

black-winged
damselfly 1.3"

THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1984

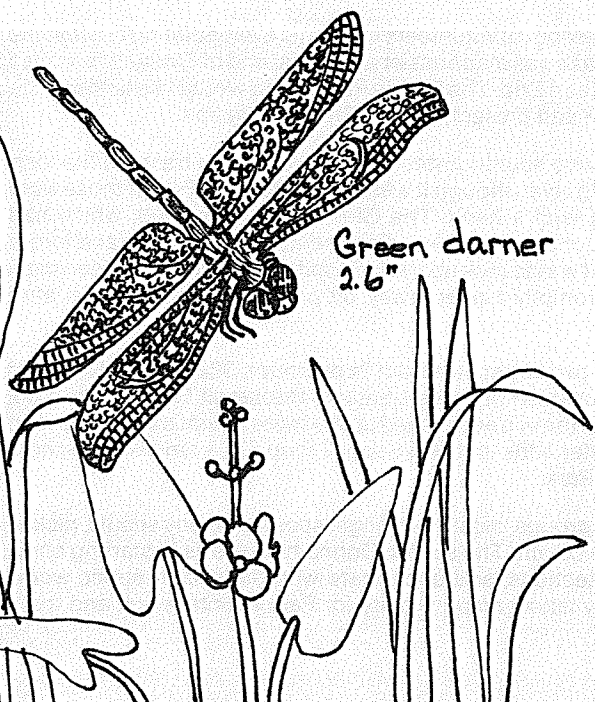
What to look for: Dragonflies and Damselflies

Every summer pond and ditch along the Prairie Path has its resident dragonflies and their near relative, the damselflies. Members of an ancient family, damselflies are usually small and rest with their wings folded over their backs. Dragonflies are usually much larger and rest with their wings at right angles to their bodies.

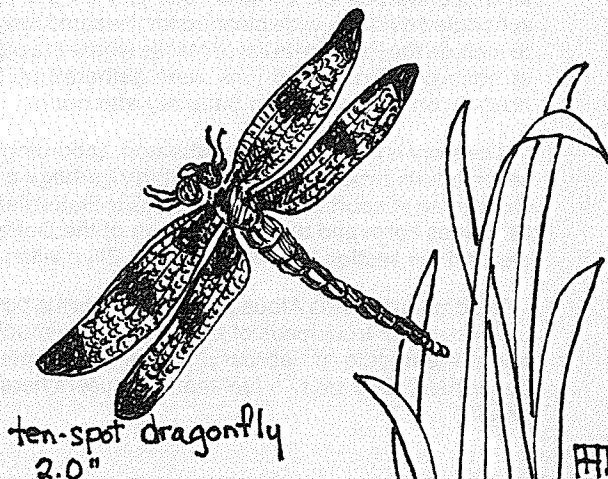
"Mosquito hawk", "snake doctor", and "devil's darning needle" are some of the names these colorful insects are called. Some species have transparent wings and some have brilliantly colored or spotted wings. Some have brilliantly colored bodies. All are superb aerialists, capable of swift flight, of a backward as well as a forward darting movement, and of hovering. The wings of a dragonfly have thickened leading edges, so that as they vibrate up and down, the hind portions of the wings flex, causing a forward thrust. Unlike most other four-winged insects, the fore and hind wings do not move in unison; but as the fore wings rise, the hind wings beat downward.

In midsummer, the adults patrol their territory, flying up and down anywhere from five to thirty feet within it. The male does his courting and if he is successful, mating occurs, and eggs are laid. The nymphs when they hatch are voracious eaters and consume quantities of mosquito wigglers. The adult hunts on the wing and helps control mosquitoes, midges, sandflies, etc.

Look for our friends, the dragonflies and the damselflies, on your next walk down the Prairie Path.



Green darner
2.6"



ten-spot dragonfly
2.0"

HT

A New Prairie for Wheaton

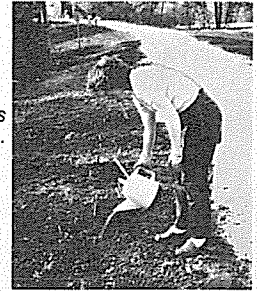
On May 9, after many months of planning, volunteers under the direction of board member and botanist Larry Sheaffer began the prairie reconstruction project on the new bridge south ramp at Liberty Street, Wheaton. The first phase of the project involves planting 1,000 prairie flowers and grasses of about 50 different species in three locations along the ramp. During the second phase, seven pounds of prairie seeds will be broadcast and raked on the remaining area and a sign and bushes will be placed next to the street to serve as a buffer. The plants were purchased from Windrift Prairie, Oregon, Illinois, and from The Natural Garden, St. Charles, Illinois. Seeds were collected from local prairie remnants and from the Bower School Prairie, a project of Larry's students in Warrenville.



Prairie expert Larry Sheaffer directs planting of prairie restoration on south ramp of Wheaton bridge.



Larry Sheaffer and Dee Tevonian plant seedlings.



Nancy Becker waters young plants.

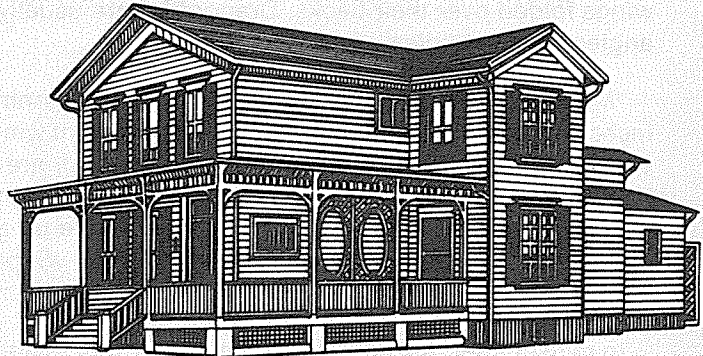
The Prairie Path board invites prairie buffs and Path fans to come and work on this beautification—preservation project. Have fun and learn about prairies at the same time! If you would like to help, call Larry Sheaffer, 665-4408, or the Prairie Path office, 665-5310, and leave your name and number as a prairie volunteer. Volunteers to date include the following: Donna Albue, Nancy Becker, Lorraine Buhl, Lynn Dostal, Karen Fonte, Phil Hodge, Jean and Paul Mooring, Larry Sheaffer, Dee and Ron Tevonian and sons, Margo Vizgirda, and Dick and Nancy Wilson.

B and B in Lombard

In response to the request of bicycle tourists Norman and Barbara Reeder, Lansing, Michigan, for information on Bed and Breakfast accommodations near the Prairie Path, we have received the following letter from Barbara Graves, 241 W. Maple, Lombard:

"We have entertained the idea of opening our historic home (one-half block off the Prairie Path) for B and B. This might be a nice way to break in, with Prairie Path people.

"If these people in Lansing are interested, please send them our name and address, and perhaps we can work something out."



THE GRAVES' HOME • BUILT BY JOSIAH LOMBARD IN 1868

The Path has sent a copy of this letter to the Reederes, who are delighted to know about the Graves home. If there are other such B and B providers in the area, we will be happy to keep a file on them for Path users. This may be the start of a new tourism industry in DuPage County!

Spring Cleanups

Prairie Path cleanups were held on April 28 in Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Lombard and Wheaton with varying degrees of success, according to the leader in each municipality:

Gene Pomerance, longtime Path member in Elmhurst, writes that the turnout of volunteers there was disappointing but that the six dedicated Path friends who worked did a good job nevertheless. The task was made easier at the east end of Elmhurst because that section is cleaned regularly by Dale Muhlethaler and his pre-school son Eric. The Prairie Path board would like to thank the Muhlethalers, Pomerances, Aisenbreyes, and Moes for all their help, past and present, on the Elmhurst section.

Glen Ellyn provided the fewest volunteers ever, says Jean Mooring, who spent fourteen hours picking up trash on the long cleanup weekend. Only ten people came out to help on Saturday morning, even though it was a beautiful day. Two of those were kind-hearted passers-by who took pity on the workers and stayed to lend a hand. The Glen Ellyn Lions Club, which had scheduled a village-wide cleanup for the same day and thus preempted our usual workers, didn't send anyone to help and forgot to include the Path on its list of places where the public works department was to pick up trash. In spite of this, about sixteen bags of trash plus brush and junk were gathered by the volunteers and promptly hauled away by public works personnel after notification by the Path on Saturday afternoon.

The story is much better for Wheaton, according to Bob Hargis. Thirty-two boy scouts from three troupes, 382, 365, and 364, and seven adults picked up a total of thirty garbage bags plus miscellaneous trash on three sections: Roosevelt Road to Orchard, Orchard to Wiesbrook, and Wiesbrook to Butterfield. Bob also rode to Warrenville and picked up the more obvious items between St. James Farm and the West Branch of the DuPage River. Larry Sheaffer adds that Girl Scout Troup 877 from Lowell School cleaned the section between the Glen Ellyn village limits and Hoffman Park.

In Lombard Donna Albue proudly reports the best response of all. Ten groups, mostly junior girl scouts and boy scouts, picked up a couple of truckloads of trash, including much brush and even one couch. The secret, Donna believes, is in starting early, about the middle of February, to line up volunteers, assign them to sections, and coordinate with the village public works department. She says, "I feel that Path users here in Lombard are really taking responsibility for Path maintenance, and that's great!"

Prairie Path Plans for Future

At the request of Jack Knuepfer, chairman of the DuPage County Board, the Prairie Path Board has submitted to the county the following long-range plans for preserving the continuity of the Path and developing a regional off-road trail network:

1. Preserve Path continuity by requiring all contractors (FAP 431, other roads, water mains, sewers, telephone and gas lines, etc.) to consult with the Path before construction, to provide a bypass for Path users during construction, and to restore the railroad grade, Path surface and vegetation to as good or better condition after construction is complete.
2. Improve all major highway intersections with bridge or underpass grade separations or at least full signalization.
3. Eliminate the Batavia Junction Detour, where the Path is cut by the East-West Tollway, by acquiring the Poss property between Bilter Road and the tollway. This will provide a connection from the IPP Aurora Branch along the NI Gas pipeline north of the tollway to the Batavia Spur, which in turn connects with the famous Fox River Bicycle Trail in Kane County.
4. Obtain an easement or license from Commonwealth Edison to add the Geneva Spur to the Prairie Path trail network and connect to the Fox River Trail. Obtain the cooperation of the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, the Village of Winfield, and the Cities of West Chicago and Geneva.
5. Develop a connecting trail along the East Branch of the DuPage River at least between Churchill Forest Preserve and the Prairie Path, but preferably all the way to the Morton Arboretum. This has been recommended by the DuPage Regional Planning Commission.
6. Develop a connecting trail along the West Branch of the DuPage River mainly through forest preserves to link the Elgin and Aurora Branches of the Path.
7. Support other major trails of national significance in the area and connect them to the Prairie Path: (a) Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Trail and (b) Tecumseh or Heartland National Scenic Trail (Northwoods to Everglades).
8. Turn active management of the Prairie Path over to the DuPage County Forest Preserve District. Path board to remain in advisory capacity.

The Prairie Path Board has also requested county help with current Path maintenance and development so that the Path can attain its full potential as a first class multipurpose trail. Especially needed are regular programs of pruning and mowing and a surfacing schedule to provide a smooth limestone screening surface for bicycling, hiking and jogging on all thirty miles of trail in DuPage County by the year 1986. Other needs are separate trails for horses and also reconstruction of the dilapidated cattle crossing near Norris Ave. in Oak Meadows.

Chairman Knuepfer has replied in a letter, thanking us for these plans and stating that he will be reviewing them with Charles Vaughan, chairman of the county board highway committee, to see how much can be accomplished this year.

Prairie Burns

As prairie enthusiasts know, burning is good for prairies. Fire kills off invading weeds and woody plants and promotes the growth of deep-rooted and thus fire-resistant native forbs and grasses by burning the thatch of dead plant material on the ground and returning nutrients to the soil.

Two prairie areas on the Path have been burned this spring: the Taylor Avenue prairie restoration in Glen Ellyn and the prairie remnant southeast of the North Avenue bridge in rural West Chicago. As in past years, biology students of Glenbard West High School master teacher Rick Billings burned the Taylor Avenue prairie in four shifts so that all four classes could have the opportunity to learn the technique. In West Chicago Path board member and science teacher Larry Sheaffer directed the burn with the assistance of Terry Voitik, Susan Doenges, and Bob McDonough. Both burns were very successful and should produce a profusion of flowers this summer.



Glenbard West students carrying water to control prairie fire at Taylor Avenue. . .



. . . burning the prairie. . .



. . . and cleaning up debris and litter remaining after the burn.

New Membership Chair

The board of directors announces with regret the resignation of Muriel Smith as membership chair. During Muriel's tenure Path membership increased to its highest level ever as she handled this important job with quiet efficiency and good humor. Now, however, she wants to have more time with her favorite outdoor activities, especially birding.

Replacing Muriel is new board member Dee Tevonian of Wheaton. A graduate of New Jersey State College at Trenton, Dee was recruited by Phil Hodge to work on the bridge project last summer. She was one of the most dependable volunteers and came out almost every weekend to do whatever needed to be done. Dee and her husband Ron, who also worked hard on the bridge, are the parents of four boys, Greg, Jeff, Tom and Pete. She is tackling the vital membership job with enthusiasm and is a welcome addition to the board.

The Sounding Board

Path Vice President Phil Hodge reminds all members and friends that the Wheaton bridge dedication will be held at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, June 16, at Carlton and Liberty Streets. Our bridge builder is not telling what sort of celebration he's planning except that the name of the bridge will be revealed at last. **So everybody come on out.** This will be our last chance to thank Phil for a great achievement and to say good-bye before he moves to Minnesota to get his master's degree.

Dee Tevonian has an announcement too: "Membership renewal letters are going out this month and we don't want to lose even one of you. We need you!"

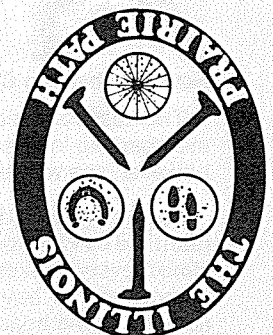
Summer Activities, Rain or Shine

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| Sunday, June 3 | Spring Hike. Hike on Batavia Spur (newly-surfaced section) and along Fox River Bicycle Trail to Island Park in Batavia and return. Ten-mile round trip. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Bilter Road and the Path. (Butterfield Road to Butterfield development entrance road, called DuPage Parkway. South to Bilter, west ½ mile to Path.) Bring lunch and drink. Leader: Dick Wilson, 299-7882. |
| Saturday, June 9 | Work Day. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Nancy Hesler's, Oak Meadows. For information call Nancy at 293-1062. |
| Saturday, June 16 | Bridge Dedication. Festivities begin at 2:00 p.m., Liberty Street and Path, Wheaton. Coordinator: Phil Hodge, 627-7362. |
| Saturday, June 23
Sunday, June 24 | Two-Day Bike Trip Overnight. Experienced bikers only. Bring own gear. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Nancy Hesler's in Oak Meadows. Leaders: Phil Hodge, 627-7362, and Nancy Hesler, 293-1062. |
| Saturday, July 14 | Work Day. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Warrenville bridge on Prairie Path in Warrenville, to build steps and prune. Bring picks, shovels, chain saws and pruning shears. Leader: Dick Wilson, 299-7882. |
| Sunday, July 22 | Bike Ride to Wheaton bridge with side trips to view Mastodon and Lake Ellyn. Seventeen-mile round trip. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at York Road and Path in Elmhurst. (#4 on map). Leader: John Kacich, 544-7524. |
| Saturday, August 18 | Work Day to build steps and shore up embankment in Lincoln Marsh. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Lincoln Ave. and Path, Wheaton. Leader: Dick Wilson, 299-7882. |

— Jean C. Mooring, Editor —

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