two Field Trips** on the West Chicago Prairie Nature Preserve. One 6:00 a.m. early birder trip and one 9:00 a.m. prairie flower trip. Meet at northeast corner of Electronic Support Systems parking lot on the east side of Industrial Drive approximately 1/2 mile south of Hawthorne and just north of Western. Leader: Mel Hoff, (312) 393-4715.
- Thursday, July 7 **Summer Seed Collecting** on the West Chicago Prairie. Primarily for Spiderwort but many other flora will be in bloom; 9:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at usual place. (See above for Sat., June 25.) Paper supermarket sacks will be furnished. Leader: Mel Hoff, 393-4715.
- Saturday, July 16 **Work Day.** Leader: Paul Mooring, 469-4289
- Saturday, August 20 **Illinois Prairie Path/Lincoln Marsh Ramble For Adults.** Co-sponsored by Wheaton Park District; 9:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at Liberty St. and Carlton Ave. for three-mile hike along stretch of IPP; then the grand tour of the Lincoln Marsh natural area with a search for the "forgotten prairie". Plant identification, marsh ecology, birdwatching. Bring cameras, binoculars, and a sack lunch. Leader: Brook McDonald, 665-5534.

— Jean C. Mooring, Editor —

MEMBERSHIP RATES: Individual \$10; Family \$15; Organization/Supporting \$20; Contributing \$25; Sustaining \$50; Patron \$100; Lifetime \$500

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