



Photo by Jen Vieth

The St. Croix Current

Photo by Lizzie Danich

Volume 37, Number 1
Winter 2018

Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

12805 St. Croix Trail S.
Hastings, Minnesota 55033

Wisconsin Campus:
300 E. Cove Rd.
Hudson, Wisconsin 54016

Phone: 651-437-4359

www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org

"The mission of Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center is fostering a lifelong appreciation of the natural world through environmental education, habitat conservation and outdoor experiences."

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CONTRIBUTORS:

Tom Benson, Paul Blanchard,
Lizzie Danich, Jessie Eckroad,
Jeff Fischer, Glen Hill, Wendy Hill,
Alan Maloney, Michael Mann,
Rob McKim, Jennifer Vieth

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Field Notes

By Jen Vieth

The ice on the edge of the sidewalk is crackling underfoot. Brilliant red male cardinals dot the brush, like Christmas ornaments. Silently, across the Midwestern landscape, the elusive and impressive Snowy Owls have returned to brighten our winter months. Typically, these birds spend their lives in the northerly reaches of the continent. However, there is an occasional influx of Snowy Owls into our region during the winter months. *What drives these owls to expand their range and venture south?*

The answer is complex, but is becoming clearer due to data gleaned through advanced science and technology. Most biology students will recall being taught about how fluctuations of the predator population are determined by prey abundance. When lots of lemmings are produced, there is ample food available for nesting Snowy Owls, and the owls produce large clutches of chicks. The chicks then disperse. This summer, two traditional Snowy Owl nesting grounds, Bylot Island and Barrow, Alaska, were barren of owl nests. Where were the owls? Technological advances in transmitters have enabled researchers to understand that Snowy Owls disperse over great distances each summer to nest wherever lemmings are abundant. This year, the owls were found nesting on Ungava Peninsula in Northern Quebec. Ungava Peninsula is the same geographic source of many of the Snowy Owls that arrived in the lower 48 states in 2013. So far, this winter appears to be another amazing natural spectacle, with Snowy Owls being reported as far south as Oklahoma and Virginia. What a wonderful excuse to get outdoors this winter to explore nature's complex beauty and hope to glimpse a giant from the north.

I was once asked by a mentor to consider, *"What drives you?"* Snowy Owls are driven by basic survival needs. We humans, however, are often fortunate to be able to make our choices based on 'wants,' versus survival needs. The advice I received from my mentor was, *"Prioritize drivers that give you energy."* For me, these drivers include family, sharing natural science with others, and scientific curiosity. When asked what drives them, some CNC visitors and volunteers responded that their life choices are made by the drive to *"make a difference,"* to *"learn something new,"* and to *"give back."* This year, I am once again in awe of CNC's volunteers. They were personally driven to donate a cumulative 12,000 hours this year, equivalent to nearly \$283,000. From assisting with orchard classes to entering bird-banding data, these incredible individuals prioritize their time at CNC and giving back to the community. As we embark into a bright new year, please take time to consider *what gives you energy*, and consider how you can make more time for it in your life. If that includes time in nature and volunteering, we look forward to seeing you at CNC!



*University of Wisconsin-River Falls
students volunteer cutting buckthorn.*



Wendy Hill

*Ookpik means "snowy owl" or
"arctic owl" in the Inuktitut language.*

Upcoming Programs

Reservations are required

For more information, to RSVP or to schedule a group program, please call the office:

651-437-4359

Ice Fishing

FREE Family Ice Fishing Days at Lake Rebecca

Jan 27 & Feb 10 • 9:00 am—Noon

Learn about ice safety, fish species and habitat, ice fishing gear and techniques, and more. Instruction provided in part by the world-renowned experts from In-Depth Outdoors® and the guides and outfitters from Kruger Farms. Try your hand at catching fish, and if you become “hooked” on fishing, you can purchase the equipment from Kruger Farms that you will need for your own family fishing fun. REGISTRATIONS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED in order to ensure there is enough equipment for all participants. Call 651-437-4359 to register and schedule your arrival time.

FREE Advanced Ice Fishing

Children ages 10+ with prior fishing experience can register for this two-part program that explores the advanced art and science of ice fishing. Registration is required and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

Part 1 Classroom Jan 6 • 10:00 am—Noon

Get the tips and tricks for successful ice-fishing from the experts. Learn about ice safety, fish species and habitats, ice fishing gear and techniques, and much more. Classroom session at CNC is a pre-requisite for the off-site field trips to North Lake.

Part 2 Field Trip Jan 20 • 8:00 - 11:30 am or Noon-3:30 pm

Meet at North Lake to explore this local fishing hot spot. Learn how to select a location, drill a hole, and land top quality fish. Instructors are local ice fishing guides and fisheries experts. Students must attend the classroom session to register for one of the field sessions.

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



PROGRAMS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM THE



Preschool Storytime

Fridays • 10:00 – 11:00 am

Jan 12 • Ice Fishing

Feb 2 • Wonderful Woodchucks

Mar 16 • Syrup Season

Apr 13 • Welcome Spring!

These programs are designed to introduce children ages 2-5 to nature in a fun and safe environment. Listen to stories, spend time outdoors, make a craft and meet live animals. Be sure to call ahead and reserve your spot, because programs sell out fast. Registration is required and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. **Children must be accompanied by an adult.** Program Fee: \$5 per child or \$3 for ‘Friends of CNC.’ No charge for accompanying adult.

Scout Fun Day: Winter Survival

Jan 20 • 10:00 am – Noon



Have fun outdoors and make new friends while working to earn badges. Cub and Girl Scouts, ages 8-11, are welcome to participate in this outdoor experience. Space is limited so call 651-437-4359 to pre-register and ask how this program meets requirements for earning badges. Program Fee: \$6 per scout; no charge for group leaders.

Making Maple Syrup

Public Programs

Mar 18 & Mar 25 • 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Scout Program

Mar 10 • 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Welcome spring by joining the CNC staff in making maple syrup. Hike to the “sugarbush” to tap maple trees, watch the process of turning sap into syrup and sample the final product. The program starts indoors, but be ready to hike in the spring snow and mud. Registration is required and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$6 per person or \$4 for ‘Friends of CNC.’



Home School: Wetlands

Apr 24 • 1:00—2:30 pm

CNC’s Home School Programs are created to offer students in home schools an opportunity to meet other children, take part in environmental education programs, and enjoy the outdoors. In this program, students will learn about the vital role of wetlands, and the plants and animals that live in these waters. Please dress appropriately for the weather. Registration is required and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$6 per student or \$4 for ‘Friends of CNC.’

Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes

Jan 26 & Mar 2 • 7:00—9:00 pm

Enjoy a winter night under the moonlight with a relaxing snowshoe hike at CNC. After the hike, warm up by the fire and enjoy fresh popcorn and hot apple cider. Snowshoes provided or bring your own; dress for the weather. Registration is required and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$10 per person or \$7 for ‘Friends of CNC.’

Upcoming Events

More details available at www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org or by calling **651-437-4359**

Masters of the Sky

Presented by the World Bird Sanctuary



**February 24 & February 25
11:00 am • 1:00 pm • 3:00 pm**

The World Bird Sanctuary staff from St. Louis, Missouri, will be coming to CNC to present a captivating program about birds of prey. Visitors will learn about raptors from around the world and have the chance to experience live hawks, eagles, owls, falcons and vultures up close and in free-flight. The presenters will introduce methods to help protect raptors and their habitats.

RSVP and non-refundable payment are required, so call 651-437-4359 to reserve your seats.

Event Fee: \$10 or \$7 for ‘Friends of CNC.’

Hastings Area Birding Festival

In partnership with the Hastings Environmental Protectors



April 21 • 8:00 am

Celebrate birds and conservation at the Hastings Area Earth Day Birding Festival. Attend classes and demonstrations that introduce you to raptors, birding, and bird banding, and go on guided bird trips throughout the Hastings area. Young birders are encouraged to participate in the Youth Birding Competition. For more information about the Youth Birding Competition, and to view a schedule for the event, visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org.

RSVPs required. Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

Event Fee: \$5 or \$15 with a box lunch.

Bird Hikes

Wisconsin Campus

300 E. Cove Rd., Hudson, WI

Jan 20 & Feb 10 • 9:00 am

Mar 10 & Apr 14 • 8:00 am

Learn to identify birds with local experts. Binoculars and field guides will be available to use or you may bring your own. Come to one or all of the hikes. Registration is recommended, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$6 or FREE for ‘Friends of CNC,’ SCVBC members, and Hasting High School students.

Minnesota Campus

Jan 6 & Feb 3 • 2:00 pm

Mar 3 & Apr 7 • 8:00 am



Owl Prowls

Minnesota Campus

Jan 16 & Feb 9

Wisconsin Campus

300 E. Cove Road, Hudson

Feb 2 & Mar 9

7:00—9:00 p.m.

This time of the year, many of the Midwest’s 12 owl species are vocalizing to attract mates. Explore CNC on a guided night hike to look and listen for these owls. If there is enough snow cover, snowshoes will be provided or you may bring your own. Registration is required, and space is limited, so please call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$6 per person or \$4 for ‘Friends of CNC.’

Woodcock Walk

Apr 17 • 8:00—9:00 pm

Bogsuckers, Labrador Twisters, Timberdoodles, and Mudsnipe. Visit CNC’s Wisconsin campus to learn about the world of the American Woodcock.

WI-DNR guest speaker, Missy Sparrow, will share fascinating details about the lifestyle and conservation outlook of

these bizarre long-beaked birds. The program will begin with an indoor presentation, which will be followed by a walk through the darkening prairie trails to observe the acrobatic mating displays of male Woodcock. Registration is required, so call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Program Fee: \$6 per person or \$4 for ‘Friends of CNC.’



Public Bird Banding

Fridays • 8:30 am – Noon

Jan 26 • Feb 23 • Mar 23 • Apr 27

Join CNC’s expert bird banders every month as they catch, band, and release songbirds on our Minnesota campus. Banding runs continuously and visitors may come and go at any time. Donations of birdseed or suet are appreciated in lieu of a program fee.

Phenology from 2017 (with additional entries from CNC's past phenology notes)

[illegible]

People Profiles

Meet our Newest Board Member Rob McKim



Rob McKim has worked for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) since 1989. He directed the Delaware Chapter before moving with his family to Minnesota, where he began his tenure as Great Plains Program Director. As part of TNC's Midwest Regional Office, Rob initiated a multi-state fundraising effort and served as interim State Director in Missouri until 1997, when he was hired as State Director for the Minnesota Chapter. In 1998, Rob was also appointed Vice President of the Great Plains Division, which encompasses 18 states, the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes.

Before working with TNC, Rob was a legislative aide for energy, agriculture and the environment for U.S. Senator Roth (R-Del), and Director of Abbotts Mill Nature Center, an education center which is part of the Delaware Nature Society.

Rob received his MBA from Wilmington College and a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from the University of Delaware. He and his family live in Stillwater, where he enjoys beekeeping, paddling the St. Croix, hiking, skiing, and gardening. The staff and board of CNC are thrilled that Rob has joined our team, and we look forward to working with him.

Donor Profile Sam and Jan Tripp

The Tripp family first visited CNC in 1989 after moving to the Pine Coulee neighborhood along the Mississippi River in Hastings. Sam and Jan were looking for an opportunity to spend time outdoors with their young sons, and quickly fell in love with the trails, the view from the river overlook, and visiting the program animals. They were so grateful for the beauty, serenity, and memories made in nature that they became donors to show their support for CNC. Since beginning to donate in 1989, the Tripp's have been encouraging other families in Hastings area to visit and support the nature center. They feel it is very important for families to be able to relax and unwind in nature, and give children the opportunity to explore the outdoors.

Sam is a former Hastings High School teacher and is now a lawyer with offices in Hastings and Edina. Jan graduated from Hastings High School and opened Jan's School of Dance in 1982. In their free time, Sam and Jan love attending sporting events, snorkeling, scuba diving, and spending time with their friends and family.



Mac McGoon Portrait Design

Volunteer Spotlight Mary Grote

This winter we are very pleased to put Mary Grote in our Volunteer Spotlight. Mary started volunteering in 2005 and has since put in over 500 hours. She is a Master Gardener and we often see Mary on spring and summer mornings as she weeds, prunes, and cares for the center garden. She has also helped with the Apple Blossom Races and has recruited her husband Charlie to help too. Thank you, Mary, for your time, talent, and dedication to CNC. It is a joy to see your smiling face as you work in the garden and we appreciate the beauty your green thumb brings forth from the soil. We lift our glasses in honor of you, Mary. Salud!



Volunteer Corner

Volunteer Information Meetings

Jan 17 • Feb 21 • Mar 13 • Apr 24 • June 5 7:00 pm
For those interested in joining the CNC volunteer corps, please call 651-437-4359 to RSVP for a meeting date. Meetings take place in the Visitor Center.

Volunteer Opportunities

Public Programs – Check out the upcoming program/event calendar and mark the dates for the Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes and Masters of the Sky. We will need volunteer help with these programs and more info will be emailed as those dates get closer.



Collect Maple Sap – During March we will be tapping maple trees and making delicious maple syrup. If the sap runs strong, we will need help with this process – you'll be hauling sap and helping to boil it down to syrup. Look for an email in March for this task.

Adopt-A-Highway spring cleanup will take place on **April 25** starting at 5:30 pm. Come help pick up all the treasures that folks "lost" from their cars.

Apple Blossom Races on Sunday, **May 20** – we will need lots of volunteers to help with tasks ranging from directing parking to guiding runners crossing the finish line. We always get compliments on how well our race is managed, and that is in large part to our fantastic volunteers. Please consider helping with this event – we can't do it without you.

Memorials & Honorariums

We wish to express our appreciation for the following gifts:

In Honor of

Bella from Don & Jean Muetting
Betty & Fritz Lueck from Don & Ellen Sherry
Bob & Kathy Setzer from Bruce and Elizabeth Oslon
Cosi's 10th birthday from Rich Cohen
Enia & Afton Armbruster from Ryan & Sara Armbruster
Florence Carmean from Kim Carmean
Their grandchildren Liliana, Mariah, Sydney, and Jackson
from Pam & Ron Kukacka
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Bill Bissen from Ann Dutton
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Dad from Matt & Kim Stegmeir
Dave Pickett and Marshall Peterson from Mike Pickett

In Memory of continued...

Dick & Jean Janssen from Kathy Janssen
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Matthew Wenisch from Jason & Anne Wenisch
Roger Brown from Hubert & Helen Schneider
Mark Berg from Bill & Betty Berg
Tim Gregory from Tom & Jeanne Gregory
Tom Bump from Michelle Bump

Spring Sneak Peak

Apple Blossom Races

May 20 • 8:00 am

Get ready for the 33rd running of the Apple Blossom Races. Routes are family friendly for beginning and expert runners alike! We offer three different races:

- 5K Run/Walk is a straight route down St. Croix Trail
- 10K is partially on the road and then weaves through the woodlands and savannahs at Carpenter Nature Center
- **FREE** 2K Fun Run following other races at 9:30 am

Event fee: \$32 for the 5K & 10K. Fees will be \$8 more to register on race day. [You can register on our website, or come to the nature center to pick up a registration form. Information about additional registration options can be found on our website \[www.carpenternaturecenter.org\]\(http://www.carpenternaturecenter.org\).](#)

Sponsorships make this event possible. If you are interested in donating food, awards or funding, please contact Glen at 651-437-4359 or Glen@carpenternaturecenter.org.



Michael Mann

Summer Camps

Visit our website to register early for summer camps.

Nature Nuts (ages 5 & 6) • June 18-22
Fishing Fun (ages 6-11) • June 20 & July 11
Raptor Camp (ages 11 & up) • June 25-27
Pioneers (ages 7 & 8) • July 9-13
Pathfinders (ages 11+) • July 16-20
Canoe Trip (ages 12+) • July 24-26
Explorers (ages 9-11) • July 30-Aug 3

Art & Nature Camps at the Phipps Center for the Arts
Located in Hudson, Wisconsin • Dates and times TBD

Critter Crafting (ages 8-12) & Raptor Studies (ages 12-18)

Additional Dates to Remember in 2018

St. Croix Valley Scramble July 23
Carpenter Art Festival August 25
Apple Shack Opens Around Labor Day
Autumn in the Valley Gala September 9
Raptor Release September 22
Apple Fest October 13 & 14



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PLEASE INFORM US IF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGES

CNC Wish List

Carpenter Nature Center is in need
of the following items in good condition:

**Waxworms, night crawlers, minnows, and other bait
(to be fed to CNC's program animals)**



CNC News & Events

If you are not receiving monthly e-mail updates please contact:
Glen@CarpenterNatureCenter.org to join our e-mail list.

Follow us online:

www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org, Facebook, Twitter, or www.givemn.org.



giveMN.org
Click. Contribute. Change Our World.

[twitter](https://twitter.com/CNCMN)



Trails and interpretive exhibits
are open daily from 8:00 a.m.
to 4:30 p.m. A trail map is
available at the registration
desk where we ask all visitors
to check in. Admission
is free but we encourage
donations, which go to help
the environmental education

programs at the Nature Center. To join our email list contact:
Glen@CarpenterNatureCenter.org.