

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER, 1990

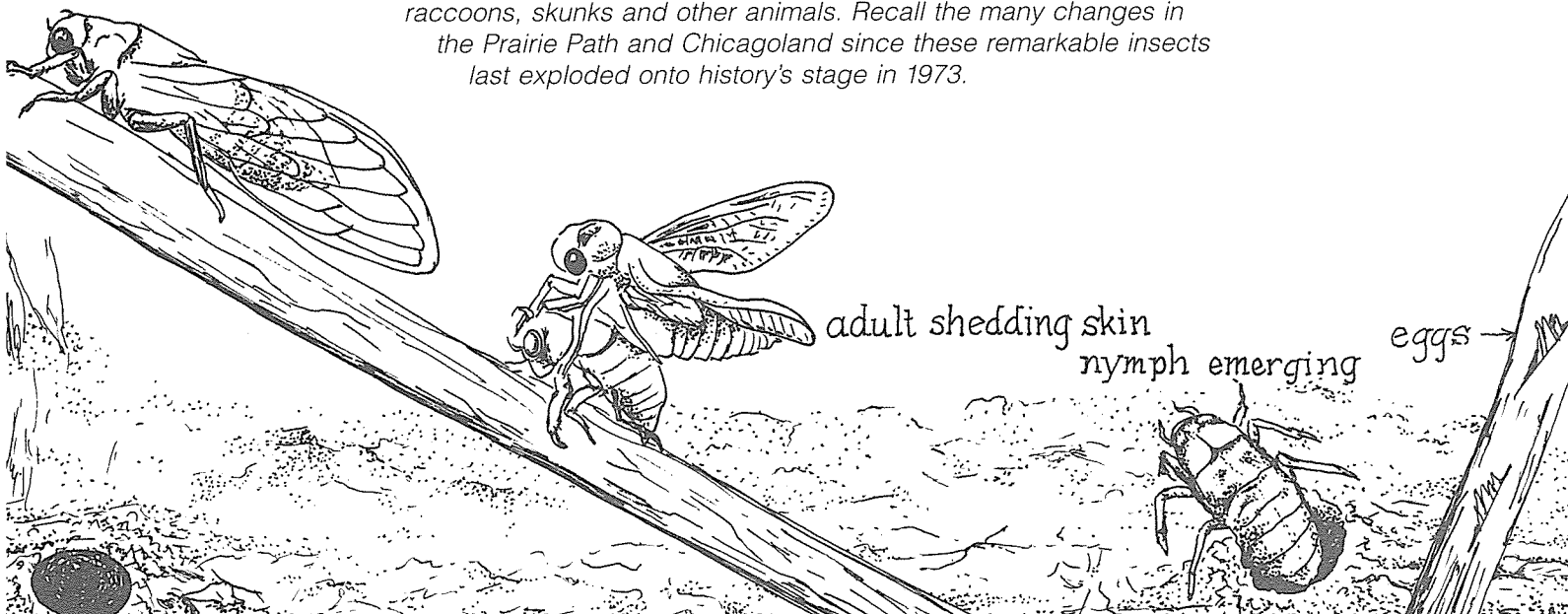


What to look for: cicadas!

Noisy but harmless, at least to humans, cicadas are fascinating insects. During May and June this year, the northern Illinois brood is going to see the light of day after growing for seventeen years in underground darkness sucking the sap of tree roots. The maturing nymphs, about one inch long, will come out of their holes, climb the nearest tree or shrub, and shed their brown skins. The young adults will then undergo a color change from whitish to almost black with orange-veined wings and brilliant red eyes. During their brief time in the sun they will fly, sing (the males), mate, lay their eggs on twigs (the females) and then die before winter. The eggs will hatch in six or seven weeks and the tiny young nymphs will fall to the ground, burrowing into the cool, moist darkness to begin the cycle anew.

The seventeen-year periodical cicada, popularly known as the seventeen-year locust, is not a locust at all. The dreaded locust is a grasshopper, which eats green leaves and can descend in hordes on farmers' field devouring every living green thing in sight. The damage done by the much-maligned cicada, on the other hand, is less severe. The female makes a series of small gashes in young twigs but will not greatly harm a healthy, well-established tree that is not under stress from drought, recent transplanting or attack by other insects.

The best places to see and hear cicadas along the Illinois Prairie Path are in the sections that pass through old growth forest. Look for thousands of holes in the forest floor (20,000 have been counted under one tree!), cast-off skins on the ground or still clinging to the trees, and the tell-tale dead twigs. The males' rasping "song" is unmistakable. When you find some cicadas, think about their place in the web of life as food for predators, such as birds, snakes, raccoons, skunks and other animals. Recall the many changes in the Prairie Path and Chicagoland since these remarkable insects last exploded onto history's stage in 1973.



Lessons from the Earth Day Festival

A lot of people care about the environment. One local example: an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 concerned citizens turned out for the DuPage County Earth Day 1990 Festival, held at the County Center on County Farm Road, Wheaton, on Sunday, April 22. Mother Earth did her part, too, and provided a beautiful sunny day so that everyone could enjoy the festivities, which included speakers, DuPage County Board Chairman Jack Knuepfer and others; musicians; good food; workshops; and more than thirty booths purveying information about ways to live lightly on the earth. Some of the organizations which had exhibits were: Conservation Foundation of DuPage County (Trails Committee, West Chicago Prairie Stewardship Group, etc.); DuPage Environmental Awareness Center; Friends of the Furred and Feathered; Illinois and DuPage Audubon Societies; Nature Conservancy; Sierra Club; Simon for Senate; Thorium Action Group; various recycling groups; Pack 'N' Paddle, outfitters for outdoor adventure, Naperville; and Natus, natural beauty care products.



"Trails are good for you and your mother (Earth)!" Earth Day poster designed by Esther Cryderman.

Hundreds of festival-goers visited the booth sponsored by The Illinois Prairie Path board of directors and offered many compliments about the trail. During the day the booth was manned by Bob and Bonnie Hargis, Nancy Becker, Joan Hamill, Len Chabala, and the Moorings, who also presented a Prairie Path slide show twice in a second-floor meeting room between 11:00 and 1:45. The volunteers sold IPP T-shirts, hats, maps, patches, and copies of Helen Turner's "Guide to the Illinois Prairie Path," and answered questions; they also obtained more than 300 signatures on a petition urging the DuPage County Board to proceed as soon as possible with the completion of the Geneva Spur and its connection to the rest of the Illinois Prairie Path trail system. It was obvious to everyone that trail users are anxious to see the Geneva Spur completed SOON.

The booth itself looked very pretty. At the back was the four-panel folding screen made by Paul Mooring several years ago, loaned by the Villa Park Historical Museum. It displays pictures of major events in the history of the Prairie Path, together with views of volunteers working on trail projects and building bridges as well as people just enjoying the trail. Flanking the screen on

one side was a free-standing wooden post which held a Prairie Path logo sign and a framed copy of Path Founder May Theilgaard Watts' famous 1963 letter to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* proposing the rails-to-trails idea; on the other side was an easel holding a large framed map of the Path. Beautiful shrubs in pots, generously loaned for the day by the Wheaton Nurseries on Roosevelt Road, were grouped near each end of the folding screen. They included three red osier dogwoods, two evergreens, and a pussywillow.

The theme of the booth was clearly stated on the colorful, eye-catching poster designed and made by Esther Cryderman: "Trails are good for you and your mother (Earth). They are safe (away from traffic), healthful for body and mind, educational (a place to study nature), non-polluting (clean air from trees and plants), and energy-conserving (bicyclists, hikers and horsebackriders do not use fossil fuels on trails)." Trails also help to preserve open space and natural areas in the form of linear greenways. Many people got this message at the Earth Day Festival. We hope they will act on it through their elected state, county and municipal officials.

Another Successful Prairie Path Cleanup

Each year since the first Earth Day in April, 1970, Illinois Prairie Path friends have celebrated the event with a major Spring cleanup of the Path and the entire right-of-way. Although the early years produced mountains of household cast-offs, furniture and building materials, junk cars and auto parts, railroad and utility debris, and broken concrete, more recently our volunteers have been picking up mostly cans, bottles, fast food containers and paper. Many hands are needed to make light work of such litter; and this year, thanks to the wonderful Earth Day publicity, we had them! Hundreds of volunteers turned out, did a super job, and had fun doing it.



Members of Chippewa Tribe from B.R. Ryall Y.M.C.A., Glen Ellyn, after pre-Earth Day cleanup, April 7. (Prairie Path Park gazebo and brick walk under construction, left.)

Bob Hargis, vice president of The Illinois Prairie Path, recruited a large proportion of the workers, ably assisted by board members Ken Moss in Elmhurst, Bob Rawls in Warrenville, and Joan Hamill and Rik Alex in Wayne. Other board members who participated included Paul and Jean Mooring, who worked with some 70 Glen Ellyn volunteers (the most ever!) to help fill a village public works department six-wheeler. The Glen Ellyn cleanup was organized by Mary McCann, chairman of the Glen Ellyn Environmental Improvement Commission, and members of the commission. The Moorings also received a framed certificate of appreciation from the Village of Glen Ellyn, presented by Village President Arthur Angrist, which reads, "For Making Earth Day Live for the past 20 Years in the Village of Glen Ellyn."

Bob Hargis reports that every section of the Path in DuPage County was covered this year and that the DuPage County Division of Transportation and the municipalities and/or park districts of Elmhurst, Villa Park, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, Warrenville and Naperville cooperated in hauling away the collected trash. In Wheaton and the county areas alone some 60 bags were collected, plus other miscellaneous items of junk. The Illinois Prairie Path board of directors would like to thank the participating government agencies as well as the following groups and/or group leaders who helped with the Prairie Path cleanup this year during the Earth Day period:



Eli Cryderman staples Earth Day cleanup announcement to display case stand at York Road, Elmhurst.



Cub Pack 335 and leaders pick up litter along Prairie Path South of Arbor, Wheaton. Photo by Bob Hargis.



STOP (dumping)! Pile of junk left for pickup at Jewel Road by IPP cleanup volunteers. Photo by Bob Hargis.

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| Elmhurst | Prairie Management Advisory Committee, Keith Olson et al.
Cub Pack 15, Dale Muhlethaler
Jane Schmitt and friends |
| Villa Park | Cub Pack 29, David Nelson and Kevin O'Connor
Joanne Bernardi |
| Lombard | Brownie Troop 566, Debbie Luketin
Brownie Troop 773, Pam Barnett
Mark Starkovich |
| Addison | Diane Lowe |
| Carol Stream | Karen Erickson |
| Glen Ellyn | Crow Tribe, YMCA, John Francis
Chippewa Tribe, YMCA, Tom Salzman
Brownie Troop 156, St. Petronille School, Cherie Doyle,
Gina McElligott, Chris Simek
Cub Pack 52 "Wolves," Lincoln School, Michael Ryan
Cub Pack 381, Park View School, Jim Tuinenga |
| Lisle | Sharon Deming |
| Winfield | Sue Brand |
| West Chicago | Boy Scout Varsity Group 6005, Jim Stewart |
| Wheaton | Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission, Mark Smith
Boy Scout Troop 382, Jim Clute
Cheyenne Tribe, YMCA, Larry Bodine,
Kim Chao
Cub Scout Pack 63: Den 1, Deborah Grobe; Den 2, Beth Fennewald; Den 3, Mike Hruby; Den 4, Tim Connor;
Den 5, Lori Leahigh; Den 6, Diane McWilliams
Cub Pack 335, Rich Kehoe
Ruth Riha |
| Naperville | Boy Scout Troop 54, John Clements |
| Warrenville | Terri Trauner
Members of St. Irene's Church
Members of W.A.V.E. (Warrenville Advocates for Values and the Environment); also donated plastic bags |
| Wayne | Members of the Wayne-DuPage Hunt |

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the scores of unsung individual volunteers who, not just on Earth Day, but all year long, pick up trash along the Illinois Prairie Path. These caring people set an example of good citizenship for all to follow; their reward is a beautiful trail that everyone can enjoy.

Good News from Springfield for Cook County Trail Users

Rick Pietruszka, trails coordinator for the Illinois Department of Conservation, reports that he has walked the entire Cook County section of the Illinois Prairie Path from Maywood to Berkeley with representatives of the DuPage Water Commission, their consulting engineers, Alvord, Burdick and Howson, and their contractor, Kenny Construction. The following trail deficiencies will be corrected: low spots will be filled and resurfaced; dump sites will be cleaned up; surfacing at "The Catacombs" in Bellwood under the Indiana Harbor Beltline Railroad overpasses will be completed; drainage problems caused by recent construction of industrial parking lots adjacent to the trail east of 25th Avenue will be eliminated; a new encroachment by a used car lot east of Mannheim Road will be stopped; and Kenny will haul in black dirt and seed grass. The target date for completion is August 1.

Best news of all: the easements from the west side of Butterfield to the west side of Mannheim are good and Conservation will enforce them; also Conservation Director Mark Frech and Assistant Director Kathy Selcke are now negotiating a final agreement with the DuPage Water Commission, which the IPP board of directors hopes will include funding for trail maintenance. The long-awaited extension of the Illinois Prairie Path in Cook County to First Avenue, Maywood, and the Des Plaines River is about to happen!

National Green Pledge — A Correction

Mo Udall of the national Earth Day 1990 organization, headquartered in Washington, D.C., has sent the following version of the *Green Pledge*, which contains a vital clause omitted from the DuPage County version in the Spring *Newsletter* (the clause is printed in capital letters):

BECAUSE...our planet today faces severe environmental crises such as global warming, rain forest devastation, rapidly-increasing population and water and air pollution...

BECAUSE...the planet's future depends on the commitment of every nation, as well as every individual...

I pledge to do my share in saving the planet by letting my concern for the environment shape how I:

ACT — I pledge to do my utmost to recycle, conserve energy, save water, use efficient transportation, REMEMBER THE EARTH'S LIMITATIONS IF I CHOOSE TO HAVE A FAMILY, and try to adopt a lifestyle as if every day were Earth Day.

PURCHASE — I pledge to do my utmost to buy and use those products least harmful to the environment. Moreover, I will to the maximum extent possible, do business with corporations that promote global environmental responsibility.

VOTE — I pledge to vote and support those candidates who demonstrate an abiding concern for the environment.

SUPPORT — I pledge to support the passage of local, state and federal laws and international treaties that protect the environment.

Signed _____

Editor's Note: Uncontrolled population growth has already exceeded the carrying capacity of Earth's life support systems — land, air and water — in many parts of the globe. More billions of people will overwhelm any and all modifications in these life support systems designed by humans to compensate for more growth. Rational limitation of the absolute number of people by families and governments in cooperation is the only just and peaceful solution. The alternatives are apocalyptic: famine, pestilence, war, and the death of the planet as well as ourselves.

Warrenville Scout Completes IPP Sign Project

On March 15, John Moeaki of Boy Scout Troop 54, Naperville (John Clements, scoutmaster), completed his Eagle project. Enlisting the aid of troop members and their fathers as well as the DuPage County Division of Transportation, John purchased the materials and designed, routed, and arranged to install three handsome wood signs for the Illinois Prairie Path; the signs mark side trails to Blackwell Forest Preserve, Warrenville Grove Forest Preserve, and the City of Warrenville's Sesquicentennial Park. John came a long distance to help the Prairie Path, all the way from his birthplace, the island monarchy of Tonga in the South Pacific. The IPP board thanks him and wishes him continued success.



Eagle candidate, John Moeaki (second from right), with advisors Paul Mooring, Sione Moeaki, Jim Stewart and Bob Hargis after locating sites for three IPP signs, March 3.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES, Rain or Shine

Saturday, June 16 **Work Day** to install display case stand at Bilter Road (Batavia Spur, north of East-West Tollway). Meet at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Paul Mooring, (708) 469-4289.

Saturday, July 14 **Bike Riders' Delight.** Nancy Hesler invites you to join her for a casual ride on the Great Western Trail, St. Charles to Sycamore land back, 40 miles round trip. Lunch at one of the restaurants or snack shops in Sycamore and swim at the Sycamore Pool. Meet at 10:00 a.m. in the parking lot at First St. and North Ave. near the Fox River Trail and across from Arcada Theater; let Nancy show you how to make the connection to the Great Western Trail. Leader: Nancy Hesler, (708) 293-1062.

Saturdays, July 28
Aug. 18 **Work Days.** Leader: Paul Mooring, (708) 469-4289.

Saturday, Aug. 25 **Explore** the late summer wonders of the Lincoln Marsh with Brook McDonald, 9:00 - 12:30. Meet on IPP at Volunteer Park. Information: Wheaton Park District, (708) 665-4710.

West Chicago Prairie Events

- Bird Trip** June 23
- Seed Collection** July 14, September 9
- Field Trips** June 23, July 21, August 25.

All events start from the northeast corner of the Electronic Support Systems parking lot on east side of Industrial Drive just north of Western Ave. and 1/2 mile south of Hawthorne. For bird and field trip reservations call (708) 790-4912. Information: Mel Hoff, (708) 393-4715, or Mollie Millen, (708) 232-4394.

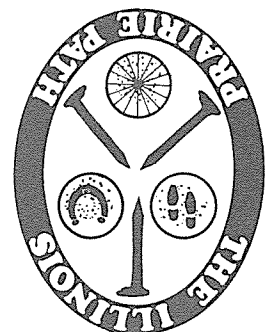
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— Jean C. Mooring, Editor —

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