



NAP

NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION

Protecting and restoring Ann Arbor's natural areas and fostering an environmental ethic among its citizens

Volume 24, Number 4
Winter 2019

A Treasure for Birds: Gallup Park

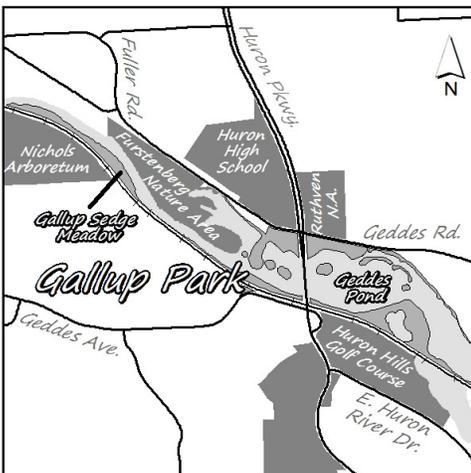
Juliet Berger, Ornithologist

When Ann Arborites think of our park system, the first place that comes to mind might be Gallup Park. A popular spot for nature lovers, picnickers, runners, walkers, playground users and boaters, Gallup hosts one of the City's two canoe liveries, two great playgrounds, miles of paved trails, picnic shelters and a turtle-nesting mound. This park was named for Eli Gallup, who was the Ann Arbor Parks Superintendent in the early 20th Century. It was under his watch that many of the dams and adjacent land along the Huron River were acquired and developed as parks. However,



Prothonotary Warblers at the nest cavity in Gallup Photo by Keith Dickey

outdoor enthusiasts don't always know about Gallup Park's other treasures—including the sedge meadow and Geddes Pond, where native plants, birds and other animals thrive.



Many uncommon species of nesting birds call Gallup Park home, particularly in the sedge meadow, a unique treasure in the Ann Arbor park system. Find the wet meadow by walking west on the Gallup pathway from the wooden car bridge for about 10 minutes. Native plants, such as tussock sedge, mountain mint and Culver's root are adapted to this habitat and support many insects, which feed birds galore.

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A unit of the City of Ann Arbor
Community Services Area, Parks
and Recreation Services.

*The mission of Natural Area
Preservation is to protect and
restore Ann Arbor's natural areas
and to foster an environmental ethic
among its citizens.*

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COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Keep Up the Good Work!

Climate change has finally become mainstream. Everybody is talking about it, and for good reason, as it threatens drastic changes to our planet. It's been the subject of numerous presentations at recent ecological conferences. But as the discussion spills over from the scientific community to the general public, there's a risk of it being misrepresented, or at least oversimplified. So I thought I'd weigh in here with my own thoughts about what climate change will do to the restoration work we undertake here in our little corner of the planet. This sort of crystal ball-gazing is always dangerous, as I risk having my current predictions read with horror by future generations. But here goes...

Climate change will undoubtedly bring profound changes to many parts of the planet, in ways far too numerous and complex to expound on here. In Michigan, the changes seen during our lifetimes may well be far less than in many other locations. I do expect that things will be warmer overall, and weather events will be more extreme. So, how are we as ecological restorationists preparing for these changes? Are we planting our parks with seeds native to Tennessee? Or converting our oak-hickory forests to longleaf pine ecosystems? Nope. None of us alive today will see range shifts that extreme. In recent decades, plant and animal ranges have shifted north about one mile per year, on average. It's 45 miles south to Toledo, and about 90 miles to Findley, Ohio. So if Appalachian ecosystems are ever going to shift north as far as Ann Arbor, it's not going to happen in the near future.

No, let's not give up quite yet on our own resilient native southeastern Michigan ecosystems. Now is not the time to abandon them; now is the time to strengthen them! We've already been invaded by Japanese Stiltgrass, a weed formerly found mostly in the southeastern U.S. We can expect that others will follow, some spurred on by climate change. The more we do to keep our native forests, savannas, prairies, and wetlands healthy now, the more resistant they will be to invasives in the future.

In Michigan, we may very well need to welcome some plant and animal species whose previous range didn't quite extend this far north. And we may be unable to hold on to other species who can no longer survive this far south. But we don't yet need to say goodbye to our oak-hickory woodlands, or our other native ecosystems. They will be with us through our lifetimes, barring some other unforeseen ecological disaster. And the restoration work we collectively do today will continue to pay big dividends tomorrow, and for years to come. The pollinator gardens we tend today will continue to nurture our native pollinators. And the tiny acorns we plant today will grow into grand old oaks that will still find the climate of Ann Arbor acceptable far into the future. The threat of climate change to our planet is real; but don't let that distract you from the good work we're all doing here today.

-David Borneman, Natural Area Preservation Manager

Winter Tree Identification

Becky Gajewski, Stewardship Specialist

Folks don't normally think of winter as a great time to practice plant identification. After all, the flowers and grasses are dormant or covered with snow and the trees have lost their distinguishing leafy features. But winter can actually be one of the best times to learn to identify trees because you can do so based on their bark and buds, which they keep all year round. Read on to see how you can identify common groups of trees by their bark and buds after the leaves have fallen.

Oaks:

The most common oaks in our woodlands are red, black, and white oak. If you can get a look at the buds, they usually appear in clusters on the ends of the twigs. White oak buds are rounded at the tips, like a little clump of bird eggs, while black and red oak buds are pointed. On mature trees, white and black oak bark has a distinctly blocky pattern. Black oak's bark is dark gray ("black"), while white oak's bark is light gray ("white"). Red oak's bark isn't blocky, rather, it has long, vertical ridges of light gray with dark gray in between. It looks as though someone took an iron and flattened out the ridges.



White oak and red oak buds



White oak bark



Black oak bark



Red oak bark

Hickories:

As with the oaks, we have three common species of hickory in our area: bitternut, pignut, and shagbark hickory. Bitternut hickory is most easily identified by its buds, which are long, pointed, and bright sulfur yellow in color. The bark of this tree is a little trickier to distinguish, but it is gray and separates into shallow cracks and narrow, crisscrossing ridges. When I was learning to identify this tree, we called the shapes in the bark "crystal latticework." Shagbark hickory is very easy to identify. As its name implies, its bark has a very shaggy appearance, separating into long, rough plates that curve away from the trunk on one or both ends. Pignut hickory can look similar to bitternut or like a mix between bitternut and shagbark, but it does not have the sulfur yellow buds, and its bark may occasionally separate into small loose strips.



Bitternut hickory bud



Bitternut hickory bark



Shagbark hickory bark



Pignut hickory bark

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NAP

VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP CALENDAR WINTER 2019-2020

Volunteers assist NAP in all aspects of our work. Community involvement is vital to the success of NAP's conservation and education efforts. Please join us for one of these events!

For all of our **Stewardship Workdays**, please dress in layers and wear shoes suitable for snow and wet ground. Workdays are **free** and suitable for all ages. Minors must be accompanied by a guardian or have a signed release form. Contact NAP for release forms. Tools, snacks, and know-how provided.

DECEMBER

Stewardship Workday
Saturday, December 7, 9 a.m. to noon
Miller Nature Area

This natural oasis is beloved by neighbors. Help us make it more beautiful by removing invasive species and making room for more native plants. Meet us at the Arborview Boulevard entrance, just east of Wildwood Avenue.

Stewardship Workday
Sunday, December 8, 1 to 4 p.m.
Sugarbush Park

The natural area here has some unique features including a pawpaw grove. Join us to remove non-native shrubs. Meet us between the two cul-de-sacs on Yellowstone Drive, just north of Bluett Road.

JANUARY

Stewardship Workday
Saturday, January 4, 1 to 3 p.m.
Olson Park

Olson Park is great place to bird watch, from migrant waterfowl in the wetland to songbirds in the meadow. Help us improve the habitat for these native birds by removing invasive shrubs. Meet us at the park entrance on Dhu Varren Road, just east of Pontiac Trail.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
Stewardship Workday
Monday, January 20, 1 to 3 p.m.
Barton Nature Area



Each year, on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is observed as a "day on, not a day

off." MLK Day of Service is intended to move us closer to Dr. King's vision of a "Beloved Community." Meet at the Barton Dam parking lot off Huron River Drive. #MLKDay

FEBRUARY

World Wetlands Day
Stewardship Workday
Sunday, February 2, 1 to 3 p.m.
Foxfire West Nature Area

World
Wetlands Day
2 February 2019



Wetlands and
climate change

World Wetlands Day is celebrated each year to raise awareness about the vital role of wetlands for people and our planet. The wetland here provide habitat for wildlife that depend on water and is home to a variety of wetland wildflowers. Join our efforts to keep this ecosystem healthy by removing invasive shrubs. Meet us at the park entrance on Birchwood Drive. #WorldWetlandsDay #KeepWetlands

Stewardship Workday
Saturday, February 8, 1 to 3 p.m.
Furstenberg Nature Area

This park is home to many ecosystems including wetland, woodland, prairie, and oak savanna. Come explore these various environments in their winter glory while helping to protect. Please meet in the parking lot off of Fuller Road.

President's Day
Stewardship Workday
Monday, February 17, 1 to 3 p.m.
Gallup Park

Spend your day off volunteering to help wildlife! A sedge meadow lies

along the border-to-border trail, but it is threatened by invasive shrubs. Clearing shrubs from this wetland will benefit both frogs and butterflies. Meet in the Gallup Park parking lot, just over the wooden bridge.

CONTROLLED BURN SEASON KICKOFF



STEWARDSHIP NETWORK
STEWARDS' CIRCLE

7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

Second Tuesday of every month

Bruegger's Bagels

709 N. University Avenue

Are you interested in learning more about how to care for natural areas? Then join the Stewardship Network's Huron Arbor cluster for an informal discussion on a monthly topic with volunteer and professional land stewards, plus others interested in nature. Free and open to anyone interested.
www.stewardshipnetwork.org.

December 10: Goatscaping at Gallup Park

'Goatscaping' is a way to address poison ivy, overgrown brush, and invasive plants in non-chemical ways. This past summer Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation used goats to control plants on two islands at Gallup Park. Come learn about this pilot project, its goals and results, and what happens next.

January 14: Taking Meaningful Photographs in Nature

Do you feel like your photographs of your work could be better? How do you set up a shot so that your photo tells a story, or makes the viewer feel a certain emotion? How can we most effectively show viewers the work we've accomplished? Come get some tips on nature photography from an expert.

February 11: Private Lands Conservation and Stewardship

This month we'll focus on the unique issues facing private landowners interested in habitat management on their property. We'll offer resources for landowners such as who to reach out to for technical support and how to find financial resources for both stewardship and protection. Opportunities for public-private collaborative partnerships will also be discussed. Come prepared to share the challenges you are facing and we'll see if we can solve them together.

SPRING 2020 KICKOFFS AND TRAININGS

For more information or to register for any of the events listed below, please contact us at NAP@a2gov.org or call 734.794.6627

Public Meeting: Controlled Burn Program

Tuesday, February 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin Ave

This meeting will be a discussion about our Controlled Ecological Burn Program. All persons are encouraged to participate in public meetings. Accommodations, including sign language interpreters, may be arranged by contacting the City Clerk's office at 734.794.6140; via email to: cityclerk@a2gov.org; or by written request addressed and mailed or delivered to: City Clerk's Office, 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Requests made with less than two business days' notice may not be able to be accommodated.

Volunteer Burn Crew Training

Wednesday, February 19, noon to 5 p.m.

Become a part of NAP's Volunteer Burn Crew! This is the required training session for anyone interested in assisting with NAP's controlled burns. Burns typically take place Monday through Friday between noon and 7 p.m. Registration is required by February 18, as enrollment is limited. Some portion of training may be outdoors.

Salamander Survey Kickoff and Training

Sunday, March 8, noon to 2 p.m.

Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin Ave

Learn how to help NAP monitor salamanders in Ann Arbor's parks – there are 5 species here! Volunteers will select parks to survey and learn how to identify these rarely-seen amphibians. Must be willing to walk in the woods on rainy cold nights in early spring, and look under logs in spring and summer. Please register by March 5.

Frog and Toad Survey Kickoff and Training

Sunday, March 8, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Ann Arbor Senior Center, 1320 Baldwin Ave

Everyone is invited to help monitor frog populations in Ann Arbor! No experience required! You will learn to identify frogs by ear and eye and will select a route to survey. Then, once per month, March through June, travel a route through the city at night, stopping to listen for frogs along the way. Most routes require driving. Please register by March 5.

Photo Monitoring Kickoff and Training

Saturday, March 28, 10 to 11 a.m.

NAP Office, 3875 E. Huron River Drive

Do you like photography and spending time outdoors? Photo monitoring may be the perfect volunteer opportunity for you! We need volunteers to take photos at specific locations in parks throughout the year to record changes and the progress of our work. Come join us at this informational meeting for more details about this volunteer opportunity! Please register by March 21.

NAP Workday Leader Training

Saturday, March 28, noon to 3:30 p.m.

NAP Office, 3875 E. Huron River Drive

This training is for volunteers interested in leading and/or co-leading NAP volunteer workdays. A strong commitment to preserving the environment, while fostering community and engaging the public is necessary. Participants should be dressed for classroom and possible field training. Minimum age of 18. Please register by March 21.

Gallup Park

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

For several years, Willow Flycatchers have made their home in the sedge meadow. These small greenish birds sally forth from a branch, over the grasses and sedges, catch an insect, and bring it back to the same branch to consume it. They build their small, cup-shaped nests low in willows and other shrubs, and can be seen from late May through July, often calling *fitz-bew*, their distinctive song. They are uncommon in our parks, only generally found nesting here, Olson Park and Furstenberg Nature Area. NAP's work preserving and restoring this natural area helps this scarce bird species to thrive.

Standing dead trees along the water's edge in the sedge meadow provide the perfect habitat for Downy Woodpeckers. This year, a pair of Prothonotary Warblers chose an old Downy Woodpecker hole for their nest. The Prothonotary Warbler is the only cavity-nesting warbler species in the Eastern U.S., a bright golden insect-eater with gray wings, whose preferred breeding habitat is a hole in a tree hanging over the water. Prothonotary Warblers are listed in Michigan as a species of special concern, so providing the right conditions for them to nest in our parks was a huge win! Since Michigan lies at the northern edge of their customary breeding range, the birds are naturally scarce. But, a small population established itself several years ago on the Huron River at Hudson Mills Metropark just west of Ann Arbor, and the population continues to spread downstream. Last year they nested in an Ann Arbor park for the first time, in Forest Nature Area. This year they returned to Forest and also moved into the Gallup sedge meadow, where they delighted many bird lovers. The best way to see Prothonotary Warblers is by boat. Luckily, you can rent a canoe, kayak or paddleboat right at Gallup Park Canoe Livery. The male warbler's loud *sweet-sweet-sweet-sweet* song alerts us to the birds' location and helps us to see this tiny songster (photo on page 1).

In winter, Gallup Park really shines. The open water at Geddes Pond can be an ideal place to view wintering ducks and other waterfowl. Rafts of Common Mergansers, with their green or rusty red head-feathers, make Geddes Pond their temporary home. Other diving ducks, such as Canvasback, Redhead, Scaup and Bufflehead, can be seen searching the waters for fish and invertebrates. Often a raptor, such as a Merlin or Cooper's Hawk, will make its winter home here too, feeding on the bounty of small songbirds that shelter in the berry bushes at Gallup. In recent years, a Northern Mockingbird has overwintered at Gallup, feasting on berries and delighting passing walkers. Maybe we will see her again this winter in Gallup Park, Ann Arbor's most renowned park.

To help protect the Gallup sedge meadow from invading shrubs, join our workday on Monday, February 17th from 1 to 3 p.m. See page 4 for details.

NAPpenings

Thank you to the local organizations that donated prizes for our Volunteer Appreciation Potluck!

Blom Meadworks
www.drinkblom.com
City of Ann Arbor Canoe Liveries
www.a2gov.org/canoe
City of Ann Arbor Golf Courses
www.a2gov.org/golf
The Creature Conservancy
www.thecreatureconservancy.org
Downtown Home and Garden
www.downtownhomeandgarden.com
Michigan Wildflower Farm
www.michiganwildflowerfarm.com
Motawi Tileworks
www.motawi.com
Real Seafood Company
www.realseafoodcoannarbor.com

Upcoming Conferences Sponsored by NAP:



The Science, Practice, and Art of Restoring Native Ecosystems Conference January 17-18, 2020

This annual conference, at the Kellogg Conference Center at Michigan State University in East Lansing, covers a wide range of topics including environmental justice, watershed conservation, and much more! See www.stewardshipnetwork.org to register or for more information.



6th Annual Burning Issues Workshop February 4-5, 2020

This annual workshop is designed to enable land managers, researchers, resource specialists, and fire

practitioners an opportunity to hear and learn from different areas of expertise in a format designed to identify gaps in knowledge and communication, and work toward solutions. To register or for details go to www.firecouncil.org/events.

Thank you!

Thank you Sunset Brooks Association for your financial gift.

Many thanks to the groups who volunteered with NAP recently. We could not make such a difference without you!

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Pall Biotech
Concordia University	PolyOne Corporation
Deloitte Consulting	Sustainable Living Experience
Eldor Automotive Powertrain	TBS Big Brothers and Big Sisters
EMU Catholics on Campus	UM Chi Epsilon
EMU Conservation Biology Class	UM Circle K
EMU Early College Alliance	UM Enviro 201 Class
Geocaching CITO	UM Newnan Advising Center
Greenhills School	UM Rotaract
Mathematical Reviews	UM Society of Wetland Scientists
Michigan Community Scholars Program	Welcome, new Park Steward!
Motawi Tileworks	Gabbie Buendia
MRun	<i>Cedar Bend Nature Area</i>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Cherries:

There two species of cherry that commonly grow to full-sized trees size in our area. They are black cherry and sweet cherry. Black cherry is a native tree whose bark is dark gray, almost black, and broken into thick irregular plates that curl up on the edges, resembling burnt potato chips. Sweet cherry is not native, and it has dark gray bark that sticks tight to the tree and is covered with conspicuous horizontal lines, called lenticels, which help the tree with gas exchange.



Black cherry bark



Sweet cherry bark



STAFF UPDATES

FAREWELL...



REBECCA SNIDER
NAP Communications

I want to thank everyone for 2 memorable years at NAP. It's been a lot of fun working both in the office and out in the nature areas. I've learned so much about native plants and I plan to put this knowledge to use in my own garden. I'm returning to life as a full-time mom for now, but I'll be back as a volunteer. I'll see you in the parks!

Would you like to be part of the NAP staff team? Follow the city jobs website (a2gov.org/jobs). Positions open throughout the year. NAP also has unpaid internships that provide valuable experience! For internship information contact NAP directly: NAP@a2gov.org or 734.794.6627.

Others:

Two more trees with conspicuous bark are ironwood and musclewood. Ironwood is a small- to medium-sized tree with soft, thin, grayish-brown bark that peels into loose strips, giving it a shredded appearance. Some call this "cat-scratch bark." Musclewood is a small tree or large shrub with thin, smooth, dark bluish-gray bark that can be spotted with lighter or darker patches. It gets its name from the distinctive muscle-like ridges running down its trunk.



Ironwood bark



Musclewood bark

For more information about identifying these trees (and many more) check out the book *Michigan Trees* by Burton V. Barnes and Warren H. Wagner, Jr.

Natural Area Preservation

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NAP 2019 by the NUMBERS

- NAP staff and volunteers performed prescribed burns on 113 acres of land across 16 parks
- 1,926 volunteers have contributed over 10,254 hours
- 34 Breeding Bird Survey volunteers contributed 410 hours of effort and observed 190 species
- 40 Photo Monitoring volunteers contributed 191 hours of effort and submitted 555 photos from 20 different parks
- 10 Butterfly Survey volunteers contributed 73 hours of effort and observed 39 species at 7 parks
- 29 Frog and Toad Survey volunteers contributed 210 hours of effort and observed 8 different species at 40 sites
- 27 Salamander Survey volunteers contributed 215 hours of effort and observed 5 different species at 9 parks
- 15 Turtle Stewards contributed 143 hours of effort and observed 5 different species all along the Huron River



HELP US GROW!

Volunteers help us keep track of the plants and animals in our nature areas. Check the calendar inside for the survey training and kickoff events coming in early spring. We would also be delighted to have you come to our public workdays, or contact us about organizing a private workday for your group!