



Natural Area Preservation News

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The mission of the Natural Area Preservation Division is to protect, restore and champion the natural areas of Ann Arbor, especially those in the City's park and recreation system.

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NAP Volunteers: Saving the World

by Courtney (Babb) Shosh

Recently I compiled volunteer statistics from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999 (the City of Ann Arbor's fiscal year) for NAP's annual report. As I compared last year's volunteer hours to those of previous years, I was amazed. In 1995-96 NAP had 1,163 volunteers hours. In 1996-97 we had 2,091 hours. In 1997-98 we had 2,310 hours. And last year (1998-99) volunteers contributed an astounding 3,359 hours to our program.

While numbers are useful to demonstrate change, they're only symbols. It's what these numbers represent—growth in stewardship of Ann Arbor's natural areas—that is truly exciting. Growth in stewardship means increased restoration, protection, support, and connection to the local remnants of wilderness which are so essential to our physical and psychological well-being.

These numbers also symbolize growth in cooperative learning (the idea behind the Volunteer Stewardship Network). Together staff and volunteers are learning increasingly more about our natural areas, how to care for them, and how to get others to care about them. The artful science of restoration is relatively new. There are few experts. Most of us are simply people knowledgeable about pieces of the infinitely complex natural world who have a passion to restore our natural areas to whole, functioning ecosystems. Together we are slowly finding the way.

The range of projects NAP's volunteers are involved in has grown fantastically over the years, as well. The very first NAP volunteers participated in workdays removing invasive shrubs. Today NAP's volunteers participate in workdays controlling several invasive plant species, rescuing native plants, controlling erosion, and collecting and cleaning seeds. They inventory breeding birds, frogs and toads, and butterflies. They are members of the prescribed burn crew, and they maintain native plant exhibit gardens. They assist with photo monitoring, and they write brochures to educate the public about natural areas. They adopt natural areas to steward, and they help with countless special projects. They are individuals, families, religious organizations, scouts, community service organizations, businesses, and school groups. Their contributions are tremendous and immeasurable.

It takes stamina, enthusiasm, and optimism to do this challenging work. Perhaps above all it takes courage. It's hard to stand up and do something to make the world a better place—that's why too few people do. But in the long run, it's much harder to live with the outcomes of apathy. NAP's volunteers understand this, more and more every year, and it seems to be what motivates them to undo the environmental damage caused by our ancestors, our parents, and ourselves. Some might say our volunteers are literally saving the world. What did you do last week?



Parks & Recreation
CITY OF ANN ARBOR

Natural Area Preservation is a Division of the City of Ann Arbor Department of Parks and Recreation.

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Coordinator's Corner: PROS Plan Update

In July the Parks and Recreation Department finished the interim version of the 1999-2005 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS Plan). This hefty document contains background information, public survey responses, maps, various planning documents, and recommendations for the future. NAP contributed to this document, and responsibility for achieving some of the recommendations falls directly on us.

Many of our existing natural areas are in need of formal management plans, which we have started developing for a few parks. But with so many individual parcels of land, creating a unique management plan for each one will require a tremendous amount of time and effort. Another way to approach the issue is to create management plans for groups of parks, perhaps by lumping them together in several categories by "degree of naturalness." Maybe there will be "Grade A" parks of the highest quality with an accompanying set of rules restricting uses. At the other end might be "Grade D" parks—undeveloped areas with a low degree of naturalness. These parks would be appropriate for a wider range of park uses. The details have yet to be worked out, but this will be a major project for NAP this fall and winter. NAP will also be involved in future natural area acquisitions for the City's park system. Many potential acquisitions have been identified in the PROS Plan. Prioritizing this list, and others, will also require our ecological expertise.

If you're interested in seeing this interim plan, look for it on the city's web page at www.ci.ann-arbor.mi.us. You can also view a hard copy at the public library and at the NAP office.

Dave Borneman,
Natural Area Preservation Coordinator

NAP-penings

At long last, *Along the Huron* is available at a bookstore near you! This book, written by NAP staff and funded by a grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Natural Heritage Program, was recently published



by the University of Michigan Press. It is a guide to the natural communities along the Huron River and includes detailed information about the natural areas bordering the Huron River in Ann Arbor. At \$15.95 per copy, it's a great gift idea for local nature lovers! Two talks are currently scheduled to promote the book. Co-author Mike Kielb will give a talk on birds at Shaman Drum on Saturday, September 25 at 4:00 pm. Mike Kielb and Dave Borneman will speak at the Leslie Science Center on Friday, October 29 at 7:30 pm.

Ralph Powell has joined the ranks of NAP's volunteer photo monitors. He's been taking photographs in Foster (part of Barton Nature Area) from set points. NAP uses these valuable photos to monitor changes in plant communities over time.

With the help of Boy Scout Troop 7, **Eagle Scout Stewart Hedberg** recently constructed two deer exclosures (one at Bird Hills Nature Area and one at Black Pond Woods). The exclosures are designed to keep deer out of a 15' x 15' area. Built solely for educational purposes, the exclosures are the first step in NAP's study of the impact deer have on native vegetation in Ann Arbor's natural areas.

Eagle Scout candidate Colin Riker has taken on the daunting task of controlling erosion on the trail near the Beechwood entrance to Bird Hills Nature Area. He and fellow Boy Scouts will be installing numerous water bars to divert water from the steep trail and prevent further soil from washing away.

Volunteers A.C. Tanner and Beni recently joined **Judy and Manfred Schmidt** as stewards of Scarlett Mitchell Nature Area. Under NAP's guidance they will work independently on restoration projects in the park, such as invasive shrub removal.

The **Volunteer Stewardship Network** was in high gear this summer with site visits to Cedar Bend Nature Area, Shanghai Prairie (owned by St. Joseph Mercy Hospital), and Thurston Nature Center (an Ann Arbor Public Schools property). If you want to become a park steward and join this group of committed volunteers learning about local natural resources and their management, please call the NAP office.

This fall the Parks and Recreation Department will construct a trail connecting Argo and Bandemer Nature Areas. The “**Barton Drive Multi-Use Trail**,” as it is called, is scheduled to be completed by late fall of this year. Volunteers rescued native plants at the site during a NAP workday in May.

Huron River Day, held July 11 in Gallup Park, was a great success! Thank you to all who joined us in celebrating the importance of the Huron River to our community! A special thank you to those who joined NAP’s butterfly walk, plant walk, and Purple Loosestrife Pull!

A new building has been approved for the **Leslie Science Center**, resulting in some changes for NAP. We will have expanded office space upstairs in the main house of the science center, but the conservation crew will need to move its tools and supplies out of the honey house, or “shed” as we call it. Ground breaking is scheduled for this fall.



The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan

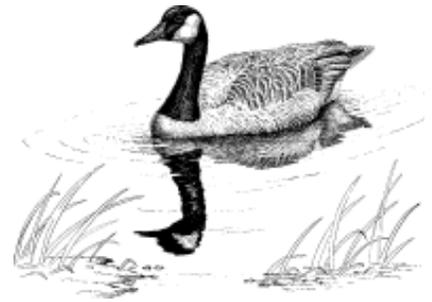
NAP Ornithologist Dea Armstrong is pleased to announce the successful breeding of **Bobolinks** at the Ann Arbor Landfill Property this summer. NAP, landfill staff, Breeding Bird Survey volunteer Roger Kuhlman, and farmers worked together to coordinate

mowing of the 4 hayfields on landfill property. The hayfields were closely monitored by Roger and NAP staff to determine which had breeding Bobolinks. The farmers waited to mow these fields until the Bobolink young fledged. An article about the declining Bobolink population appeared in the Autumn 1998 *NAP News*.

Take a look at the medians along **Huron Parkway** this fall and you will notice they are undergoing a restorative face-lift. What is now turf (from Hubbard Road south to the entrance to Geddes Lakes Apartments) will slowly be transformed into a colorful prairie of native forbs and grasses. Prairies require less maintenance than turf (no mowing, watering, or fertilizing), thus reducing energy costs as well as stormwater run-off. Michigan Wildflower Farm, contractors for this pilot project, are hoping to sow

the forb and grass seed this October. They will also sow a cover crop of wild rye which will green up the site for the fall/winter period.

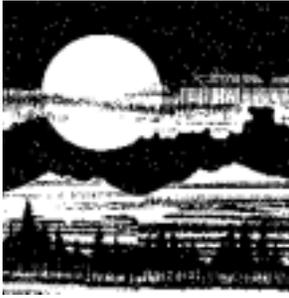
In June NAP staff and volunteers joined forces with officials from the DNR, banding 257 **Canada geese** in a study to



determine whether Ann Arbor is eligible for an egg replacement program. The program would aim to slow the growth of the City’s goose population. Using canoes, walkie talkies, and an assortment of creative “shooing” techniques, workers rounded up, banded, and released geese in Gallup Park, Huron Hills Golf Course, and Leslie Park Golf Course. This fall DNR officials will be monitoring the banded geese to determine how many are year-round residents.

The City of Ann Arbor City Council has approved a **new millage proposal** for the November ballot. If passed, the millage would provide funds to acquire additional parkland.

Over the past few years we’ve watched the Children’s Wet Meadow in Buhr Park grow from an idea, to a plan, to an actual on-the-ground project. Where once there was turf, now there are sedges and a host of native wildflowers. The same citizen’s group who spearheaded that project is now championing a new proposal—to develop a **native landscaping plan for the Buhr Park/Cobblestone Farm area** which would better manage rainwater falling there without compromising the recreational needs of this popular city park. Citizens have hired Conservation Design Forum (CDF), an environmental consulting firm, to develop the plan. CDF will take input from park staff, neighbors, user groups, and other interested parties and will also consider existing master plans for the site. Contact NAP if you would like to provide input or for more information.



Reflections from Afield

by Jennifer Mairret

One of the ironies of environmental work is that a large part of it happens in offices, meeting rooms, and behind computers. Golden savannas, woodland wildflowers, and babbling

brooks are often the inspiration behind a biologist's career. However, they are seldom the scenery of day to day dealings. Because of this, subtle changes and small successes may pass unnoticed like a fringed gentian blooming in the middle of a tallgrass prairie.

I am not one of the fortunate few featured in *National Geographic* magazines—the biologists featured traversing through unimaginably diverse ecosystems, racing against the clock to catalog newly discovered species imminently threatened with extinction. Instead, I am in the majority and spend most of my days in an office, occasionally escaping to the field. Recently, I had one of those treasured opportunities to “escape to the field” for a week and spend some time reflecting far afield in the mountains of Idaho.

This trip, admittedly, was not work related. However, my thoughts of NAP were never far away as I noticed signs of restoration work in progress and many signs of work yet to be done. Despite extremely different plant and animal communities, there were all too familiar sites, such as spotted knapweed and rivulets of purple loosestrife that led from irrigation canals to mountainous headwaters. I also came across pamphlets with messages about the threat that these invasives pose to biodiversity. There were signs of fire—acres and acres of mountainsides left charred from forest fires—that left me with impressions of flames more intense than I ever care to experience. I expected to see signs featuring Smoky the Bear nearby. Instead, I was surprised by an educational kiosk describing the natural processes of fire and explaining a new policy of surveillance rather than suppression.

The experience that impressed me most, however, was discovering that these attempts at education are working. Time and time again I met with individuals who were both very interested and well-versed in the restoration work in progress. And each time, the effects of work done in offices on ecological restoration and public awareness became more apparent. Perhaps those *National Geographic* explorers aren't the only ones fighting out on the “front lines” of restoration after all.

Staff Updates

NAP recently added a new permanent position titled **Clerk II**. At the time of printing, the name of our new staff member was not available.

NAP will share this administrative position with the Leslie Science Center.



Farewell to **Greg Vaclavek** as NAP's Crew Leader, and hello as a NAP Botanist! Greg left the Crew Leader position in June to spend more time running his business, The Native Plant Nursery. However, in September we welcome Greg back to the NAP staff as a part-time botanist.



Good luck to Conservation Worker **Brian Killian** as he leaves NAP to pursue career opportunities in Colorado. As Thoreau said, “Eastward I go only by force, but westward I go free!”

Don't be confused by the new name of NAP's Outreach Coordinator, formerly **Courtney Babb**. Courtney was married this July and (after much deliberation) decided to take her husband's last name. Her new name is Courtney Shosh.



NAP Autumn 1999 Volunteer Calendar

Please note: Long pants and closed-toe shoes are **REQUIRED** for all outdoor workdays. Call 996-3266 for more information.

SEPTEMBER

September 8, Wednesday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Miller Nature Area, 5:30-7:30 pm

Join us in improving trails at Miller Nature Area! Meet at 5:30 pm at the park entrance on Arborview Boulevard.

September 18, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Sugarbush Park, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Help maintain and improve Sugarbush Park's trails! Meet at 10:00 am at the park sign on Bluett Drive, just east of Georgetown Boulevard.

OCTOBER

October 2, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Furstenberg Nature Area, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Come remove invasive, non-native shrubs at Furstenberg Nature Area! Meet at 10:00 am at the restrooms at Furstenberg (off of Fuller Road across from Huron High School).

October 10, Sunday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Furstenberg Nature Area, 12:00-4:00 pm

Led by a volunteer steward, this workday will focus on maintaining and improving the Native Plant Exhibit Garden at Furstenberg Nature Area. Please bring your own drinking water, snack, and work gloves. Also bring a shovel and/or spade if you have one. It will be a great opportunity to learn about native prairie plants! Meet at noon at the garden (on the left just as you enter the nature area from Fuller Road). Call 996-3266 for more information.

October 16, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Leslie Science Center, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Join us in cleaning native seeds to prepare them for storage or sowing. The work will be indoors. Meet at 10:00 am inside the Leslie Science Center, 1831 Traver Road.

October 30, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Barton Nature Area, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Help us collect native seeds to be used in future restoration projects! Meet at 10:00 am at the Barton Dam parking lot off of Huron River Drive (just north of Bird Road).

NOVEMBER

November 6, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Bird Hills Nature Area, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Our task will be collecting seeds from native, woodland plants. The seeds will be used in future restoration projects. Meet at 10:00 am at the park entrance on Newport Road.

November 20, Saturday
Volunteer Stewardship Workday
Leslie Science Center, 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Help clean seeds to prepare them for storage or sowing. The work will be indoors. Meet at 10:00 am inside the Leslie Science Center, 1831 Traver Road.

DECEMBER

December 7, Tuesday
Volunteer Appreciation Potluck
Cobblestone Farm Barn, 6:00-9:00 pm

Join us as we celebrate the close of the 1999 field season and the wonderful work of our volunteers! Please let us know if you're coming so we plan for enough people! Call 996-3266.

SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Seed Collectors Wanted!

NAP is looking for volunteers interested in gathering native seeds from park natural areas. Each fall we search through prairies and woodlands collecting pounds of seeds from dozens of species of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. The seeds we collect are cleaned, weighed, and then sown into park natural areas undergoing restoration. With so many parks and so little time, we need your help! Please call 996-3266 for more information.

Fall Flying Butterflies in Southeastern Michigan

by Chris Rickards (photos from *Butterflies and Skippers of Ohio*)

Although most butterflies are seen from late spring to late summer, a few of our resident species may be seen in early spring and late into the fall. These butterflies are members of the large butterfly family Nymphalidae, or “Brushfoot” butterflies.

Some of our native Nymphalid butterflies overwinter as adult butterflies called imagos. These butterflies find a safe, warm place, usually under the bark of a tree or in a barn, and hibernate until the first warm days of spring. During the winter they mature sexually and wake to feed and find a mate. They lay their eggs, or ova, early in the year. The caterpillars feed on woody or herbaceous plants, form a chrysalis (a pupa enclosed in a firm case or cocoon), and eventually emerge as an adult in mid summer. Many species may rest during the hot summer months in a state of torpor or hibernation known as estivation. During the fall these butterflies feed heavily before entering hibernation for the winter.

Brushfoot butterflies may be seen in meadows and wooded areas feeding on a variety of flowering plants, tree sap, rotting fruit and even animal excrement. Many species may be seen throughout Ann Arbor, particularly in the city’s natural areas. The following resident, breeding Nymphalid butterflies may be found in Ann Arbor’s parks in September and October. Look for them nectaring on plant species within the *Aster* and *Eupatorium* genera.

Question Marks (*Polygonia interrogationis*) are found in woodland and meadow habitats. Their larval host plants are elms. A silver question mark shape on the hind wing identifies these butterflies. They have been recorded in Bandemer, Barton, Marshall, Kuebler Langford, Dhu Varren Woods, and Furstenberg Nature Areas but may be seen throughout Ann Arbor.

Commas (*Polygonia comma*) are mainly found within wooded areas, although they



Question Mark



Comma



Mourning Cloak



Red Admiral



Milbert's
Tortoiseshell



Compton's
Tortoiseshell

may occasionally be seen in more open meadows. They are likely to be observed feeding from tree sap in a downward facing position. Frequently seen in most of Ann Arbor’s parks, these butterflies can be distinguished from Question Marks by a distinct silver comma shape on their hind wing. Their larval host plants are elms and hops.

Mourning Cloaks (*Nymphalis antiopa*) are usually the first butterflies to emerge from hibernation and the last to disappear in fall. They may be seen flying on the first sunny days of spring even when snow is present. Look for these butterflies in or near deciduous woodlands where their larval host plants are found. Willows, elms, birches, and aspens are their favorites.

Red Admirals (*Vanessa atalanta*) are common butterflies of all habitats around Ann Arbor. They can be seen nectaring from many flowering plants from April through October. Their resident population is supplemented by migrant individuals from the south. They likely suffer heavy losses during hibernation, however, and may be quite rare early in spring. Nettles are the Red Admiral’s larval host plant.

Milbert’s Tortoiseshells (*Nymphalis milberti*) are butterflies of open spaces, often seen flying fast or basking on open patches of soil. They are heavy nectar feeders as adults and utilize nettles as their larval host plant. These butterflies have been seen in Bandemer, Furstenberg, Barton, Kuebler Langford, and Brown Parks.

Compton’s Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis vau-album*), a rare northern species, has been recorded in Marshall Nature Area in spring and summer. Its larval food plants are willows, birches, and aspens. This is one of Ann Arbor’s rarest butterflies and may not be a permanent resident. Individuals are known to disperse in a southerly direction in spring from resident northern populations, and individuals seen around Ann Arbor may be migrants. Never visiting flowers, this butterfly may be seen feeding on rotting fruit and basking on forest paths.



Rethinking How We Use Our Parks and Natural Areas

by Dea Armstrong

We're very lucky Ann Arbor is a town of parks and natural areas; roughly 10% of the city is set aside as parkland. We all have noticed the remarkable growth and development in surrounding counties, but undeveloped land within city limits is disappearing, too. This means that more people and, consequently, more pets, are using our 1000 acres of undeveloped parkland than ever before.

Perhaps 30 years ago a pet allowed to run freely through an Ann Arbor park might have disrupted the nesting cycle of a small percentage of Ovenbirds (small, migratory warblers whose winter range extends from the southern U.S. into South America). The ground-nesting Ovenbirds that were disturbed could probably move on to another site and re-nest successfully. In 1999, however, only one Ann Arbor park (Marshall) had a nesting Ovenbird, and most of the Ovenbird's habitat has been developed. So if disturbed, it may not have anywhere to re-nest. Because there is so little habitat available to wildlife today, both within our city and in the surrounding areas, we all need to rethink how we and our pets use our parks and natural areas. Here are a few suggestions of how we can use parks in a way friendly to all life forms.

- Stay on trails at all times and keep pets on the trail. No matter how well your pet listens to you, this means keeping it on a leash (or even a harness). It's the law for dogs, and it may well become the law for cats. Obviously, it's mandatory for alligators!
- Remove pet waste. Feces on trails or tossed off the trail are not good fertilizer, and humans are not thrilled with that scent "eau de tennis shoe dung." Carry a plastic bag and dispose of the waste at home by flushing it or using it to fertilize *your* plants and yard.
- Don't allow pets to roam free. "Free range dogs" are far less of a problem than "free range cats" since keeping cats inside is a more recent concept (kitty litter was only invented about 50 years ago, and the deodorizing kind came about even later). Most dog owners understand that keeping their dogs inside or in a dog run keeps them safe. The same is true for cats. Recent research also shows that cats and dogs are one of the leading predators of migratory songbirds. While at least one third of all cat owners agree, there are many who still believe the following myths about cats and wildlife: "Belled" cats don't kill birds (in fact, they do), well fed cats won't kill wildlife (they do, they just don't eat it), and most animals caught by a cat survive since



the cat only plays with it (being caught by a cat is usually fatal even if the animal doesn't die immediately). Most owners of outdoor cats say that their next cat will be an indoor cat, but why not start with the current one and convert a happy outdoor cat to a happy indoor one? Winter is probably the best time to start since your cat likely spends less time outside. Decrease the outdoor time gradually, give your cat plenty of attention, and give it an interesting place to play. Consult your veterinarian for further tips.

Remember, all kinds of animals use Ann Arbor's parks. With a little planning and consideration we can preserve our limited natural areas for us all—humans, our (leashed) pets, and wildlife.



Park Focus: Barton Nature Area

(Excerpt from *Along the Huron*)

History

Barton Nature Area was purchased in the 1960s from Detroit Edison, who used Barton Dam for electric power production. Barton is the only dam in the city still used to generate electricity, but now the City sells the electricity to Detroit Edison. Historically, the flat nature of this land made it attractive for farming. The bridges and the wide wood chip trail were constructed in 1991 to supplement the informal network of trails which has evolved over time.

Natural Communities

The oxbow area in Barton Nature Area is a patchwork of natural communities, including old field, dry prairie, wet meadow, wet shrubland, mesic forest, and emergent marsh. In the 1994-1998 plant inventory, 314 species of plants were recorded here, 235 of them native.

The majority of the oxbow area is classified as old field. Clues from remnant plants suggest that it used to be a prairie, but became an old field after being abandoned as farmland. Still, there are many native wildflowers to enjoy. In the fall the brilliant yellow color of showy goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*) lights up the landscape.

Closer to the railroad, the old field has recovered to what can once again be called a dry prairie. The main distinction here is the thick stand of big bluestem grass (*Andropogon gerardii*) which dominates in patches. This is the densest stand of this six-foot high grass that you will find in any of our city parks. Big bluestem is probably the most widespread of any of the tall prairie grasses. It was once quite abundant in the tallgrass prairies which stretched for hundreds of miles across the Midwest. Catch it at its peak of color and height in September and October. The proximity of this prairie remnant to the



big bluestem

railroad tracks is not mere chance. Sparks thrown from passing trains would have ensured that this area historically burned with enough regularity to keep out the encroaching shrubs.

As the river worked its way out to its current path with ever-widening swaths, it left behind a few former channels that are slightly lower and wetter than the old field and dry prairie. Here the wet meadow community dominates. These rich areas are home to many birds and butterflies, as well as numerous moisture-loving plants such as sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), the pale pink, flat-topped flowers of Joe-pye weed (*Eupatorium maculatum*), and numerous sedges (*Carex*). Also look for the less common tufted loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsiflora*) and yellowish flowers of swamp-betony (*Pedicularis lanceolata*).



Joe-pye weed

Like prairies, wet meadows are also maintained by fires. Where no fires have occurred recently, the wet meadows have been invaded by shrubs to the point where they are now classified as wet shrublands. Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), and willow (*Salix*) are the most common native shrubs here, though there are also many non-natives. Identify red-osier dogwood by its bright red stems. This is also the only known site in Ann Arbor for wild senna (*Cassia hebecarpa*). This tall, striking plant grows to 5 feet in height and is topped with a large cluster of bright yellow, butterfly-like flowers.

Woody plants draw moisture out of the soil and release it to the atmosphere as they “breathe.” This can have the effect of drying the soil and lowering the water table. This may be what has allowed a patch of mesic forest to replace the wet meadows and wet shrublands in part of the oxbow area. Tall agrimony (*Agrimonia gryposepala*), enchanter’s nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) are some of the wildflowers that can be

found beneath basswood (*Tilia americana*) and American elm (*Ulmus americana*) trees.

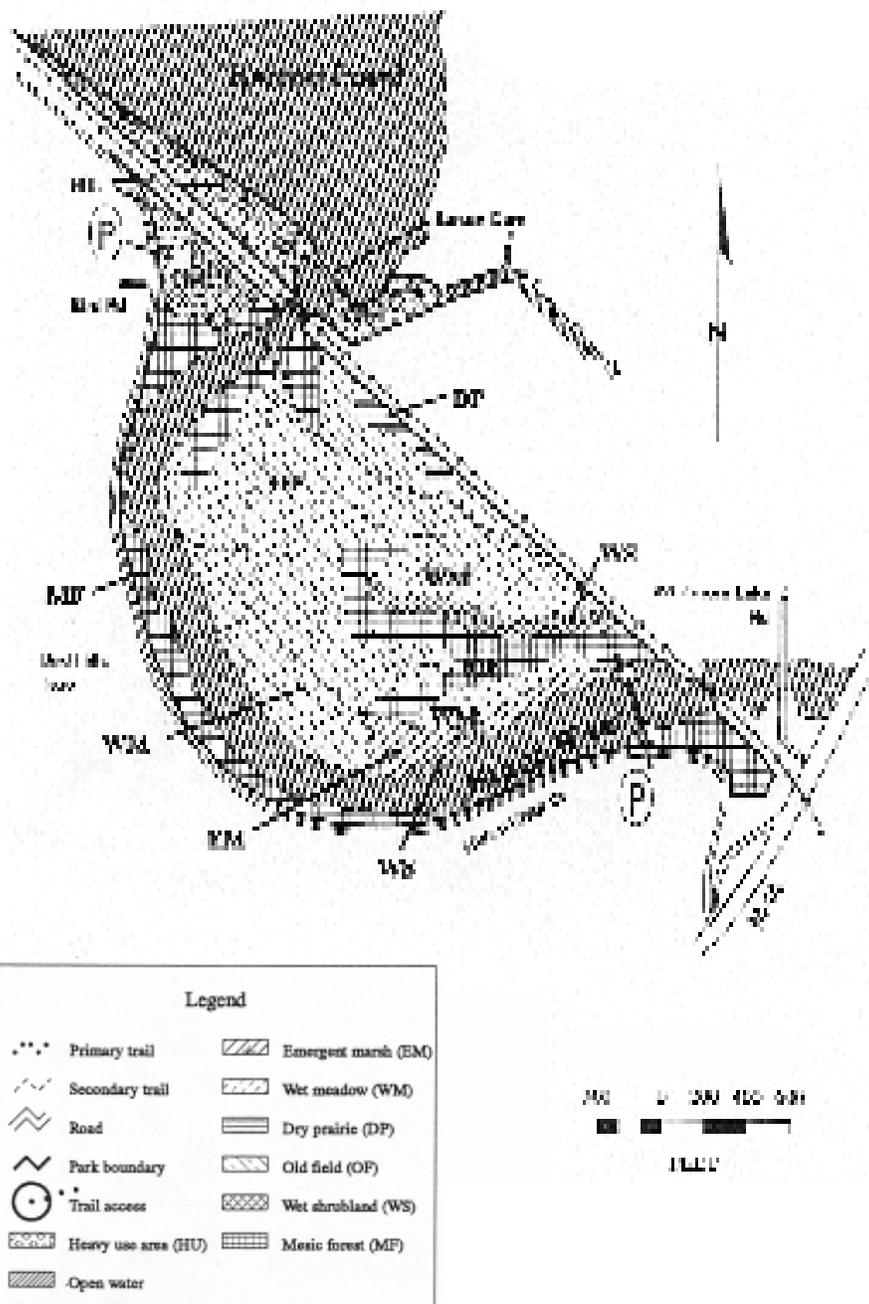
At the edge of the river along the backwater of several small bays lies an emergent marsh. Unfortunately, in the summer and fall the scene is dominated by purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). Plant life is also present underneath the surface of the water at the river's edge. Canoeists can feel these submerged plants with their paddles and look down to see coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), pondweed (*Potamogeton*), great bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*), and water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum*) growing there.

Animals

The oxbow area of Barton Nature Area is home to several uncommon butterflies. American and Bronze Coppers are found in the open fields, while the state special concern species Wild Indigo Duskywing can be seen among patches of crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*). Recently, the Little Sulphur and Orange Sulphur, both southern species, have been located in the park.

The brushy thickets adjacent to the prairie and old field are home to the Brown Thrasher, an otherwise rare bird in the Ann Arbor area. According to *The Birds of Washtenaw County, Michigan*, this is also one of the few locations in Washtenaw County where overwintering robins can be seen. Canada geese, various ducks, and Great Blue Herons are often visible from the southern bridge.

Listen for the calls of chorus frogs and spring peepers in Barton. Red fox are sometimes seen in the park, and muskrats are common along the river banks.



Parking	1) main lot is on Huron River Drive near Barton Dam, 2) pull-off a mile further east, near M-14
Trail Access	either parking area
Restrooms	a portable one near the main parking lot
Picnic Areas	tables and grills near the main parking lot, table near the dam
River Access	canoeists have a short portage around the west end of the dam; numerous fishing sites along the riverbank, especially near the dam, where there is also a small dock in Barton Pond
Size	83.6 acres

My Experience with NAP

by Kim Rasche



This summer was the third year that interns came from Germany to do their internship at the City of Ann Arbor. I was one of those lucky persons who had the chance to work with NAP as part of the Parks and Recreation Department. From June 1 until July 31 I had two months of new experiences and pleasure working in the nice wooden house on the hill where NAP and the Leslie Science Center (LSC) are located, surrounded by trees and parks. My work at NAP included working outside in the parks with the crew (Mallory, Michelle, Kristie and Brian), as well as office work for NAP and LSC. One of my projects was to find new information about how to control and fight invasive plants in our parks.

There are many things I learned and many things I can use in my studies in Germany, but what I liked most while working with NAP and LSC was everybody being so nice and helpful to me. I want to thank you Jen, Courtney, Mallory, Kristie, Michelle, Brian, Dave and all the LSC staff for that!! Of course there was also the nicest city in the U.S. that made my trip to the States so fantastic. During my spare time I had so many opportunities to enjoy life in Ann Arbor, meeting a lot of people and also taking trips around Michigan and further.

Back in Germany I still have one year of study in Public Administration Science at the University in Kehl to finish my 4-year program. During that time we also speak about our internship with the younger students. I'm gonna recommend this place for sure!

Return Service Requested

Natural Area Preservation
City of Ann Arbor
Dept. of Parks and Recreation
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