

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH  
NEWSLETTER

*What To See  
and Hear*

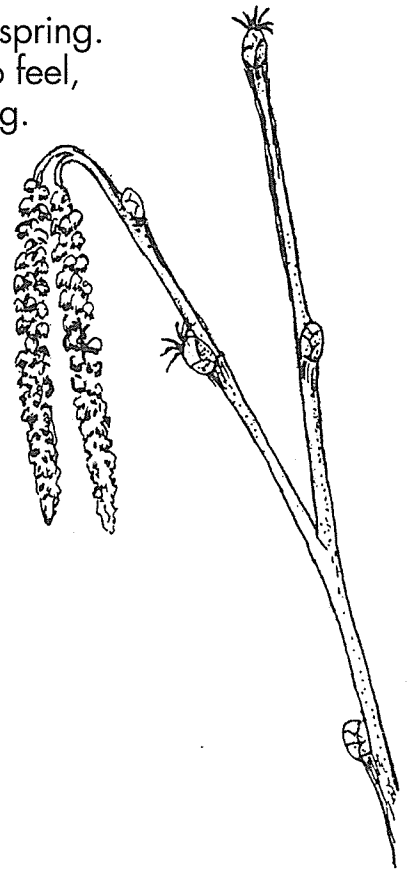
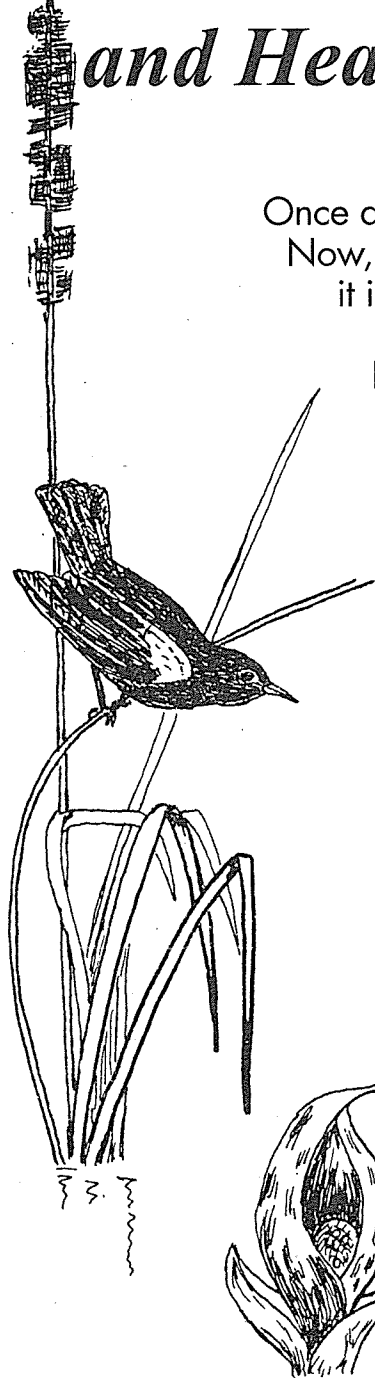
Once again it is time to listen for the chorus of spring. Now, though there is much to see, to smell, to feel, it is the new sounds that seem most exciting.

It is your ear that hears the honk of the *wild geese*, that makes you search the sky for that wavering wedge. It is the trill of the *spring peeper* you hear that puts the final period at the end of another winter; you seldom see this tiny, elusive frog that calls so persistently. It is the kong-ka-reee that announces the return of the *red-winged blackbird*. These are creatures of the wet places.

We can see the flowers of earliest spring in wet places, too. Look for them, for *skunk cabbage* and *hazel* along the water's edge.

Fortunately, the Prairie Path passes many ponds, swamps and streams. There is a superb field of skunk cabbage on the Path just west of Prince Crossing Road. Look for hazel near Eola Road on the Batavia Spur, and don't fail to see its tiny crimson flowers.

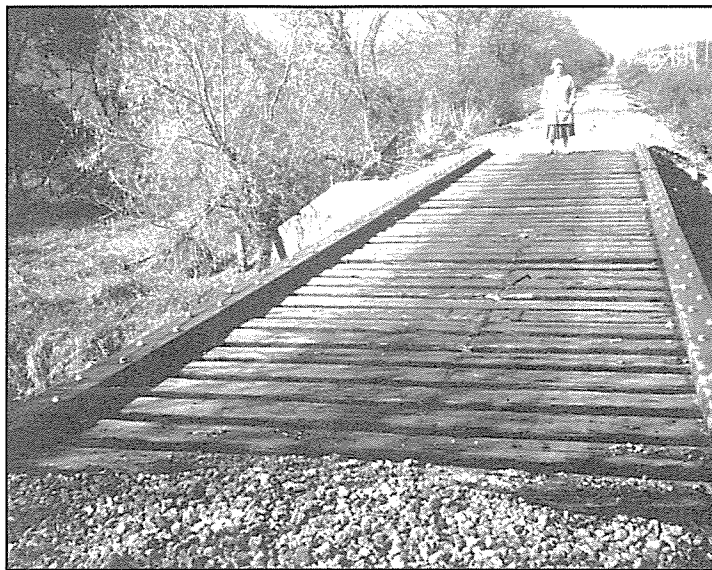
Above all, listen. . . always listen for the songs of spring.



# FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT SHOULD ACQUIRE KUHN PROPERTY

On February 4, representatives of conservation and environmental groups, together with many local residents, spoke to the DuPage County Forest Preserve Commission urging purchase of 47.2 acres of land east of Prince Crossing Road, south of North Avenue, and adjacent to the West Branch of the DuPage River. The land is owned by Harry W. Kuhn, Inc., and can be easily identified because it was recently bulldozed flat to facilitate the parking of company trucks. Several sign-carrying Kuhn employees opposed the purchase, saying that they believed their jobs were at stake and that the commission should instead accept a conservation easement on slightly less than half the property while the Kuhn interests would be able to develop the remainder in accordance with its industrial zoning.

Jean Mooring spoke on behalf of the Illinois Prairie Path board of directors and membership and advised purchase of the entire parcel. This recommendation is in accordance with the stated mission of our organization: land preservation, and conservation of natural resources adjoining the trail with the goal of increasing trail opportunities and connections to other trails in the region.



*View from old railroad bridge over West Branch of the DuPage River shows the Great Western Trail running through the Kuhn property toward Prince Crossing Road.*

The Kuhn property lies just a few hundred feet north of the Illinois Prairie Path and has the new Great Western Trail running across it. When the planned north-south trail along the West DuPage River is built in the near future, it will also cross the Kuhn property and thus connect the two east-west trails.

Many speakers pointed out the importance of maintaining this land as open space to filter polluted stormwater runoff and protect the water quality of the West Branch. The land, when revegetated, would also screen the noise and visual pollution of the industrial site from nearby homeowners and would provide wildlife habitat on the west side of the river. The residents reiterated that they had already voted in a referendum to tax

themselves as a Special Service District to help pay for the modest cost of the acquisition: less than \$400,000 for the 47 acres. Some also said that this would be a suitable parcel for purchase with part of the proceeds of the \$5 million land acquisition referendum approved by DuPage County voters last fall. The final decision will be made by the forest preserve commissioners. ■

## TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Illinois Prairie Path board of directors is now up to its full strength of fifteen members with the election of Susan Wisniewski of Bellwood and Christopher Joyce of Wheaton. They replace Bonnie Hargis, who moved downstate from Wheaton last fall, and Rik Alex of Wayne, who resigned in January because of other commitments.

Susan will serve on the IPP Cook County Committee and will be our official liaison with the village government and citizens of Bellwood as we work with the municipalities and the Illinois Department of Conservation to improve the Prairie Path in Cook County. Susan studied art at Triton College and is a self-employed professional artist who air-brushes her own original

designs on T-shirts and other clothing. She enjoys riding her bike and running on the Path and will be the Path's "eyes and ears" in Bellwood.

Chris Joyce has a degree in history from the University of Illinois, Champaign, and a Doctor of Law degree from John Marshall Law School in Chicago. He is employed as a trust department manager at First National Bank of LaGrange. The father of two young Prairie Path fans, he is a regular Path hiker, jogger and biker. He has worked on the IPP spring cleanup in the past and this year will be in charge of the sections from Roosevelt Road to Winfield Road on the Aurora Branch and from Jewell Road to Smith Road on the Elgin Branch. He will be the Path's Wheaton representative. ■