



NAI INTERPRETIVE
NATURALIST SECTION

The Naturalist



Fall 2023

September 23- December 20, 2023

An Autumn Message

“If I were a bird, I would fly about the Earth seeking the successive autumns.”

- George Eliot



Our Mission

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) mission is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession.

Visit: interpnet.com for more information on NAI.

About *The Naturalist*

The Naturalist is published quarterly by the Interpretive Naturalist Section of NAI. It is published on each equinox and solstice.

Share Your Content

Your content is welcome anytime. Send any articles, poems, photos, or news to Newsletter Editor, John Miller at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com.

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Get Involved!

If you are in the Northwest Region and you are good at networking, we need your help. You can help gather newsletter content such as news, articles, and photos from your Region. Contact John Miller interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com.



From the Trail

Director Corner

Mary Loan



So...how many of you were able to enjoy (like I did) the IN Section Virtual Workshop in August? Wasn't it great? So many great presenters, so many tips, so much networking. And our keynotes were fabulous! And the virtual field trips. It was all wonderful! If you registered, remember that you still have time to watch or re-watch any of the presentations through the Whova platform. If you weren't able to register for the

workshop, don't fret—you will have another chance to attend next year. I highly recommend taking advantage of the opportunity if you can—it is so nice to have the virtual option for a workshop, especially one that gives us 90 days to see everything. It really is a great break from our “normal” hectic lives and a great way to learn from others.

Speaking of next year's workshop, we are still working on a theme, but it looks like there is a lot of interest in interpreting climate change. How can we help others to see what is happening with our world? There is also good interest in JEDAI/Diversity issues. What else would you like to see as part of our theme and/or presentations? And... more importantly...what could

you present to your fellow interpreters? If you have a presentation or a virtual field trip idea, please let us know. It may seem like a long way away, but we are already putting together our list of sessions and keynotes. We already have a great keynote speaker lined up, and we are already looking forward to next year's workshop. I hope you are too!

We are also looking for presenters for our Monthly Meet-Ups/Trivia Nights, which are held the first Thursday of (almost) every month. We have some great presenters already lined up for the rest of this year, but we are always looking a few months out. Again, if you have a short presentation that you think our other interpreters would find interesting, let us know. We love to learn from

our fellow interpreters—and John’s trivia is so much fun and challenging. It’s a great time.

Hopefully you are all starting to get a breather from the busy summer—it is starting to slow down for me, too, but it always seems like there are more things to do. I always have a project or two waiting in the wings. Some of them are “need to do” types and others are the “want to do” projects. I really want to get to at least a couple of my want to do projects this winter—wish me luck! One of the projects I have hoped to work on is a junior ranger program for my site—I love to look at the Junior Ranger programs at other sites (and have done a few myself, I will fully admit) and I just think they are such great ways to reach visitors of all ages. I would also like to look at how

to reach more visitors, outside of our “box” of those who are normally visiting. A couple of years ago I took some courses in education and creating programs (not interpretation-specific, but still really valuable information), and I would really like to focus on some of the ideas we came up with. I just love to share my knowledge and passion for an area or topic with...well...anyone who will listen, to be completely honest. And there are so many ways to reach the public these days... online, apps, even AI is coming.

Wait...that could be another topic for our workshop—how changes in technology are changing interpretation. There are so many things I want to learn. Do you have an idea to share? Please let us know!

And, finally, as we move into Fall, I hope that you are all well and that you have a chance to breathe and enjoy what we do. I know it gets stressful and overwhelming at times, but I hope you also know that you are appreciated and are doing a great job—keep it up!

:) Mary

Expertise Directory Reminder

We are trying to build up the IN Section Expertise/Specialist/Interest Directory by getting more section members to send us their information. Remember, this is completely voluntary. We encourage you to participate in the development of this directory because it will be an effective way to build professional connections with your fellow Interpretive Naturalist Section members.

Our goal is to have at least 10% of our membership (that would be roughly 100 people) send their contact information and a summary of their expertise, specialties, and interests. Once we get some critical mass, we will post the list on the section website for members to access. For more information, email Lori Spencer at spencerinterp@gmail.com



Trivia Night!



What is Trivia Night?

Trivia Night is a fun and refreshing way to interact with your fellow interpreters over nature-related presentations and trivia. This reoccurring event is conducted on the FIRST THURSDAY of each month. The event starts off with a 15 to 20-minute presentation and is followed by nature trivia. The highest scoring participants each evening receive fun swag from our Section leaders.

The best part is that by signing up through NAI and participating, you receive ½ hour of continuing education credits (CECs) towards your NAI recertification. If you have any questions about the IN Section Trivia night, please contact us at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com

Trivia Night Line Up

October

October 5th, 2023
5:00pm Pacific Time

Best Presentation Experience Ever (Group Discussion)

October will be a group discussion to learn what made one of your programs the best presentation ever. The discussion will reveal what made this all possible, how it related to your site and audience, what artistry you commanded, how you provoked the audience to stay engaged, if you involved the whole story, how to know what was appropriate or not. These discussions will help generate ideas for both new and seasoned interpreters.

November

None due to the
National Conference.

December

December 7, 2023
5:00pm Pacific Time

To Be Announced.

2023 Trivia Night Presenters Needed

Consider giving a 15 to 20-minute presentation about any aspect of nature. We would love to put you on the 2023 schedule. This is a great way to gain more experience and introduce yourself to our amazing IN Section members. Contact us at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com for more information.

Trivia Night Swag Sponsors

Want to share more about your company or organization and offer prizes to our worthy game night winners? Consider being a Trivia Night Swag Sponsor. Contact: Monique Thompson, interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com



A RECAP

2023 Interpretive Naturalist Section Virtual Conference



Theme: *Nature Can Be Found in Unexpected Places*

The IN Section's 2023 Virtual Conference was bigger and better with 131 registrations. Thanks to your attendance, we were able to sponsor TWO scholarships to this year's National Conference in Little Rock, AR. We could not have done this without your support.

THANK YOU goes to our presenters. They include:

Shelton Johnson (Keynote Speaker: Planting Seeds, Harvesting Dreams: Buffalo Soldiers and the Yosemite Arboretum)

Paul Caputo (Chat with Acting NAI Executive Director)

Sarah Smith (The Play's the Thing: Deeper Stages of Play-based Learning)

Kristin Robinson (Seriously Sticky Storytelling)

Sabrina Dechamps (Lunch & Learn – Make-up Presentation) &
(Moderating the Young Professionals Discussion Panel)

John Miller (Better Photography with CARP)

Griffin Bray (Calls of the Wild)

Cynthia Coss (African American Influence on the CCC)

Tess Renusch & Emma Taylor (Pigment Foraging: Connecting People to Plants through Inkmaking)

Rhana Paris (Daytime Astronomy)

Adrienne Provenzano (NASA & Nature)

John Miller (Out on a Limb; Interpreters Quiz)

Lori Spencer (Moderating 'Community Coffee')
(Moderating the Volunteer Discussion Panel)

Terry Joyce, AnnMari Lisi, Mary Loan, Paul Caputo, Jay Schneider, & Ken Forman (NAI Board Members and Little Rock Committee)

Celine Nash (Clear as Coal: A History Buried in the Mountains)

IN Section Officers (IN Section Business Meeting and Roundtable)

Still On the Hill – Donna and Kelly Mullhollan (Keynote Concert: Faces and Places)

Thank you to the following individuals and groups who provided Virtual Field Trips:

Mustang Island State Park (TX) (Texas Parks and Wildlife)

Tiny Desk Concert with Shelton Johnson and Indigenous Flutes (Shelton Johnson, NPS)

Galveston Island State Park (TX) (Texas Parks and Wildlife)

An Invitation for Wildness Documentary (Robert and Robyn Guyton, New Zealand)

Hueco Tanks State Natural Area: Virtual Tour (TX) (Texas Parks and Wildlife)

Government Canyon State Natural Area (TX) (Texas Parks and Wildlife)

Congratulations to **Sarah Smith** for being the winner of the "Out on sa Limb" Interpreters Quiz with a score of 38 out of 40! She received a \$75 Acorn Naturalist gift card for being the top scorer on the quiz.

Mark Your Calendars! The 2024 IN Section Virtual Conference will be August 7-8, 2024.

Finally, a HUGE THANK YOU to the officers and members who were a part of the planning and tech committee.

Lori Spencer (Conference Chair)

Mary Loan

Monique Thompson

Adrienne Johnson

Sabrina Deschamps

Kathryn Borowicz

Ken Forman

John Miller

Presenters Needed

If you are interested in presenting or providing a recorded virtual field trip next year, please contact the IN Section Officers at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com.



Get Involved!



Vote for your New NAI Leaders!

NAI Elections are open until October 5th! Please take your time to vote to help establish new leaders. If you did not receive your ballot by email, check your Junk Folder or contact John Miller at elections@interpnet.com.

Be a Part of the IN Section Annual Business

Even if you are not able to attend the National Conference in Little Rock, you can virtually attend the Section Business Meeting via Zoom. Contact John Miller at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com for more details.

Tell Your Story

Interpreters come from all walks of life, and we take all sorts of unique paths to this career. Our “Faces of NAI” video series will highlight the diversity of backgrounds, career paths, and interests represented in the field of interpretation.

To see yourself featured in this series, which will be shared on social media and the NAI website, please send your video according to the following parameters to pcaputo@interpnet.com. Duration: 2 minutes Format: Digital video file such as .WMV, .MOV, and .MP4 (Phone cameras work well, but please shoot horizontally, not vertically—and be wary of the effects of wind on audio!)

Please include the following:

- Your name, title, and place of work
- How you got into interpretation
- What the field has meant to you
- Anything else that makes your story unique!

Instagram

Follow us at [@naiinterpretivenaturalist](https://www.instagram.com/naiinterpretivenaturalist)

The Interpretive Naturalist Section would like to highlight your story and your work! Each month, our Instagram account features an ***Interpretive Naturalist of the Month***. Want to be our IN of the month? Email 3-4 photos and a brief bio: how you decided to go into the field, your favorite interpretive place or program, hopes for the future, and anything else you’d like to share to Sabrina Deschamps or Kathryn Borowicz at interpretivenaturalist@gmail.com.

What is it?!



Can you identify this unusual bird?

Hint: It is flightless and found in the land of Kiwis.

The answer is on page 21

News from the Sunny Southeast

By Brian Bockhahn

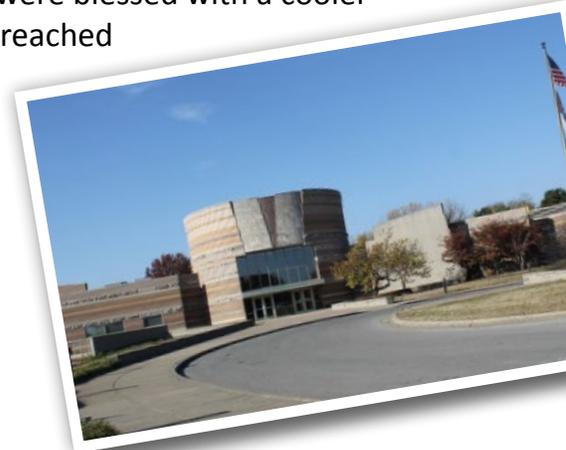
North Carolina State Parks continues to conduct two CIG sessions per year for new park rangers and education staff. Since converting from our original training program to the CIG curriculum, 94 current program staff in our parks are now Certified Interpretive Guides. Two rangers who attended CIG have now become CIG Trainers, adding to our training capabilities. We keep adding new positions, losing some staff, and adding new parks. When fully filled, we will have 244 positions so we will have plenty of trainings in the future.

News from the Great Lakes

By Alan Goldstein

The Falls of the Ohio State Park interpretive center in Clarksville, Indiana, will be reopening on October 16. It closed for a complete HVAC overhaul in May. The interpretive staff were not twiddling their collective thumbs during the closure. Special events and weekend programs continued, and we added special weekday hikes as part of the local Cultural Pass program. We were blessed with a cooler than normal summer, though there were days the indoor workspace reached 90 degrees.

School group programs resume when we reopen, and thanks to a grant for the Falls of the Ohio Foundation that covers admission and bus fees, our school program schedule is full. The staff is looking forward to moving back into the offices so we can get back to finding our materials and working in comfortable conditions.



Poetry of the Seasons

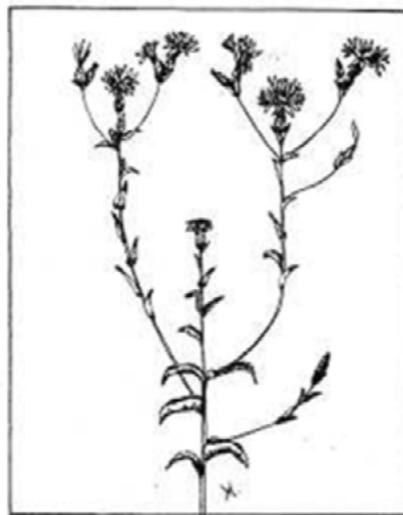
By Cory Goehring, Lead Naturalist, Yosemite Conservancy

As seasons shift here in Yosemite, nature has a poetic way of signaling transitions. The emergence of the Sierra Lessingia in the meadows and paths of Yosemite Valley symbolizes the transition of summer to fall and a welcomed exhale.

The Sierra Lessingia, or fittingly termed “summer lavender,” blooms in a tranquil shade of purple. “Its tiny flowers produce mass effects on dry flats, or sometimes as hedgerows along roadsides, that give the illusion of a thin veil or ground mist of purest color floating across the landscape. At closer range, however, lessingia appears very much like a tiny aster, to which it is distantly related, as both are in the composite or sunflower family. Lessingia first appears in late June as a single short stem a few inches high, with a solitary bloom at its tip. Thereafter, the growing and branching occurs steadily, so that by the end of August it will be about 2 feet in height. A very typical location to see it at its best is the southern side of the Ahwahnee Meadow, where it reaches its peak about Labor Day.” - Yosemite Wildflower Trails (1975) by Dana C. Morgenson

In both Yosemite and other regions, the color purple often signifies the transition between seasons, acting as a temporal marker signaling the end of one chapter and the beginning

of another. The purple Clarkia, affectionately termed “farewell to spring,” symbolizes the conclusion of spring. In contrast, the Lessingia represents summer’s departure. From a scientific perspective, the purple hues of the Lessingia and



LESSINGIA

Sweet summer lavender—
A myriad of stars
In the sun-scorched grass,
Like a veil enchanting
On a prairie lass.

Sweet summer lavender
Adorning the withered
Like a spring bouquet—
Flattering passe' grasses,
Making them young and gay.

—Elizabeth H. Godfrey.

Clarkia flowers become particularly prominent against the backdrop of the season’s fading foliage. As deciduous trees undergo their autumnal transformation, these purple wildflowers stand out distinctly. Their vivid appearance makes them increasingly attractive to active pollinators like bees and butterflies during this period.

To us in Yosemite, these flowers serve as bookends to the bustling seasons of Yosemite. As the Lessingia blooms, it offers a moment of respite and reflection, inviting us to appreciate the season’s close. The programs we’ve given, the people we’ve met, the trials and tribulations of a very busy season. In a way it’s sad to see the season close but the bloom of the Lessingia reminds us that there is still beauty in change.



From Rocks to Riches: Exploring Keweenaw Geoheritage

*By Karl Larson and Emmeline Wolowiec, Interpretive Rangers
Keweenaw National Historical Park, Calumet, MI*

Boasting the largest deposit of native copper and some of the largest lava flows anywhere on Earth, the geology of the Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan's Upper Peninsula is unlike any other. But what makes this place unique is the geological connection to the local heritage: Keweenaw Geoheritage. The story starts around 1.1 billion years ago when a supercontinent tried to split apart through rifting. While this Midcontinent Rift was active, lava oozed from rift volcanoes and cooled to form the Portage Lake Volcanics, a section of around 300 lava flows each up to 500m thick. Then, hydrothermal fluids, water that is extremely

hot and mineral rich, permeated through the volcanic layers, altering the chemical compositions and allowing copper to precipitate into holes left by gas bubbles in the lava, cracks, and other voids. A final important step was millions of years of erosion. The Keweenaw's Geoheritage roots start almost 9,000 years ago when Native Americans first started pit mining and shaping the copper to make jewelry and tools which were traded to other parts of North America. Then, in the early 1840s, the United States experienced its first great mineral boom. People from all over the world started to flock to the Keweenaw hoping to make their

there declined until the closures in the 1960s. Throughout the changing times in the Keweenaw, copper has remained a focus. Many residents have a direct, familial connection to the copper mines and those that don't become deeply connected to the Copper Country through homes we live in, buildings we shop in, roads we travel on, and foods we eat; all of which are a part of the copper story. These roots keep people here. Visitors come to resorts started during mining times, to generational family cabins, or to Keweenaw National Historical Park to discover the copper story. Geoheritage connects us all, especially in the Keweenaw Peninsula.

lives better for themselves and their families. From then on, copper was king in the Keweenaw. From the mid-1840s to 1887, Keweenaw mines produced the most copper in the U.S. Mining peaked around 1916 and from



Park Ranger Emmeline Wolowiec tells the copper mining story at a pop-up event. Photo credit: Amber Kraft, NPS photo.



Quincy Mine, nicknamed Old Reliable, in Hancock, MI stands tall on the landscape as a constant reminder of the vibrant mining history of this region. Photo credit: Emmeline Wolowiec.

Bird Rescues Volunteer

*By Eliz Linser, CIG; Lifetime Volunteer with Non-Profit Orgs.
Preserving Nature & Wildlife*

I am a volunteer with a large non-profit wildlife rescue organization in Phoenix, Arizona. This year has been a frenzy of urgency to rescue wild birds, especially raptors. While there are dates that define summer, the blazing heat from record temperatures are exempt from seasonal periods. I have driven many miles, sometimes hours, to rescue and transport downed birds, needing care. Sometimes the bird needs x-rays, medication and splints, but more often, we are seeing them in dire need of fluids, especially fledglings. The young birds often jump prematurely from the nest because it's too hot in it, and are injured and at risk on the ground. Some days are 12-hours of rescues, and as many as four in a single day; saving birds is exhausting but rewarding.

Each bird is issued a number when intake occurs, and that paperwork follows the bird through release back to the wild habitat, or alternatively, the feathers donated to the feather depository for recognized native tribes' ceremonial use.

Each encounter with the public presents as an opportunity to educate, however brief. It is an interpretation microburst and varies greatly dependent on the audience. Some individuals are more knowledgeable than others and so I customize the interaction, accordingly.



Injured Great-horned owl rescue in local nursery

For example, after a fledgling great-horned owl was found perched on an office doormat one early morning, the audience grew to include the residential neighborhood. After a quick look

around, I located the watchful eyes of the parents in tall trees nearby. In a tree across the street, I saw a large nest, openly viewed, as clean cuts of large branches were recent and removed the owl family's protection from predators and unrelenting sun. The endeared feathered family that provided natural rodent control was cruelly evicted from their home of many years, and investment in their nest-building was now lost. This was an illegal act and licensed arborists should be aware of it.

I also provide information to prevent window strikes and encourage natural habitat, canopy and water to help our feathered friends through challenging climatical changes.

The grassroots interpretation approach during rescues is an important role in helping others to participate actively in assisting wild birds cope with the changes in weather and habitat loss. It is an honor to be both a rescuer and a nature interpreter.



Upcoming Events

Fall Fungi Festival

Tenderfoot Learning Lab

This two-day one-night event will include inoculation workshops, guided hikes with mushroom experts, fungus forays, family programming, dehydration workshops, live music, camping and more!

This is a space that is inclusive and encouraging for all folks to learn more about fungi and deepen their sense of place in Appalachia Ohio. They will come to learn about mushrooms and they will stay for the friendship that they find amongst each other.

<https://www.appalachianunderstories.com/fallfungifestival>



CIG Course

CIG Cox Arboretum MetroPark, OH November 2023

Five Rivers MetroParks, in partnership with the National Association for Interpretation (NAI), is offering a training course for individuals in the field of Interpretation. The NAI Certified Interpretive Guide curriculum is an internationally recognized professional certificate course full of interactive lessons, hands-on experiences. Training will equip participants with current theoretical foundations of the profession as well as skills and tools to communicate effectively with visitors. This class will share perspectives on programming and interpretation, and will benefit from the instructors' combined 70 years of experience in the field practicing skills especially relevant to the parks, outdoor education and conservation fields.

Register for this and other CIG courses through NAI here:

https://www.interpnet.com/NAI/interp/Certification/Certification_Training_Calendar/nai/_certification/Certification_Calendar.aspx?hkey=35609fbd-8ab3-43c9-9749-93e136a6bc33

On the Precipice of Change: An Autumn Leaf Study

By Lauren Connolly

Change is inevitable. Sometimes terrifying, sometimes exciting, and usually we have very little control over change. In our home, we have had a LOT of changes lately. We recently moved, Connor started high school, dropped some activities to make room for my photography and watercolor career, some health issues, and too many more to list here. In the midst of all the chaos, I find that I am fascinated by change lately. Since I can't control it, the scientist in me loves to observe & study it and the artist in me wants to capture & paint it!

Since we are nearing the end of summer and rapidly approaching fall, leaves would be a simple exercise anyone in a deciduous forest area can participate in! But it does require some preparation as we are on the cusp of the changing seasons. We still have a few more weeks of lush green leaves, so now is the time!

This study will connect you to nature by getting outdoors and improving your observation skills. You don't have to go far either!

For my study, I am focusing on the trees in my yard. You will want to pick someplace easy and memorable that you can go back to and replicate the pictures.

Leaf Study-

In the area that you choose, find 5-10 different tree species.

Take a picture of each tree species leaf. For a bonus, you can take a picture of the whole tree.

*Tip: to help ID trees, use an app like Seek. Seek uses the camera on your phone to help ID. Make sure to verify with a website or identification guide to make it is correct.

3. Next, draw each leaf.

You can use your photo as reference or if you are not comfortable, you can trace the leaf or do a leaf rubbing.

4. When you have finished your drawing, color it in the best you can in any medium you are comfortable with- watercolor, acrylic, oil, markers, crayons, colored pencils. *Make sure to write the species name on your page.

5. Now we wait....

6. When autumn has arrived

and the color of the leaves have changed, replicate steps 1-4 using the same tree species as you did in the first part of this exercise. To find out when the peak colors will arrive in your area, check out the Fall Foliage Color Map.

7. Compare and contrast your leaves and write down any observations you saw.

I have only done steps 1-4 so far and I am learning so much about leaves! By slowing down and really observing the leaves from a new perspective, I noticed colors I didn't know



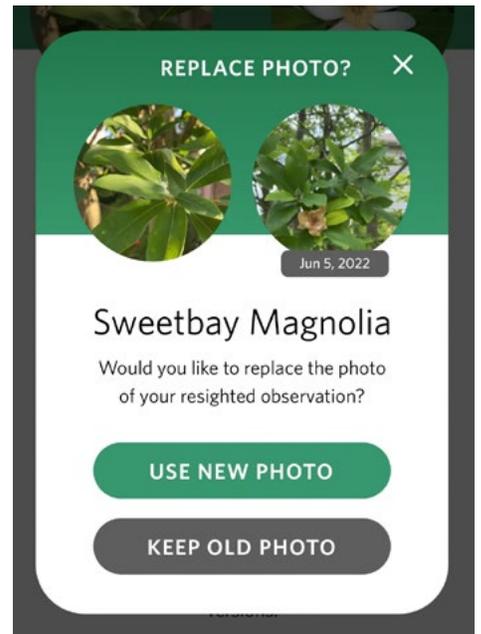
Injured Great-horned owl rescue in local nursery

were there, the way the veins move through the leaf, rough edges that I thought from a distance were smooth. This study will help you with your tree identification. After I sketched out all my leaves, we took the dogs for a walk and I found myself able to quickly identify some of the trees whose leaves I just drew. Where I once saw different blobs of green in the forest, I now see the forest coming alive as I am able to identify each of the trees based on special shape its leaf contains.

Tell me some of your observations in the comments, I am excited to hear what you all have learned! In a future blog, I will post the results of the second half of my study. After all my initial observations, I am having fun guessing what color the leaves will turn in the autumn.



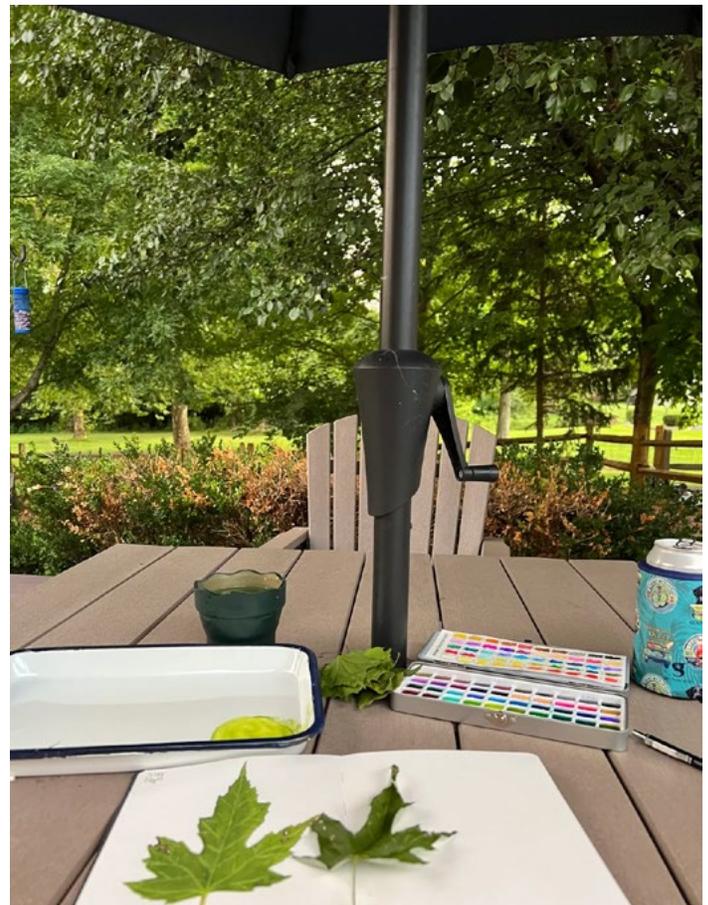
If you are not comfortable drawing the leaf, you can always trace it or do a leaf rubbing!



An app like Seek can help you identify trees, if you are not familiar with them.



What did you observe with your leaf? Notice the way the veins move? Upon close inspection, any colors surprise you?



Now relax with your favorite drink in your favorite spot outside and color in your leaf the best you can!



The Harvest

By Andrew Cirtwill

I have been retired from my job as interpretive naturalist at Pokagon State Park since March of 2015. It's hard to believe it has been eight years. Most who retire from a career job like ours, do not retire from work and certainly do not retire from life.

After leaving Indiana State Parks, I soon began working for a land restoration and resource management group in northeast Indiana, Blue Heron Ministries. At my position, it's all labor, no hiring, supervising, planning, evaluating, scheduling, budget wrangling, etc... It is nice. It can be arduous, but I love it. Basically, we remove unwanted invasive species and then enhance, replace, and manage for the native landscapes that once occupied our worksites. I work with a small crew of very dedicated naturalists and resource managers.

Basically, I am doing the work that we promote as interpretive naturalists. It's work I preached over a 40-year career. We understand and appreciate the natural world and work to maintain and sustain healthy, ecologically sound environments.

I am doing the same on our own property. My wife Jackie and I purchased 21 acres of an old farm

in 1997. I've slowly been working the land, converting fallow ag fields and the home landscape into native, natural habitats. I'm working in a once semi-degraded wetland fen and bringing it back to its native brilliance.

The joy of living on the land is seeing daily the fruits of our labor. My sweet Jackie passed away four years ago, but I carry on with our legacy to the land and our work of restoration and promotion of native, natural landscapes.

The success of individual plants and animals may vary season to season, year to year, based on several variables: weather, status of host plants, competition from other species, etc... Naturalists often speak of a "good year for yellow-billed cuckoos," or "a good year for eastern bluebirds," or "a good year for nodding onion/blue flag irises/sky blue asters, etc..."

The year 2023 on this old farm was a good year for eastern tiger swallowtail butterflies. I seemed to have noticed them everywhere on a variety of plants. I'm happy to say they had mostly an eye on the native species I have nurtured.

I do have one nonnative butterfly bush planted years ago over the septic field distribution tank. The soil there is just inches deep. I cut the shrub to ground level every winter and it flourishes and sends up an igloo-sized plant every growing season. A perfectly named bush, the butterflies love it. This year I counted seven tiger swallowtails there at one time.

Natural resource management work is not too unlike that of interpretive naturalists. We plant seeds and nourish growth, whether in soil and landscapes or in minds and souls. Sometimes results are not immediate. It may take time. With seeds and new plants there is always hope.

Those of us lucky to do interpretation, whether for a lifetime or just one season, we sow seeds. We connect people to the land. Awareness, appreciation, understanding, and commitment to making and showcasing a better world. A butterfly takes flight.

Fred Wooley is a naturalist, writer, and land preservation/restoration enthusiast. He lives on part of an old farm overlooking an extensive fen in northern Steuben County. He can be reached at fwooley@frontier.com.



Garfield Park - Indianapolis

By Jessica Helmbold

Garfield Park in Indianapolis, Indiana is full of history in the 100 plus years it's been serving the community. It is the oldest park in the City of Indianapolis Parks Department system. The City purchased the land from private owners in 1873 and turned it into its first official park in 1887. The Park stands at 127 acres.

Over the course of time the park has served many different purposes. The park started out as a horse racing venue. For a time, the city connected residents to the park through a trolley line. The park originally housed several animals, such as bears, that were later transferred to the zoo when the first city zoo was created. One of the Park's shelters originally served as the first home to the Indianapolis Children's Museum.

The original pool changing house and gymnasium is now the Park's Arts Center, which reopened as such in 2006. The pool is now a parking lot and the gymnasium

was turned into a large art gallery. To see what the Garfield Park Arts Center has to offer today visit their website at www.gpacarts.org. The Arts Center focuses on community issues through art from community members. They also have art classes that cater to all levels of artistic ability.

The pool, having been removed, was rebuilt in its current location in 1996. Two years later the Burrello Family Center opened next to the pool. It was named after one of the Park's long-time managers, Lynda Burrello. It houses a gymnasium and exercise rooms, and event spaces and offers a lot of recreational classes.

However, when people think of Garfield Park, they often think about the Conservatory and Sunken Garden. This is where, I, your author, work! It is a very magical place! Let me tell you all about it.

The first Conservatory and

Sunken Garden were constructed in 1915. The first Conservatory was of the Art Nouveau style and was a wooden structure with glass. In the early 1950s this wooden structure showed major signs of depreciation, so it was replaced in 1954 with the first all-aluminum and glass conservatory in the US. This is the Conservatory you see today. In 1997, the Conservatory interior was remodeled, and a permanent rainforest display was added. Before the Conservatory was largely a wide-open space with ever-changing floral displays. And while this is still part of what we do today, such as our poinsettia display at the holidays, there's a large part of the Conservatory that stays mostly unchanged throughout the year. The Sunken Garden has not changed much though since its construction in 1915.

The Garden and Conservatory were developed by famed landscape architect, George Kessler, who studied under Frederick Law Olmsted of Central

Park fame. Kessler designed a lot of the City's layout actually and now there are several streets and neighborhoods named in his honor. It is a true pleasure to work at a place with so much history.

The Conservatory and Gardens serve to connect visitors with the wonders of the plant kingdom! We do this through several main facets. Our rainforest display shows how interconnected our world is. We may not live in the rainforest, but the health of this biome, is crucial to our daily lives. Our Sunken Garden connects visitors with rich landscape architecture history, as one were stepping back in time, when they enter the garden. It also serves as a serene space where visitors can come and perhaps forget they are in the middle of the hustle and bustle of a big city. Blake's Children's Garden serves to connect visitors with our food system and with the importance of native plants to wildlife. We accomplish this through community garden programs where the public can learn where healthy foods come from and by educating the public through our wildlife and pollinator gardens and interpretive signage. While native plantings are a focus of our park, they are not our only focus. Plants of all kinds play important roles in our daily lives; our food; our medicines; our mental well-being; and our

enjoyment of artfully designed spaces to name a few.

With that being said, we will be hiring soon and are looking for passionate and creative people to join our team. At the Conservatory we are a team of 5 currently. We have an assistant manager, a naturalist educator, an interior horticulturalist, an exterior horticulturalist, and a gardener. Our naturalist educator has been promoted to assistant manager and our dedicated interior horticulturalist of 16 years is retiring. We will be looking to fill the role of naturalist educator and interior horticulturalist.

The naturalist educator is responsible for a variety of programming; event planning and execution; digital media and marketing and horticulture/gardening experience is a plus, because they often help with those tasks as need be. To see what programs and events we currently have visit our website at www.garfieldgardensconservatory.org The interior horticulturalist is responsible for the care and maintenance of our 10,000 square foot tropical rainforest conservatory and production greenhouse.

These jobs will be posted soon on our website. Please bookmark our jobs page and visit often. We hope that you will consider applying for one of these jobs

or pass this along to anyone you know who might be looking and would be a good fit. I am more than happy to answer any questions in the meantime or start a dialogue with potential candidates and keep them updated on the process. Garfield Park has a storied past, but we are excited about the future and how new staff will contribute. We hope you will join us in creating a new story! To find information about jobs, visit this link:

<https://www.garfieldgardensconservatory.org/jobsvolunteer>



Did You Know that Some Dragonflies Migrate?

By Ray Novotny, Naturalist Emeritus, Mill Creek Metroparks

I attended Ami Thompson's dragonfly session at our 2013 NAI national conference in Reno. She began her career as an interpretive park ranger at Mississippi National River and Recreation Area in St. Paul, Minnesota, so it shouldn't have surprised me that on a cool November day, she dipped for nymphs in the not-exactly-gently-flowing Truckee River near our hotel. Ami updated me at a subsequent conference: she was working on a doctorate at the University of Minnesota, and her research included cutting through ice to study nymphs during winter, and during summer, using helicopters for transportation to remote bogs!

Ami is now a professor at North Carolina Wesleyan University. She also works with Wings Across the Americas, a U.S. Forest Service International Program "Partnering to Preserve & Protect Migratory Species and their Habitat."

On the final Saturday in August 2023, Ami and her colleagues Melissa Sanchez Herrera, a native of Columbia, now a post-doc at the University of Alabama, and freelance biologist Sandra Hunt von Arb of California, traveled to Ohio to present a workshop about the migration mysteries of the Common Green Darner dragonfly. U.S. Forest Service administrators Karin Theophile and

Mike Rizo also accompanied them. I learned about something brand new to me: The Motus Wildlife Tracking System. According to its website, "Motus is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating

international dragonfly conservation & research and hopefully reveal clues about the mystery of migration.

How fortunate for me that the workshop's site, West Creek Reservation in Cleveland Metroparks, is only ~70 miles from home. About 20 others attended, mostly local teachers. NAI award-winners Tim Krynak and Jennifer Brumfield, former Metroparks interpretive naturalists now working in resource management, also shared their expertise.

Sandra made my day by choosing me to release one of the darners! I hope to find out about its journey south.

For more information:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SL-8LayWFGY&t=9s>
<https://www.amidragonfly.com/>
<https://motus.org/>



Photo of Ray Novotny releasing Darner courtesy of Sandra Hunt-von Arb

researchers and organizations." During the workshop, we captured nine darners, attached Motus tags (a tedious process!), and then released them. A network of Motus stations will record location data as they fly past. Data will inform future



Amy and Melissa attaching tags Sandra records data

Restoring Native Plants and Cultivating Community

By Kat Hill, a Volunteer Program Coordinator with the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, San Jose CA.

People crave opportunities to get their hands in the earth. As a volunteer coordinator for the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority I work with people passionate about restoring local habitats and in turn am transformed by their sense of community.

While I work throughout Santa Clara Valley, one specific project is quite dear to my heart: the restoration of the Furtado Barn riparian area, located in Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve in east San Jose.

What makes Furtado special? It is located in a canyon through which feed tributaries of Penitencia Creek, which flow through Alum Rock Park, the oldest city park in California. Furtado is also an oasis: whereas much of Sierra Vista is an open

grassland, Furtado has chaparral, mixed forest, plus a perfusion of native plant species, insects, birds and mammals such as the gray fox and the ever elusive mountain lion.

Furtado is also special because of the people who care for it. Furtado was once a walnut orchard and dairy. Over the years, disturbance brought invasive mustard, hemlock and thistle. Volunteers, staff and I'd make monthly trips to the site to remove the most egregious invaders by hand and experiment with solarization to reduce the seedbank.

Just last year, we were awarded a generous grant of 1400 plants from the Xerces Society in order to establish a resilient population of native host and nectar plants for pollinators. Volunteers came out to

plant milkweed, fuschia, goldenrod, coyote mint and phacelia. They returned after a stormy winter to pull weeds from around the young shoots and admire their growth despite the heavy rain and snow.

And it wasn't just the plants that grew. Volunteers brought their friends to celebrate a conservation-themed birthday; couples and families returned again and again to see their progress, to share in the camaraderie (and botany jokes) and the chance to witness monarchs and red-tail hawk fledglings taking their first flight. The restoration of this place is not just a story of successful habitat rehabilitation but one of a community coming together to care for nature.



*Photographer- David Mauk, Natural Resources Technician
Volunteers happily putting native plants in the ground*



*Photographer- Kat Hill, Volunteer Programs Coordinator
Staff and Volunteers digging a trench and laying clear plastic for solarizing the top layer of soil in order to denature invasive weed seeds.*

BOOK REVIEW: Desert Darshan

Review by John Parker, River Guide (Rio Grande Canyons along the Texas Mexico border)

BOOK: Desert Darshan by Luiza “Birdie” McKaughan

Encounters with the infinite . . . Lose yourself in the charming and spellbinding presence of the plant and animal Beings that animate the desert with this is a delightful publication.

After reading these poems, I somehow felt grounded yet at the same time in touch with the wonders of the cosmos. The photos, of which there are many, are windows into the awe-inspiring natural world.

I would recommend Desert Darshan to anyone wanting an emotional tune-up.

BOOK DETAILS

Primary Category: Nature / Wildlife

Additional Categories: Religion & Spirituality, Arts & Photography Books

Project Option: Standard Portrait, 8×10 in, 20×25 cm

56 Pages

Publish Date: Aug 23, 2023

Language: English

Review and Book Details link:

https://www.blurb.com/b/11674311-desert-darshan?utm_medium=email&utm_source=application&utm_campaign=share-share_promote&utm_content=1138am-09_15_23-body#:~:text=About%20the%20Book,Texas%20Mexico%20border



Desert Darshan by birdie

What Is It? (ANSWER)

By John Miller

Takahē

The takahē is the largest member of the rail family and the biggest flightless bird to survive in New Zealand. The takahē and the pūkeko look very much alike, but with a little observation and the photos below, you will see a few major differences.

Like the kiwi, the takahē is flightless. You can see the flight feathers on the side of the pūkeko. Second, while both have red beaks, the takahē beak is very large and robust beak. The pūkeko has a leaner and more streamlined beak. Next the color of the two birds is striking. The takahē has shiny green, blue, and black feathers, whereas the pūkeko has just blue and black feathers. Finally, the two have different habitats. The takahē lives in tussock (small areas of thick clump grasses) country most of the year. Pūkekos tend to live in wet places like swampy

ground, lagoons, reeds, rushes, and swamps.

Like the Kiwi, the takahē was nearly extinct. In 1948, Dr Geoffrey Orbell rediscovered a population of takahē in the remote Murchison Mountains of Fiordland in the South Island of New Zealand. Today, takahē are classified as Nationally Vulnerable with a population of just over 400 birds.

To learn more about the takahē and to celebrate them in with National Takahē month go to:
New Zealand Department of Conservation.



pūkeko



Takahē

NAI Shining Star Award

Have you witnessed a fellow interpreter going above and beyond the call of duty? We are looking to recognize NAI members with these qualities on a monthly basis. The NAI Shining Star Award will highlight the amazing interpretive work being done by members, like you, all across NAI.

This award is meant to highlight winners' efforts to the NAI interpretive community as well as the winners' supervisors and coworkers. To nominate someone for the NAI Shining Star Award email NAI Member Liaison Heather Manier at hmanier@interpnet.com with the following information:

- Contact information of the nominee (name, title, site, work address, work email, and work phone).
- Example(s) of how the nominee went above and beyond their routine duties.
- Example(s) of how the nominee's action made a positive impact on visitors, resources, or NAI.

These awards are independent of the NAI Professional Awards.