

Natural Area Preservation News

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

Volume 7, Number 2

Summer 2002

Park Focus: Bandemer by Beth Campbell

I recently attended an all-day meeting in downtown Detroit, two blocks from the Detroit River. It was a bright, warm, early spring day, so I walked down to the river's edge to picnic with my brown bag lunch. While sitting on the edge of the waters that connect two wild and wonderful great lakes, I was struck by the harsh geometries of the Detroit and Windsor skylines. I wondered about the time when the Detroit River ran free, edged not by concrete walls, but instead by woodland and wetland.

A week later, I am sitting on the shore of the Huron River in Bandemer Park. Though not as well known as some other City parks, Bandemer is one of a series along the Huron that help create a fairly natural river corridor through Ann Arbor. I am thankful to look out across the river and see the treeline of Argo Nature Area, not an urban skyline, reflected in the calm waters.

Despite these natural qualities, Bandemer has had a rather unnatural history: the land that now makes up the park has been used as a stockyard for the railroad, as pasture land, and as a staging area for the construction of M-14. Fortunately, Bandemer has long been in recovery, and thanks to a little help from NAP and volunteers, it is regaining a diversity of flora and fauna.

Spring is a nice time to be here at Bandemer. It's marvelous to witness the changes happening in the natural communities of the park as spring gradually touches the

wet mesic woods, dry prairie, wet meadow, and long curving shoreline. This is a favorite time of year for birders, who have long used the trails through the mesic shrubland of Bandemer to look for Warbling Vireos, Yellow

Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats, among other birds. Although this shrubland consists of troublesome invasive European buckthorn and Asian honeysuckle, it does provide some habitat for breeding and migrating birds. In past years, Bandemer has been home to a small colony of Cliff Swallows. Look for their circular mud nests under the M-14 bridge, high about the Huron River.

Bandemer also plays host to another group of winged creatures. Soon up to forty species of butterfly will be fluttering throughout the park, competing with the flowers they pollinate for the title of most colorful. Bandemer is a terrific place to see American Coppers and a variety of skippers, and is one of the few sites where Common Sootywings have been observed. The park's shoreline, most easily accessed by canoe, is a great place to check out the otherwise uncommon Harvester butterfly, the larval form of

which is North America's only carnivorous caterpillar.

On warm spring evenings, the mesic woods and wet meadows of Bandemer come alive with the calls of a melodious group of insect-eaters. Listen for the trill of American Toads on your next evening walk. And later in the summer, if you're lucky, you might hear the croaking of the elusive Bullfrog.

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Coordinator's Corner

Weather or Not to Burn Today...

...That is the question we ponder throughout burn season. This spring it has been an especially difficult one to answer satisfactorily. How do you know when it is a good burn day? Well, besides asking obvious questions such as "Is it raining?" or "Are there hurricane-force winds?" the most important question to ask is "What's the relative humidity going to be this afternoon?"

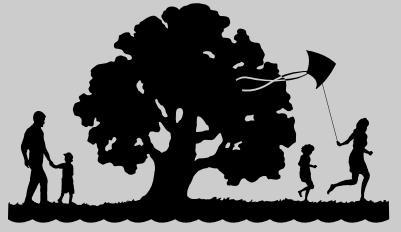
Relative humidity (or RH) is defined as the ratio, in percent, of the amount of moisture in a volume of air to the total amount of moisture that volume can hold at a given temperature. So, if the RH is 50%, that means the air contains only one-half of the total amount of moisture it is capable of holding. On days with low RH (maybe 30% in southeastern Michigan), there's lots of moisture evaporating from the dead leaves and grass on the ground into the dry air. As those materials dry out, they become much more flammable. In the spring, we typically declare a "good burn day" when the RH is between 30% and 50%. Higher than that and things don't burn well. Lower than that and they burn *too* well. Relative humidity is probably *the* most important criterion in determining whether it will be a good day for an effective prescribed burn.

Now, it isn't too hard to turn on the TV and get a decent forecast for tomorrow that tells you the temperature, the wind direction and speed, and whether it will be sunny or cloudy. But try to find an accurate forecast for the RH and you'll quickly discover that it is nearly impossible to track down. That's because even minor variations in air temperature and dew point can translate into significant changes in relative humidity.

Thus, one morning early this spring I checked an Internet forecast that said the RH in Ann Arbor was only going to get down to 66% that afternoon--too high for a good burn. So we sent out the message to the volunteers, "No burn today, too humid." But by 3 o'clock that afternoon the RH was actually 33%--exactly half of what had been forecasted, and low enough to get a really effective burn! But alas, by then it was too late to mobilize the forces for the first burn of the year.

Thinking I had learned my lesson, the next time the forecast called for a local RH of around 45%, I rallied the troops and proclaimed to the volunteers, "Today will be our first burn day of the spring!" But, you guessed it, by noon it was gray, cloudy, and damp, with snow for good measure. Still, when I, the burn leader, pulled into the parking lot, there were die-hard volunteers who responded to the call, all suited up and shivering to keep warm. I couldn't just tell them the forecast had been wrong and send them away, so we made the best of the situation, modified our plans, and had a very good *practice* burn in the most flammable site we could find close by: the Leslie Science Center prairie.

This has been the challenge all spring: trying to find a reliable forecast in the morning that will accurately predict what the relative humidity will be in the afternoon. Still, I can't blame it all on the forecasters. Weather-wise, it's just been a lousy spring for burning.



Parks&Recreation
CITY OF ANN ARBOR

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

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

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For up-to-date information on
stewardship activities, call the
"hotline" at (734) 996-3266.

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Ask the Technician: Spotted Knapweed

by Kee Condict

Q: Where Did Knapweed Come From and Why is it an Ecological Threat?

A: Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) is a native of Eurasia and was accidentally introduced into North America most likely in the 1890s in alfalfa seed from Asia Minor. An even more problematic noxious weed in the western part of the United States, it grows so densely that it looks as if the ranchers are cultivating it as a crop. Yet in the Caucasus foothills of the Republic of Georgia where it is native, knapweed is so rare that researchers are having to enlist the help of local botanists just to find it at all. So why is it so invasive and aggressive in the United States? Researchers point to two answers: 1) knapweed has gained a competitive edge in its adopted home by leaving behind its natural predators and pathogens, and 2) subsurface chemical warfare. Spotted knapweed exudes organic chemicals from its roots that hamper its new neighbors' growth. It is, in a sense, deploying chemical weaponry to interfere with other plants' ability to take up nutrients. This tactic, coupled with its tremendous reproductive potential, allows knapweed to out compete species native to this area. The end result is often elimination of native vegetation, leading to decreased biodiversity and increased surface runoff. Spotted knapweed also has the potential to reduce habitat for ground-nesting songbirds and other wildlife.

Q: How Can I Spot Spotted Knapweed?

A: Spotted knapweed is a biennial or short-lived perennial in the aster family. Sometimes called star thistle, knapweed is easiest to identify during the summer months (June through October), when it produces



Spotted knapweed (Centaurea maculosa)
Photo credit: University of Idaho

eye-catching, thistle-like purple and pink flowers. Knapweed has grayish-green leaves, grows in tufted clumps, and can reach a height of 48 inches. Stems are slender and hairy with leaves that are alternate, pale, and one to three inches in length. Dark-tipped bracts give the mature flowering head a spotted appearance and thus its name.

Q: How Does Knapweed Spread into Natural Areas?

A: As with many other invasive plants, knapweed's colorful summer displays turn into prolific seed sets, producing up to 1,000 seeds per plant. These seeds spread into natural areas and other sites when the seed head attaches itself to animals, or to outdoor enthusiasts who happen through a patch of knapweed and don't realize they are harboring a fugitive on their clothing, shoes, or gear.

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Join us for informal discussions with volunteer and professional stewards at the Stewardship Network's **Stewards Circle meetings**, from 7:30 to 8:30 AM at Bruegger's Bagels, North University Street, Ann Arbor.

- June 11, Tuesday - Volunteer stewards. How do you cultivate stewards to take increasing responsibility and ownership over projects? When can volunteers choose which projects to undertake?
- July 9, Tuesday - Use of grazing animals as a restoration tool. What has been the experience of using grazers? Is it appropriate for urban areas?
- August 13, Tuesday - Mapping natural areas. How can we get more people involved in mapping? Where can we find the resources to make effective maps? What are innovative uses for maps? If you have them, bring examples to share.

For more information,
email Lisa Brush at
lbrush@umich.edu.

NAPpenings

Join other volunteers and NAP staff in celebration of National Rivers Day and National Trails Day! We will be in Argo and Cedar Bend Nature Areas on June 1. See the Stewardship Calendar for more information.

Huron River Day is Sunday, July 14, 2002. See the Stewardship Calendar for more details.



The 3rd annual conference of the **Southern Michigan Prescribed Fire Council (SMPFC)** will be held at the Michigan Library/Historical Center in Lansing on Friday and Saturday, August 2 and 3, 2002. Friday's session topics include Managing Invasives with Fire, Impacts of Fire on Insects and Birds, Monitoring Fire's Impacts, and What to Learn From Incidents/Escapes. On Saturday, the main focus will be preparing for and conducting a simulated burn on site. Anyone with an interest in prescribed burning is invited to attend. The cost is \$25 per day, which includes lunch. For more information, or to register, contact Dave Borneman at dborneman@ci.ann Arbor.mi.us (or call 994-4834).



Enjoy a guided tour of wetlands along the Huron River-by canoe! Gallup Park's **Wetlands by Canoe**

program provides an opportunity to learn first-hand about the functions and values of these amazing buffers between land and water. Please call the Gallup Canoe Livery at 662-9319 for reservations and fee information.

As NAP's Volunteer Park Steward Program continues to expand, we have realized the need to make our trainings available to Park Stewards who are actively leading or helping to lead workdays. This past March, volunteers **Aunita Erskine, Steve Bean, and Manfred Schmidt** attended our annual **First Aid & CPR training** alongside NAP staff. Congratulations for being the first stewards to gain this certification with us!

Thanks...

- To students from Loyola University (in Chicago) and Eastern Michigan University for cutting and hauling massive quantities of buckthorn and honeysuckle from Furstenberg Nature Area and Brown Park!
- To numerous volunteers from **Temple Beth Emeth**, the **Professional Volunteer Corps**, and the **Girl Scouts** for removing oodles of invasives from Furstenberg, Marshall, Dolph, and Kuebler Langford Nature Areas!
- To **Whole Foods**, for donating two cases of soda to keep NAP volunteers refreshed at our spring trainings!

The **Sustainable Ann Arbor Native Plant Demonstration** took place Saturday, May 11. The Ann Arbor District Library and Nichols Arboretum (University of Michigan) sponsored this event, which highlighted re-creating natural areas at Nichols Arboretum and the Leslie Science Center.



Matt Warba, who manages the two City golf courses, recently became the first recipient of NAP's new **Friend of the Earth Award**. Matt has gone above and beyond the call of duty to protect the environment. The golf courses have been certified as being environmentally friendly by the County Drain Commissioner's Clean Streams program and the Environmental Stewardship program (MSU & the National Audubon Society). Kudos to Matt!

This summer, Dolph and Foxfire West Nature Areas will benefit from the work of two dedicated **Eagle Scout** candidates. **Dan Mitchell** is designing and building a scenic overlook along the western edge of Dolph, so birders and other park users can rest and relax while taking in a wonderful view of the pond and wildlife. **Austin Riker** plans to construct a footbridge at the entrance to Foxfire West to provide improved access for park visitors through a low, wet area. Thanks to Dan and Austin for helping to enhance our parks!



Summer 2002 Natural Area Preservation Volunteer Stewardship Calendar

NAP is located in the Leslie Science Center (1831 Traver Road, Ann Arbor). The phone number is 996-3266.
Minors must either be accompanied by a guardian or contact NAP in advance to obtain a release form.



June

June 1, Saturday

**National Trails &
National Rivers Day**

Two great locations, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Help protect the Huron River by maintaining trails and removing invasive, non-native dame's rocket and buckthorn from two woodland parks. This will help native plants to flourish and slow erosion.

Argo Nature Area -- Meet in the parking lot north of the Argo Canoe Livery, off Longshore Drive.

Cedar Bend Nature Area - Meet at park entrance near the perennial gardens on Cedar Bend Drive, off Broadway.

June 1, Saturday

Breeding Bird Survey Walk



**Gallup Park/Furstenberg Nature Area,
7:30 AM**

This walk is for all levels of birders but beginners are especially welcome. Binoculars are nice but not essential. Led by NAP Ornithologist Dea Armstrong. Meet at the Gallup Canoe Livery.

June 1, Saturday

Bird Hills Trail



Rededication, 2:00PM

The "Sierra Club Trail" will be rededicated as the "George Sexton Trail" in honor of this great advocate of natural areas in Ann Arbor. Meet at the Bird Road entrance to Bird Hills (additional parking in Barton Dam parking lot).

June 2, Sunday

**Furstenberg Native Plant Garden,
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**



Help in the garden and learn a bit about native gardening. Botanical tour will be provided, time permitting. Meet at the circle drive entrance at Furstenberg Nature Area off Fuller Road.

June 8, Saturday

Breeding Bird Survey Walk

Ann Arbor Landfill, 7:30 AM

Help with NAP's survey! This walk is for all levels of birders but beginners are especially welcome. Binoculars are nice but not essential. Led by Dea Armstrong, NAP Ornithologist. Meet at small parking area just inside the Platt Road entrance, which is south of the intersection of Platt and Ellsworth Roads.



June 15, Saturday

Butterfly Survey Walk

Barton Nature Area, 9:30 AM

Join NAP Entomologist Barb Barton and survey volunteers to learn more about our local butterflies. Meet at the South entrance on W Huron River Drive, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from M-14 and Main Street.



June 15, Saturday

Brown Park,

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Lend a hand removing woody invasives from the natural area of this wonderful park. Meet us at the parking lot off Packard Road, across from Easy Street.



June 16, Sunday

Botanical & Butterfly Walks

Marshall Nature Area

Cost: \$5.00. This tour will last two hours on Sunday, June 16. Please register by calling NAP.



June 22, Saturday

Bluffs Nature Area,

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Help remove invasive spotted knapweed and clean up trash in this gem of a park. Meet in the parking lot of the Elks Pratt Lodge on Sunset Road, just north of Wildt Street.



July

July 13, Saturday

Butterfly Survey Walk

Marshall Nature Area, 9:30 AM

Join NAP Entomologist Barb Barton and survey volunteers to learn more about our local butterflies. Marshall is the best City Park site to see the beautiful Silvery Checkerspot! Meet in the parking lot off Dixboro Road, north of Plymouth Road.



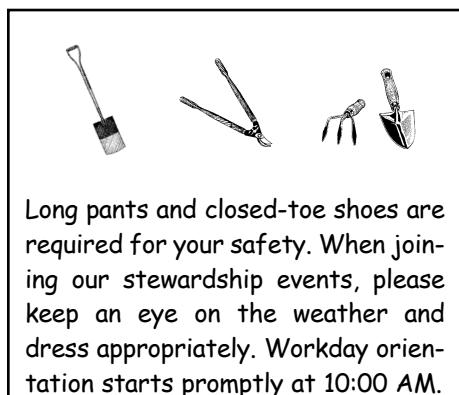
July 14, Sunday

Huron River Day

Gallup Park,

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Bring friends and family for a celebration of the entire watershed! Activities for the day will include canoe and foot races in the morning, and entertainment and numerous environmental group displays in the afternoon. NAP Botanist Bev Walters will lead a botanical tour of nearby Ruthven Nature Area, at 10:00 AM (meet at the exhibitors' tent in Gallup Park). NAP volunteer and Master Gardener Aunita Erskine will hold a tour of the Furstenberg/Gallup boardwalk at 1:00 PM (meet at the exhibitors tent in Gallup Park).



Long pants and closed-toe shoes are required for your safety. When joining our stewardship events, please keep an eye on the weather and dress appropriately. Workday orientation starts promptly at 10:00 AM.

Volunteer Stewardship Calendar Continued

August

August 3, Saturday

Foxfire West,

9:00 AM - Noon,

Special Beat-the-Heat Hours!

Help spruce up some trails and remove trash before the day gets too hot. Meet at the park entrance on Foxway Drive, west of Omlesaad Drive.

August 13, Tuesday

Furstenberg Native

Plant Garden,

7:00 - 8:30 PM

Does a nature walk in the evening sound nice? Spend some time with park volunteers and botanical specialists learning about native plants. Meet at the circle drive entrance at Furstenberg Nature Area off Fuller Road.



August 17, Saturday

Brown Park,

9:00 AM - Noon,

Special Beat-the-Heat Hours!

Join other volunteers in removing invasive, non-native shrubs from this wonderful park next to Malletts Creek. Meet in the parking lot at the Packard Road entrance.



August 24, Saturday

Butterfly Survey Walk

Furstenberg Nature Area,

9:30 AM

Join NAP Entomologist Barb Barton and survey volunteers to learn more about our local butterflies. Meet at the entrance near the bathrooms at the west end of the Furstenberg parking lot (off Fuller Road).



September

September 8, Sunday

Bird Hills Nature Area,

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Get to know this fantastic woodland park while removing invasive shrubbery and trash. Join us at the Bird Road entrance.



If your group is interested in arranging a workday, call the NAP office at 996-3266!

A decorative illustration featuring a variety of flowers and leaves, including sunflowers, daisies, and wildflowers, arranged around a central circular frame. The entire illustration is rendered in a black and white sketch-like style.

The Natural Cycle: Native Landscaping Workshop III

NAP's first two Native Landscaping Workshops in October and April were a smash hit! In anticipation of the gardeners who will be thinking of going native, we've already planned another workshop for September, so mark your calendars!

When: Tuesday, September 10, 2002, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Where: Leslie Science Center Nature House

Fee: \$15

To Register: Call Natural Area Preservation at (734) 996-3266

You can always purchase our native landscaping brochures for \$1 each from the NAP office or from the Parks Department (on the 6th floor of City Hall). We also have a variety of other information about native landscaping, including contact information for native plant nurseries and cost comparisons of native and traditional landscapes.

NAP Behind the Scenes

by Bev Walters

Much of NAP's work in our local natural areas, such as shrub removal or prescribed burns, is readily visible. NAP also has some significant impacts on Ann Arbor's landscape that are not immediately apparent. When a developer submits a site plan to the City of Ann Arbor, people in many departments within the City examine it. NAP comments on these projects while still in the planning phase. Over the past year I've become more involved in this site plan review process. It's heartening to see that native plants are appearing in more and more of the landscape plans for these developments. I also keep an eye out for plans that include species on the City's invasive plant list, which are prohibited from use in certain circumstances by City Code. If the site is near a natural area, I often visit and sometimes conduct a plant inventory to assess the inventory the vegetation.

Over the years, NAP has often been involved in protecting the local landscape by reviewing these plans. Examples include securing natural areas as parkland,

alerting the Building Department to runoff problems from areas under development, assessing wetland mitigation projects, and checking that all natural features and landmark trees at sites are indicated on development plans. In one new subdivision, a NAP staff member dramatically stopped a bulldozer that was mistakenly removing soil in a natural area slated to become parkland. When reviewing the survey of trees to be removed for the building of another development, NAP noticed serious errors in both measurement and species identifications. The corrected plan increased the number of replacement trees to be planted by 33% (as per City Code). Although development in a growing urban area is inevitable, NAP's continued participation helps minimize negative impacts on our natural areas, and the environment as a whole. This will, in turn, enhance the quality of life for all Ann Arbor's inhabitants, whether feathered, furred, scaled or skinned.

Weather or Not to Burn

Continued from page 2

Whereas March has been the best month for burning in recent years, this cold, rainy March we got in only that one practice burn. April was a bit better, but we seem to have skipped spring and gone straight to hot, humid summer--also not good conditions for burning. So, at least at the time of this writing in late April, we don't have very impressive numbers to report from the 2002 Spring Burn Season: only 10 burns on about 50 acres--our worst spring ever! Fortunately the success of last fall's tremendous burn season compensates somewhat. Thanks to volunteers Jane Bishop, Erica Choberka, Mark Cornwell, Tom Enright, Ray Fahlsing, Ted Fasing, Mike Garr, Jane Hayes, Bob Heinold, Jim Hope, Carol Kasprzak, Mindy Milos-Dale, Ryan O'Connor, Barbara Powell, Cynthia Radcliffe, Manfred Schmidt, John Swerdlow, Alice Ward, Steve Weaver, and Nick White, who responded to the call when the RH did drop below 50%. Special thanks to Ross Orr for attending *every single burn* so far this season!

Let's hope for a dry fall!

— David Borneman, *Natural Area Preservation Manager*

On June 30, 2003, the Park Maintenance and Repair Millage, which is NAP's sole funding source, expires. NAP currently receives about 1/5 of the funds generated by this millage. The rest is used to fund a wide range of projects to maintain and beautify parklands, and keep them safe and accessible. At its April 2002 meeting, the Park Advisory Commission passed a resolution recommending that City Council place the millage renewal on the November 2002 ballot at a higher rate. Over the next few months, before the actual ballot language is approved by City Council, there will be opportunities for public input on this issue. Call the office if you'd like more information on this millage or your chance to provide public comment on it.

Ask the Technician *Continued from page 3*

Q: What Can I Do To Help?

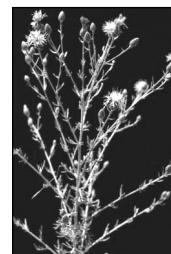
- **Check.** Make sure to check that your clothes and gear (including tire treads) are free of any knapweed seeds before leaving a site where you may have come into contact with this plant.
- **Volunteer** at the Bluffs Workday on June 22 to help NAP control the spread of knapweed in this natural area. See the Stewardship Calendar for more details.
- **Control.** Several methods are effective in controlling spotted knapweed.

***Hand-pull.** If you find some spotted knapweed growing on your property, hand-pull the plant from its base, making sure to remove as much of the root as possible. If you reside in Ann Arbor, plants can be placed with marked compostables for free curbside compost collection. *Knapweed can be irritating to the skin, so we recommend wearing gloves and long sleeves for hand-pulling.*

***Burn.** Established populations can be reduced by hot prescribed burns in the spring in combination with follow-up pulling later in the season. If prescribed burns are not practical for the location or

size of your site, you may use a propane torch to scorch the plants at their base two or three times during the growing season (May through June, before plants flower) followed by hand-pulling of any new rosettes after that.

- **Herbicide.** Chemical controls have been shown to be effective in controlling spotted knapweed, but care needs to be taken to avoid spraying non-target species. People interested in using herbicide should seek advice from a knowledgeable professional.
- **Re-seeding** a site with native species after removal of invasives can help increase competition against invasive plant seeds remaining in the seed bank.



Spotted knapweed
(*Centaurea maculosa*)
Photo credit:
Montana State University

Staff Update

After three fun years working for NAP, I am saying "adieu." I'm taking a few months off to travel and enjoy my family this summer. This fall, I start a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture at the School of Natural Resources and Environment (U of M). My focus will be conservation biology and ecosystem management, and I wish to incorporate the lessons I have learned at NAP in designing and maintaining landscapes.

A huge thank-you to everyone at NAP for teaching me all about native and invasive plants, prescribed burning, ecological restoration, teamwork, etc., etc.! I thoroughly enjoyed meeting all volunteers at workdays, burns, and survey events.

Thanks, y'all!

— Jana Vanderhaar

Yellow Warblers
(*Dendroica petechia*) by
volunteer Susan Falcone



Beth Campbell has left NAP for exciting and partially new adventures. After working on the crew this past year, she decided to spend another summer at Isle Royale National Park as part of their trail and campground crew. While here, Beth had the chance to be involved in seed collection and dispersal, invasive species removal, stewardship workdays, and burns. She will be greatly missed!

Eric Ellis joined the NAP Conservation Crew in April. A 1997 graduate of U of M's School of Natural Resources program, he has done forestry research, taught ecology, managed a camping gear store, led backpacking trips, and driven a forklift. He returned to Ann Arbor in January after a three-year stint overseas. As a volunteer environmental consultant with the Peace Corps, he lived in Mongolia and worked for an agency similar in function to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The past two summers he spent as an adventure travel guide and interpreter, leading fly fishing and horseback riding pack trips across the steppes. When not at NAP, he is most likely found running or backpacking.

Word(s) of the Season: Special Concern

by Nancy Novitski

The words "Special Concern" bring a variety of images to mind. You might expect a plant or animal species of Special Concern to be a particularly troublesome exotic invader. In fact, as the Michigan Endangered Species Act of 1994 reveals, this term means quite the opposite.



Blanchard's cricket frog (Acris crepitans blanchardi) is a Michigan species of Special Concern found in Ann Arbor.

While state and federal Endangered Species Acts help to preserve biodiversity by protecting species in jeopardy, these measures represent desperate attempts to avert

seemingly imminent extinction or extirpation (local extinction). Once species are so imperiled that they qualify for official listing as Endangered, it is a daunting challenge to bring them back from the brink. Sometimes it is impossible. A greater goal is to prevent species from becoming Threatened or Endangered in the first place. So the Michigan Department of Natural Resources monitors native species whose populations are declining in the state, with the potential to be at great risk in the near future. While these species receive no protection under the law, the non-legal designation "Special Concern" identifies them as plants and animals to focus on.

Ann Arbor is home to almost 30 such species, including numerous plants, several birds, one butterfly, one frog, one snake, and one turtle. Since these species are particularly vulnerable, NAP goes to great lengths to prevent their decline. For example, during the development of Northeast Area Park, NAP has worked with park planners and contractors to relocate host plants of the Wild Indigo Duskywing butterfly, ensuring protection of its habitat. With this kind of extra attention, we hope to maintain or improve local populations of Special Concern species, helping to secure their future in Michigan.

So when you hear Special Concern, think opportunity: this is where we can really make a difference.

For more information, contact the Endangered Species Coordinator, Wildlife Division, MDNR, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI, 48909, or head to www.dnr.state.mi.us.

Botanical and Butterfly Walks at Marshall Nature Area - for Father's Day!

Have you ever wanted to increase your knowledge of nature while chatting with friends and experts?

Visit with NAP Botanist Bev Walters and NAP Entomologist Barb Barton for only \$5.00, while learning about plants and butterflies that have benefited from NAP's restoration efforts.

This tour will last from 2:00 to 4:00 PM on Sunday, June 16. We will meet in the parking lot off Dixboro, north of Plymouth Road.

Please register by calling NAP at (734) 996-3266.



Park Focus: Bandemer

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Tucked in along the shore of the Huron River, a small wet meadow gives refuge to the botanical beauties of purple gerardia, tall swamp-marigold and swamp-betony.

A close look at some of the less colorful plants here reveals the round heads of common bur-reed and the locally rare slender bog arrow-grass.

While strolling through Bandemer, you may run into the NAP Natural Features Inventory biologists out surveying all of these plants and wildlife. You may also see the NAP conservation crew out doing restoration work. Recently we have focused our efforts at Bandemer on the dry prairie, which runs the western edge of the park. Folks might find us a peculiar sight, burning or pulling spotted knapweed right alongside the railroad tracks. This prairie, along with many intact prairie remnants in southeastern Michigan, was "protected" from other development because of its proximity to the tracks. NAP's prescribed burns and invasive species removal have helped transform this area into a beautiful mix of tall prairie grasses and goldenrods, including big bluestem, Indian grass, switchgrass, stiff goldenrod, and showy goldenrod.

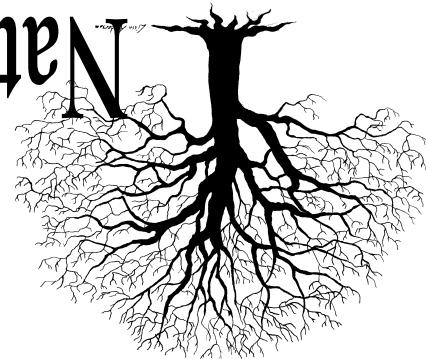
Bandemer is not only home to a wide variety of plants and animals, it is a great park for visitors as well. In addition to the hiking and biking trails, there is a picnic shelter near the north entrance and a large fire ring—the only one in the City park system (reservations necessary: 994-2780). There you will also find small docks suitable for canoe launching or fishing. Plans for future improvements include a direct trail connection between Bandemer and Barton Nature Area.

As the Ann Arbor skyline fades into the treeline at the park's southern border, and a crew team rows quietly, rhythmically upstream, I am reminded that Bandemer is a good place to be still and observe. Today I witness a moment of spring happening around me, knowing that a few short days of sun and rain will transform the park once again.

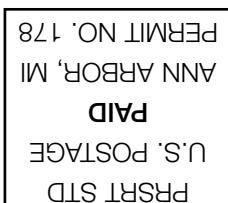
Reference: City of Ann Arbor Department of Parks and Recreation. (1999). *Along the Huron*. The University of Michigan Press.

Bandemer Nature Area is located on the west shore of the Huron River at Argo Pond. You can access Bandemer from Whitmore Lake Road (near Barton Drive) or from Lakeshore Drive (off North Main Street).

Natural Area Preservation News



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