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Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

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"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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Field Notes

By Jen Vieth

Anyone who has spent time with me knows I've got birds on the brain all the time. Birds are fascinating! They can be huge, such as the intimidating Cassowaries of Australia, or minute, like our iridescent Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Birds come in all colors, from camouflaged American Woodcock to flamboyant Scarlet Tanagers. Many birds have brief lives, yet some live decades, such as "Wisdom" the Laysan Albatross, who returned to nest on Midway Atoll last November at 68 years of age. Some species are residents that spend their entire lives within a few miles of their nest site, while others make monumental journeys every year, connecting us vicariously with other continents and cultures! For example, the Arctic Tern migrates 55,923 miles every year, from the Arctic to the Antarctic and back.

We know about bird longevity and migratory routes through the science of bird banding, and technological advances allow us to learn even more. From satellite telemetry to stable isotope analysis and GPS Geolocators, we are learning about the full life cycle of the birds and the connectivity between their breeding and wintering grounds. The knowledge helps us prioritize habitat protection to help species that are in dramatic decline, such as grassland birds that have declined by 53% since 1970. Another revolutionary technological advances in this field is MOTUS. The network of more than 850 radio telemetry receivers stationed around the world are listening around the clock for any creature with a nano-transmitter to fly within 20 km of the tower. Nano-transmitters are such tiny pieces of technology, they can even be safely attached to dragonflies!

Carpenter Nature Center, in partnership with many collaborators, is proud to be the first location in the Metro area to install a MOTUS Tower. We received funding from the Minnesota Ornithologists Union to buy the materials and advice from the team at NRRI in Duluth, the WI DNR, and Bird Studies Canada. Extensive technical assistance was provided by last summer's intern Anders Santelman, his father Craig Santelman, and CNC volunteer Ben Douglas. We recently tested the system with a live nano-transmitter from our partners at the MN DNR, and it worked! The next step in this project is to install a tower on the Wisconsin Campus, which is already partially funded by Tropical Wings.

Our tower, strategically located at the confluence of the St. Croix River and Mississippi Rivers, is listening for nano-tags along one of the busiest migration flyways on our continent. If a tagged Northern Saw-whet Owl migrates past the site this Autumn we will know. In addition, if that owl migrates past a MOTUS tower in St. Louis, Missouri later in the season, we will know that too! If you want to learn more about the science behind the system, check out motus.org to see actual migratory tracks of birds and bats along the East Coast where the MOTUS system is more established.

Every day, every season, I'm amazed by CNC and all that we can accomplish when we work collaboratively with philanthropists, staff, volunteers, and visitors. Projects such as the MOTUS tower show that in celebrating the unique talents and individual interests of our collaborators, we can accomplish more than any one person could by themselves.



Although MOTUS is common on the East Coast, CNC's tower is one of only a few in the Midwest region (top). Even on a small American Kestrel, nanotags are tiny in comparison (bottom).

Creative Through COVID

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, CNC has been committed to nurturing the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of families in the St. Croix River Valley and beyond. Here's a quick snap-shot of some of the successes and our future plans to keep our programs and trails accessible this fall.

Alternatives to Annual Events

While we are unable to host our large events such as **The Raptor Release**, we have been able to modify other events and had a great response from the community. We successfully hosted two **Safe-at-Home Youth Birding Competitions** (see the Summer 2020 issue of The St. Croix Current for details). The **St. Croix Golf Scramble** was hosted using staggered tee times, patio boxed lunches, masks, and hand sanitizer, which helped participants to safely enjoy a round of golf in support of CNC. Although the **Carpenter Art Festival** is not being held in-person this year, we are still exhibiting the work of local artists through a series of virtual art galleries which can be found on Carpenter's Art Festival Facebook page, and on our website. Join us for our FREE **Autumn in the Valley Virtual Gala** on Sunday, September 13th from 6:30–7:15 pm. The event will feature an online auction, music from local artists, an online wine-pull game, and a live-streamed program with messages from Executive Director Jennifer Vieth and the CNC Board of Directors. Visit <https://carpenternaturecenter.org/gala/> for more information.

Environmental Education in Action

Summer Camps had a fresh, new look! Half-day mini-camps were offered with themes such as Outdoor Survival Skills (top right). Mask wearing, physical distancing, and frequent sanitizing helped keep campers safe. Other on-site opportunities included **Preschool Story Times** and **Animal Meet & Greets**. In order to engage with families that could not come to CNC, the **Outreach Team** traveled to local parks, childcare facilities, and camps with a variety of CNC's **Animal Ambassadors**. This fall, the education team is looking forward to supporting K-12 education in new ways. Although students may not be able to participate in field trips with their schools this Autumn, we are making our school group programming available for families to attend. These **Family Field Trips** (bottom right) are designed to address graduation standards and supplement classroom and distance learning, and are a fun opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy nature. Additionally, our **Outreach Team** is prepared to travel to your school or business to deliver entertaining and educational programming.

Intern and Volunteer Engagement

Although CNC limited the number of internship opportunities early in the pandemic, our summer interns had a great season. They participated with our partner organizations in **Kestrel banding** and **Osprey banding** projects, and the education team raised and released dozens of **Monarch Butterflies** (middle right). As with most non-profits, indoor, high contact volunteer opportunities have been limited due to COVID safety concerns. Fortunately, at CNC we have 725 acres and an orchard to manage. We've had teams of staff and volunteers working diligently removing trees encroaching on the prairie and working to eradicate invasive species such as buckthorn and spotted knapweed.

Safe Celebration of Apple Harvest

The horticulture team works diligently all year to grow delicious apples using environmentally friendly methods. We are thrilled to share our harvest with the community each Autumn, and this year, we will be encouraging our visitors to pre-order their apples for contact-free, curbside pick-up. For more information about Apple Shack operations, and to see a list of current apple inventory, visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/apples.

APPLE SALES

Labor Day - Thanksgiving
Wednesday - Sunday · 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Open for curbside service and limited in-store shopping.

By purchasing apples from CNC, you are supporting environmental education and habitat protection in the St. Croix Valley.



Abbey Holden



Jessie Eckroad

Summer campers show off their shelter-building skills (top). CNC staff, interns, and visitors work together to release newly emerged butterflies (bottom).

Family Field Trips — Minnesota Campus

Tuesdays & Thursdays • 2:00—4:00 pm

Program Fee: \$5 per child, max \$20 per family unit unless noted*. No cost for accompanying adult unless noted*. Majority of programming is outdoors and is weather dependent. Dress for the weather. Reservations required. Scholarships will be available. Visit our website www.carpenternaturecenter.org/events/ for more information.

Sept 15 & 17—Orchard*

Sept 22 & 24—Life Cycles

Sept 29 & Oct 1—Orchard*

Oct 6 & 8—Wetlands

Oct 13—Orchard*

Oct 20 & 22—Change of Seasons

Oct 27 & 29—Water Quality

Nov 3 & 5—Change of Seasons

Nov 10 & 12—Weather

Nov 17 & 19—Rocks & Minerals

Nov 24—Change of Seasons

Dec 1 & 3—Animal Adaptations

Dec 8 & 10—Winter Survival

Dec 15 & 17—Gifts for Wildlife

Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

If attending a weekday program is inconvenient for your family, check out our Saturday morning programs! ➡

Programs & Events

At Carpenter Nature Center, the safety of our visitors is of the utmost importance. We are continuing to monitor the spread of COVID-19, and are making decisions about operations and programming based on recommendations from the CDC and MN and WI Departments of Health. The programming below is currently scheduled, but may need to be postponed or canceled based on the ever-changing circumstances related to COVID-19.

SPACE IS LIMITED AND PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL PROGRAMS. Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot. Majority of programming is outdoors and weather dependent. Please dress accordingly. Visit our website www.carpenternaturecenter.org for program details and the most current programming information.



Bird Hikes

Minnesota Campus

Sept 5 • Oct 3

8:00—10:00 am

Wisconsin Campus

Sept 12 • Oct 10

8:00—10:00 am

Nov 14 • Dec 12

9:00—11:00 am

Program Fee: \$5 per person or FREE for 'Friends of CNC' and SCVBC Members. Reservations required.



Lizzie Danich

Public Bird Banding

Minnesota Campus

Fourth Fridays • 8:30 am—Noon

Sept 25 • Oct 23 • Nov 27 • Dec 18

Donations of bird seed and suet are appreciated in lieu of a program fee. Programs outdoors and weather dependent.

Saturday Family Field Trips

Minnesota Campus

10:00 am—Noon

Sept 19 & 26—Orchard Fun*

Oct 3, 10 & 17—Orchard Fun*

Oct 24—Raptors

Oct 31—Reptiles and Amphibians

Nov 7—Animals of the St. Croix

Nov 14—Raptors

Nov 21—Reptiles and Amphibians

Nov 28—Animals of the St. Croix

Dec 5, 12 & 19—Winter Birds

Animal Meet & Greets

Minnesota Campus

Sept 11 & 25 • Oct 9 & 23 • Nov 6 & 20

10:00—11:00 am

Program Fee: FREE



Seed Collecting

Wisconsin Campus

Sept 13

10:00 am—Noon

Program Fee: FREE

Preschool Story Time

Minnesota Campus

Sept 18 • Oct 30 • Nov 13 • Dec 11

9:30—11:30 am (ongoing)

Program Fee: \$5 per child or \$3 for 'Friends of CNC.' No cost for accompanying adult. Reservations required.

MEA Break Wildlife Adventure Day Camps

Minnesota Campus

Oct 15 (Ages 5-8) • 9:00 am—Noon

Oct 16 (Ages 9-14) • 9:00 am—Noon

Explore nature, play games, create nature-themed crafts, and meet CNC's live Animal Ambassadors up-close.

Program Fee: \$35 per child or \$25 for 'Friends of CNC.'

Owl Prowls

Wisconsin Campus

Nov 13 • Dec 11

6:00—8:00 pm

Program Fee: \$5 per person or \$4 for 'Friends of CNC.' Reservations required.

Adult Painting Parties

Minnesota Campus

Saturdays • 2:00—4:00 pm

Dec 5, 12 & 19







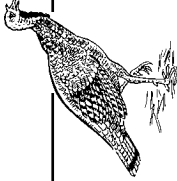
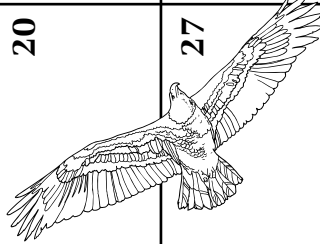
All supplies provided. Program Fee: \$30 per person or \$25 for 'Friends of CNC.' Reservations required.



Jessie Eckroad

2020 Calendar of Events at Carpenter Nature Center

Phenology from 2019 (with additional entries from CNC's past phenology notes)

September			1	2	3	4	5
6	Labor Day	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	Autumn in the Valley Virtual Gala	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	30 Broad-winged Hawks overhead	21	22	23	24	25	26
27		28	29	30	October Full Moon	1	3
4		5	6	7	8	9	10
11	First snowflakes	12	13	14	15	16	17
18		19	20	21	22	23	24
25	Hard frost: Birdbaths frozen	26	27	28	29	30	31
November		2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Pond freezing over	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	Swans migrating over Mississippi ('08)	16	17	18	19	20	21
22		23	24	25	26	27	28
29		30	December	1	2	3	4
6	Trumpeter Swans flying overhead	7	8	9	10	11	12
13		14	15	16	17	18	19
20		21	22	23	24	25	26
27		28	29	30	31		

People Profiles

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Carpenter Nature Center heavily relies on the support of dedicated volunteers, hardworking interns, a passionate Board of Directors, and generous donors. On behalf of the staff at CNC, we would like to take time to express our gratitude for the contributions of just a few of the individuals who help us serve the communities on both sides of the beautiful St. Croix River.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteer of the Year—Mike Murphy



In this issue, we are pleased to shine the spotlight on our Volunteer of the Year, and this year the award goes to Mike Murphy. Mike started volunteering for CNC in 2015 and has put in over 750 hours. Mike puts in most of his hours out in the orchard where he performs a litany of duties too numerous to list here. Sverre would have a harder time managing the orchard without Mike's help. Mike has also taken over care and management of the garden near the wooden carvings of the boy and girl. Many visitors have commented on how beautiful and welcoming that garden looks. Thanks, Mike, for all your hard work and dedication to CNC. Your modesty, integrity, and willingness to pitch-in makes you a great asset to our band of volunteers. You are truly top-notch and we can't thank you enough. Congrats!

Volunteer Opportunities

Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up

Sept 29 • 5:30 pm

Trash bags and safety vests will be available. If you are able to help, bring your gloves and your favorite litter-grabbing tool. We should be able to do this while maintaining our social distance but bring a mask just in case. This usually takes about 1 ½ - 2 hours depending on the number of volunteers available. If you are interested in volunteering at CNC, please call 651-437-4359 and ask for Alan, the Volunteer Coordinator; or email alan@carpenternaturecenter.org.

Meet Our Summer Intern

Catherine Donohue

Cat Donohue is an incoming senior at Luther College, in Decorah, Iowa, majoring in Environmental Studies with a concentration on culture and society, and minoring in Spanish. Along with spending time in nature, she enjoys playing violin and competing in ballroom and swing dance. She has been here this summer working as the Natural Resources/ Horticulture Intern. Much of her time has been spent in the orchard helping out with the apple trees and the pumpkin patch, as well as working on various habitat restoration projects on both our Minnesota and Wisconsin campuses. She has enjoyed expanding her plant identification knowledge this summer.

CNC strives to provide a multifaceted learning experience for all our interns. Cat had the opportunity to accompany one of CNC's Osprey banding partners to observe and assist with research. Juvenile Osprey were banded and returned to the nest. They are learning to fly and will soon migrate south for the winter.



Help Support CNC

During these turbulent times, CNC is in need of your help more than ever.

Outlined below are a variety of ways that you can support our mission.

Your contributions help keep our trails open and available to the public, allow us to continue our education and habitat work, and support the physical and mental health of the community.

Become a 'Friend of CNC' — Whether you join as an Individual Friend of CNC for \$25, or become a member of The Director's Council with a gift of \$5,000 or more, there is a spectrum of giving options suitable for any budget. You can make a one time donation, or structure your gift to be made in installments. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/friends/ for more information.

Attend our Programs — The professional naturalists at Carpenter Nature Center offer fun and educational programming on a variety of topics for learners of all ages. Programming is available on both our Minnesota and Wisconsin campuses, and provide the community with the opportunity to enjoy nature during all four seasons. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/events/ for a full list and information about upcoming programs.

Adopt a CNC Animal Ambassador — As an adopter of an Animal Ambassador, your contribution funds the cost to feed your animal for one full year. Our amphibians can be adopted for as little as \$25 each, or if you have a larger budget, consider adopting one of our reptiles, our rabbit, or one of our birds of prey. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/adoptions/ for more information.

Donate an Item From Our 'Wish List' — From toilet paper to power tools, we need a variety of supplies to keep the Nature Center running. For a detailed list of items, visit our website. Have an item that's not on the list, but that you think would be useful to CNC? Call us at 651-437-4359 to discuss your item donation. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/wish-list/ for more information.

Visit the Apple Shack — As a nature center, we are committed to growing and providing the highest quality apples in a sustainable environment. Besides apples, our Apple Shack has other quality goods for sale, including pumpkins and squash, syrup, and wildflower honey extracted from our own beehives. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org/apples/ for more information.

Follow Us on Social Media — When you 'like' and 'share' our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Youtube content, you help to expand our reach.

Other Giving Options — Carpenter Nature Center is able to accept a variety of asset donations from sources such as appreciated stocks, retirement IRAs, workplace giving programs, matching gift programs, donor advised funds, and more. Talk to your financial advisor and/or employer to learn about opportunities to donate to CNC and the possible tax benefits of your gift.



Memorials & Honorariums

We wish to express our appreciation for the following gifts:

In Honor Of

Liam from Kathy Widin

In Memory Of

Cosi from Rich Cohen, Donna Buck from Donald Buck, Tom Bump from Michelle Bump, Daryl Donath from Toni & Sharon Lewandowski, Robert Alphonse Elm from Phil & Marlene Kachelmyer, Gloria Hansen from Mark Hansen, Lloyd Hanson from Darleen Hanson, Poot Hedin from Brad Delaney & Scout, Yvonne Hedin, Gabe & Kirsten Jensen, Pat Jensen, and Poot's special friend Dani, and Nathan Lopez from Dan & Kim Lopez



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Locations and Hours

Carpenter Nature Center is a 501(c)(3) private, non-profit organization with property on both the Minnesota and Wisconsin sides of the scenic St. Croix River.
For more information about our properties, please visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org.

Minnesota Campus

12805 St. Croix Trail S.
Hastings, MN 55033
(651) 437-4359

Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm daily
Trails, buildings, parking lots, and front gates
close daily at 4:30 pm
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Day,
New Year's Day, and Easter.

Wisconsin Campus

300 East Cove Road
Hudson, WI 54016
(651) 437-4359

Hours: Trails open year-round
from sunrise to sunset

