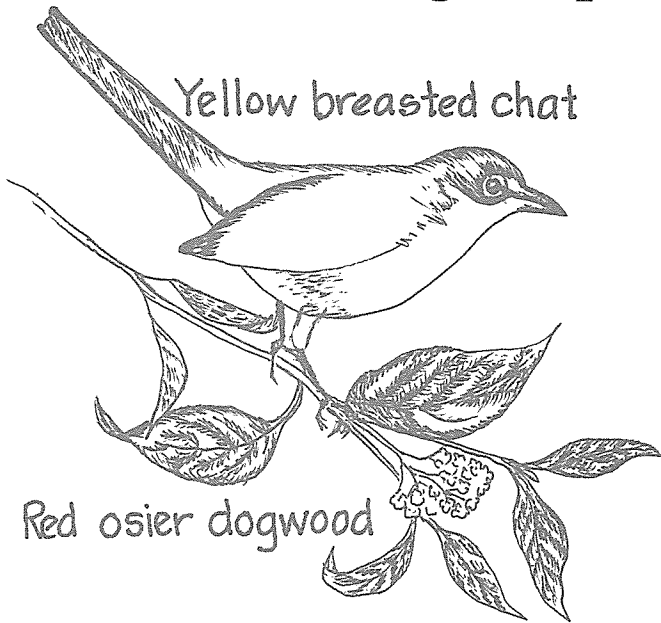




SUMMER 1992

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

*What to see:
a true tallgrass prairie.*



Yellow breasted chat

Red osier dogwood

Birds and bur oaks, bees and butterflies, grasses bending in the breeze, and everywhere flowers blooming. This is the West Chicago Prairie in summer. The largest prairie remnant in DuPage County, it adjoins the Illinois Prairie Path Geneva Spur for three-quarters of a mile. This rare native landscape is being restored by the West Chicago Prairie Stewardship Group, who have devoted thousands of hours over a period of many years to the project. Now their hard work of removing alien species and propagating native ones is beginning to bear fruit as the prairie emerges in its primeval splendor.

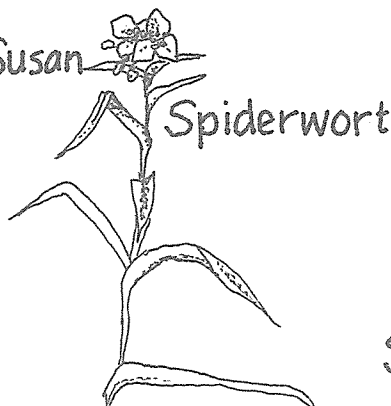
The West Chicago Prairie Stewards invite us all to visit this special place, whose natural charm is now enhanced by various DuPage County Forest Preserve amenities such as a new parking lot, picnic tables, toilet facility, information display case, and a network of mowed trails. On June 20th there will be two field trips: a bird trip which may produce sightings of the Yellow-breasted Chat and Sedge Wren; and a wildflower walk to admire spectacular displays of Spiderwort, Black-eyed Susan, and White Wild Indigo, among many others. Ride your bike (or come by car) and enjoy!



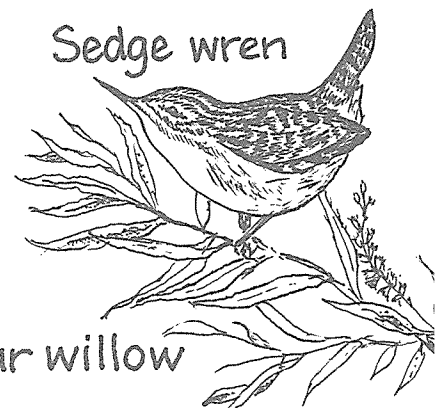
White wild indigo



Black eyed Susan



Spiderwort



Sedge wren

Sand bar willow

REP. LEE DANIELS HONORS IPP VOLUNTEERS

On April 25 State Rep. Lee Daniels (R-Elmhurst) presented to the volunteers of The Illinois Prairie Path his *Green Leaf* environmental award. The special Earth Day ceremony took place at the Spring Road intersection with the famous national trail in Elmhurst and kicked off the annual IPP spring cleanup. Present to receive the honor was Ken Moss, an Elmhurst member of The Illinois Prairie Path board of directors. Two former board members also attended: Eugene Pomerance, now an Elmhurst Park District board member, and Keith Olson of the Park District Prairie Management Advisory Committee.

“For years, the Prairie Path has meant a lot of natural beauty and scenery for those who enjoy walking, cycling or jogging this magnificent trail,” said Daniels in his press release. “The dedication of so few for the enjoyment of so many can’t go ignored. It is indeed fitting for the Prairie Path group to become the next recipients of the *Green Leaf* Award.”

The press release continues, “The *Green Leaf* Award honors outstanding citizens and organizations for their contributions in preserving and protecting the environment. Daniels’ Advisory Committee on the Environment last year created the award to recognize these achievements.”

The inscription on the plaque reads: “In recognition of ‘Environmental Citizenship’ Representative Lee Daniels’ Advisory Committee on the Environment presents the *Green Leaf* Award to Illinois Prairie Path, April 25, 1992.”



Left to right: Sally Kirk, DuPage Clean and Beautiful; Lexi Payovich, volunteer for Lee Daniels; Ken Moss, IPP board member, Elmhurst (holding Green Leaf Award plaque); Rep. Lee Daniels. Photo by June Moss.

WHO IS OUR MYSTERIOUS BENEFACTOR?



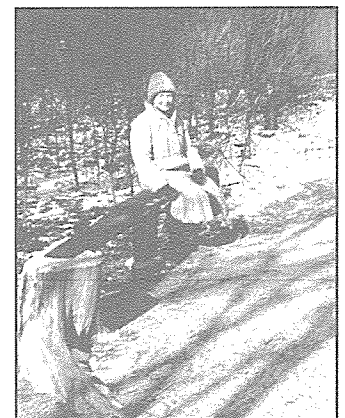
A fungus was among us.

An unknown sculptor is at work on the Illinois Prairie Path. His artistry first appeared about three years ago when several handsome wood mushrooms sprouted along the trail where only tree stumps had stood before. Some half dozen of the attractive fungi clustered like elfin chairs beside the Path or down in the ditch on either side a few hundred feet northwest of the Klein Creek bridge on the Elgin Branch. Although many Path users admired them and some even took pictures of them, no one seemed to know who the chainsaw artist was. A few did notice that the mushrooms had appeared after a tree-trimming crew from the DuPage County Division of Transportation had finished its task. Nevertheless and sad to say, several months later the mushrooms vanished, as suddenly as they had appeared, leaving behind a lot of puzzled and disappointed people.

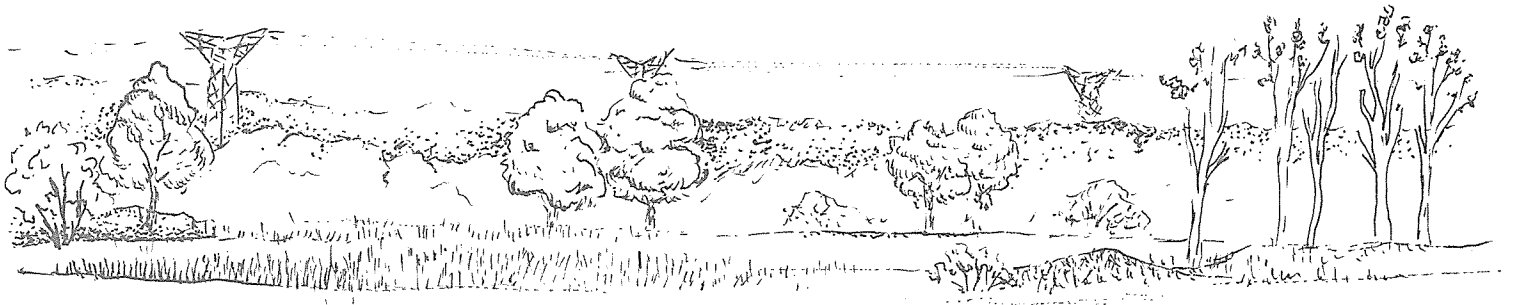
The story does not end there, however. Some time last

winter, we believe, the mysterious sculptor seems to have struck again in about the same location. This time he produced seats for people: a couple of stumps shaped like comfortable stools with smooth tops and beveled edges, and his masterpiece, a restored bench. (The bench had been built originally by longtime IPP volunteer Ralph Franzen about twenty years ago and was beginning to decay.) Each end of the original plank seat now rests on a sturdy stump neatly carved, by chainsaw no doubt, to receive it; and there is a solid section of 6 X 6 atop another stump supporting the center.

We don’t know whom to thank for this. Forest Preserve District officials say they did not restore the bench and we believe no Prairie Path member did. We would appreciate it if the talented woodworker would identify himself and take a bow. Does anyone have a clue?



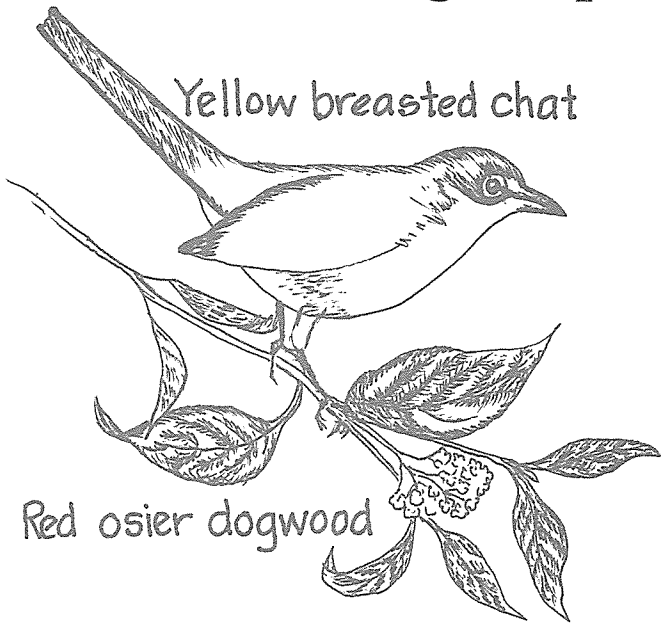
Jean Mooring sits on restored bench. Who dunit?



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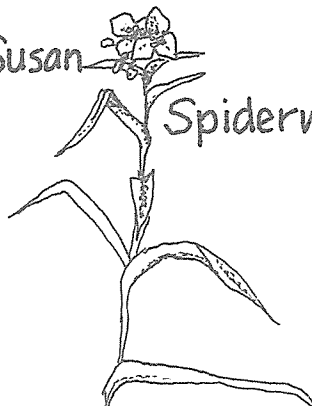
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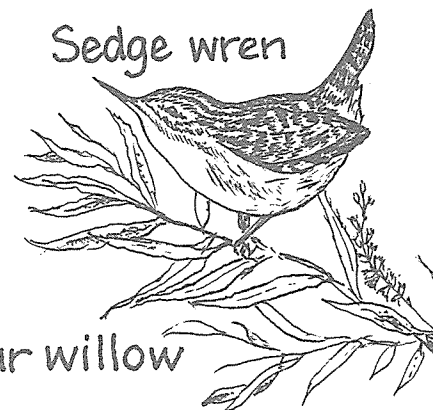
White wild indigo



Black eyed Susan



Spiderwort



Sedge wren

Sand bar willow