

# St. Croix Current

Volume 30, Number 1 January – April 2011

# Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

12805 St. Croix Trail Hastings, Minnesota 55033 Phone: 651-437-4359 Fax: 651-438-2908

www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org

Wisconsin Campus: 300 Cove Rd. Hudson, Wisconsin 54016

"The mission of Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center is to foster appreciation and inspire stewardship of the natural world. We accomplish our mission by acquiring and preserving land and wildlife habitat, providing quality environmental education, conservation practices and enjoyable outdoor experiences for visitors of all ages and capabilities."

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# Headwater Riffles...

By J. Fitzpatrick

The air had a sting in it for the first time this late fall/early winter season. The car thermometer said 12 degrees on the way into work. The small ponds not only had a thin layer of ice but about a half inch of very light, fluffy snow. The grass that stuck through the snow from a week ago was too rough for this kind of snow to stick to.

And so begins another winter season on the bluffs of the St. Croix River. The Great Horned Owls are setting up their territories. Amphibians are deep into the mud below the ice and the Dark-eyed Juncos and American Tree Sparrows are here to stay. We, on the other hand, are warming up the snowshoes getting ready for our first six inches and breaking out the ice auger to sharpen the blade so we can see how deep the ice is getting. Winter survival gear is



CNC Prairie grasses with frost make a beautiful photo study.

set and ready to help teach 6th graders how to stay alive in the winter.

Soon it will be time to break out the taps and drills and buckets for maple syrup production and then the spring season jumps in to warm everything back up again. When I was a young lad, winter seemed to go on forever. We could ski from Thanksgiving all the way into late April. Someday we hope that regular Midwestern winter returns.

The report

from the

fiscal



Survival is one of CNC's most popular winter classes. Students make a shelter, send help signals, and build fires.

and we have put our financial house in order.

year end is historic. Though we finished the year a bit over budget, we were also over budget in revenue. Thus we ended our fiscal year "in the black" for the first time in many years! While this is a monumental improvement and provides hope for a more sustainable future it still reflects ongoing staffing and salary cuts. The 2011 operating budget calls for a decreased, yet more sustainable draw from The Carpenter Endowment. We feel that CNC has indeed turned the corner on this recession

I would like to take this time to personally thank our volunteers, our staff and our Board of Directors for helping us make it through another very difficult time period in our history. Each one of these hurdles we weather makes the organization different but more resilient in its make-up. Our organization is much leaner now but we are feeling good about the present and the future, and looking forward to a very busy 2011.

I hope you will share this issue with family members and neighbors before recycling it.

Our calendar of classes is filling up all the way through the end of school in June. We know scheduling will pick up even more once January and February are here and we urge teachers to call as far ahead as possible because March through June is our busiest season of the year.

Where at CNC?
If you only visit our trails during the summer, you may have missed our waterfall. You can find it and other fascinating wildlife just off the North River Bluff Trail. The creek bed is active once spring thaw begins and dries up by early summer.

# **Upcoming Programs**

Carpenter Nature Center offers a wide variety of public programs. We invite you to participate in any, or all, of the following programs. **Reservations are required.** For more information, to RSVP, or to schedule a group program please call the office: **651-437-4359** 

# JANUARY & FEBRUARY

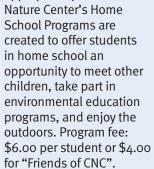
Moonlight Snowshoe Hike

Fridays, January 14 & February 18 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Enjoy a winter night under the moonlight with a relaxing snowshoe hike at Carpenter Nature Center. Afterward, warm up by the fire and enjoy some fresh popcorn and hot apple cider. Snowshoes provided or bring your own. Dress appropriately for the weather. Recommended for ages 10 and up. This popular program fills up quickly so call 651-437-4359 to make a reservation and let us know which date works best for you. Program fee: \$8.00 per person or \$5.00 for "Friends of CNC".

### MARCH

# Home School: Maple Syruping

Wednesday, March 9 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Learn how to make maple syrup the old-fashioned way in the CNC sugarbush.
Students will learn how trees produce sap, how to identify maple trees, and will participate in the tapping of trees and production of maple syrup. Be prepared to hike in the spring snow and mud; dress appropriately for the weather. Carpenter



# Making Maple Syrup

Sundays, March 20 & 27



From tapping the trees to sampling the syrup, a trip to Carpenter Nature Center's sugarbush is sure to be fun for visitors both young and old.

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Welcome the coming of spring by joining the CNC staff in the tradition of making maple syrup. We'll hike to the "sugarbush" to tap maple trees, witness the process of turning sap into syrup and sample the finished product. This program will start indoors, but be prepared to hike in the spring snow and mud. This popular program fills up quickly so call 651-437-4359 to make a reservation and let us know which date works best for you. Program fee: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for "Friends of CNC" and children under 10.

## **APRIL**

Minnesota Starwatch with Mike Lynch

Friday, April 15 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. Ioin WCCO Radio



Meteorologist Mike Lynch to watch the great celestial show in the skies over Carpenter Nature Center. This night with the stars, constellations, planets, star clusters, galaxies, and nebulae starts with an indoor orientation followed by quality time outside. Get to know the constellations like The Big Bear, Cassiopeia, Orion and his gang, and some of the great stories behind them. We'll also use large reflecting telescopes for close up views of the planets and other wonders in our early spring skies. You'll get a great handout and package with user-friendly star maps and constellation chart maps, websites, a telescope-buying guide, and more! Dress appropriately for the weather and bring a lawn chair if you want to make yourself comfy. Recommended for ages 8 and up. Reservations required. Program fee: \$15.00 per person or \$12.00 for "Friends of CNC".

# **Bird Banding**

Fourth Fridays 8:30 a.m. - Noon January 28 February 25 March 25 April 22 Have you ever wondered what bird banding is all about? This is

your chance to see songbirds up close and to watch the experts band birds. Bird banding records help us learn how long birds live, where they travel, when they migrate and many other interesting facts. Carpenter Nature Center has been banding birds for over 29 years and our banding experts welcome you

to come visit them and learn about the song birds who share our ecosystem. Bird banding runs continuously for the full 3 1/2 hours but visitors may come and go at any time. Please call ahead (651-437-4359) so we know you are coming. Donations of bird seed or suet will be greatly appreciated in lieu of a program fee.



A skirmish between a rodent and a small owl is recorded in the snow for morning visitors to decipher.

# Preschool Storytime Fridays 10:00 – 11:00 am

January 21 Animal Tracks & Scat

February 11 Squirrels

March 4 Once Upon a Time...
April 1 Signs of Spring
May 6 Animal Babies

CNC's Preschool Story Times are designed to introduce young children, ages 2 through 5 (with a parent or guardian), to nature in a fun and safe environment. We'll listen to stories, spend some time outdoors, make an art or craft project and meet live animals. Please call 651-437-4359 to register for any or all of the story times and be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. Program fee: \$5.00 per child per program or \$3.00 per preschooler for "Friends of CNC"; no charge for accompanying adult.

<sup>\*</sup> CNC Story Time programs have been partially funded through support from Target.

# **Upcoming Events**

More details available at www.CarpenterCatureCenter.org or by calling 651-437-4359 Please call early to RSVP. These programs WILL sell out.

### OWLS AND OTHER MASTERS OF THE SKY

# Saturday March 5th AND Sunday March 6th 1-hour programs at 11:00, 1:00 & 3:00

Presented by and in partnership with the World Bird Sanctuary from St. Louis, Missouri

Humans have been mesmerized by birds of prey for centuries. Around the world raptors are used as national and military symbols of strength. We are amazed by their speed and maneuverability, exceptional eyesight and astounding hearing. Did you know that while some falcons can dive at speeds in excess of 200 miles an hour, others hover nearly motionless over grasslands? Or that 'Ghost owls' can find their prey in absolute darkness and kestrels use ultraviolet light to find their prey? Come and learn more about these fascinating creatures and what we can do to protect them and their habitats worldwide. Experts from the World Bird Sanctuary will introduce you to owls, hawks, falcons and eagles, with some doing flight demonstrations over the audience! Program fees are \$10 per person or \$7 for 'Friends of CNC'.



A Barn Owl has many nicknames including Ghost Owl for its silent flight, which will be demonstrated during the programs.



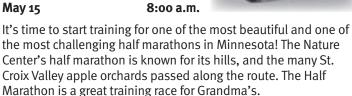
Shadow, a Bateleur Eagle, was taken illegally from his home in Africa, confiscated by U.S. Customs, and given to the World Bird Sanctuary.



Runners enjoy the scenic trails and friendly volunteer water stops.

# 26th Apple Blossom Races 5K, 10K, ½ Marathon & 2K Fun Run

8:00 a.m.



Our 10K race takes runners through woodlands and savannahs along the paved trails of the nature center. The 5K race is a direct shot down St. Croix Trail to the finish line. There is no charge for the 2K Fun Run, which starts after the other three timed races end, usually around 11:30.

All proceeds from this event support the environmental education programming at Carpenter Nature Center. To register please visit our website to download a form, or sign up online through either www.Midwest Events.com or www.active.com



Jim Fitzpatrick February 26th to March 5th Have you always wanted to visit a rain forest? Or see toucans in the wild?



Join Jim and other 'Friends of CNC' on a week long trip to the foothills of the Maya Mountains. You will stay at the Mopan River Resort, which has been voted one of the top 10 All Inclusive Resorts in the World. Their food has even been featured by Gourmet Magazine!

While birding will be a big goal on this trip, there will also be day trips to Mayan Ruins, a canoe trip down a local river and other excursions in the Cayo District. Over 300 bird species can be found in the area and the mammals include kinkajous and agouti. The cost per person is only \$1,350 (not including airfare). For more information please contact Jim@CarpenterNatureCenter. org or 651-437-4359.

# DATES TO REMEMBER

For more details please call 651-437-4359

St. Croix Valley Scramble Monday, July 18th Ride for Carpenter motorcycle benefit Summer 2011 Autumn in the Valley Gala Sunday, September 11th

# 2011 Calendar of Events at Carpenter Nature Center (Phenology from 2010)

			STOP THOU BOTOTION	(010)			
	January			***************************************	6	New Year's Day – CNC Closed	П
2 1st ice shack on St. Croix River	SChickadees singing spring fee-bee	Deep Snow New Moon	5 5th day of sub-zero lows	9 4 4 4 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6	7		$\infty$
6	10	11 2 robins at bird bath	12	13	Moonlight Snowshoe Hike		15
16 Golden Eagle sighted over Prescott	17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18	Full Moon 19	20	Preschool Story Time: Animal Tracks and Scat	Starling beaks showing yellow	22
23	24	25 (2)	26	St. Paul Winter Carnival Begins	28 Bird Banding in Visitor Center	. 7	29
30	31 9 hours and 49 minutes of daylight	February	Sroundhog Day	S Chinese New Year – Year of the Rabbit	4		ro
6 Super Bowl Sunday	7	8 More snow in Feb so far than all of Jan.	6 ************************************	10	Preschool Story Time: Squirrels		12
13	Valentine's Day 14 Blue Jays singing spring song	15	16 35° F degrees!	17	Moonlight Snowshoe Hike – Full Moon		19
20	21 President's Day	22	23	24	25 Bird Banding in Visitor Center		26

27	28 11 hours and 6 minutes daylight	$\underset{Turkeys}{March}^{1}$	2	3	4 Preschool Story Time: Once Upon a Time	5 Owls and Other Masters of the Sky
6 Owls and Other Masters of the Sky	7 Sap is running	8	9 Home School: Maple Syruping	10 10 10 RAIN! 60 1 1 10 1	11	12 Swans in "field water"
13 Daylight Savings Time Begins	14 64°F a new record!	15	Red-shouldered Hawk migrating	17 St Patrick's Day	Bluebirds by farmhouse	Full Moon 19
20% Making Maple Syrup First Day of Spring	21	ZD Common Grackle at feeders	Large flocks of swans migrating	24 Ice off wetland	25 Bird Banding in Visitor Center	26 Goldfinches showing bright yellow patches
27 Making Maple Syrup	28	29	30 Wood frogs calling	31 Ice off St. Croix River 12 hours and 43 minutes of daylight	Preschool Story Time: 1 Signs of Spring Bigfoot & Elvis Seen near River Overlook	2 1st 13-lined ground squirrel
New Moon – 3	4	5 Hepatica and Pasque Flowers blooming	9	Frogs singing in wetland	B Did prairie burn	9 1st flocks of migrating gulls
10 Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup	11 Dandelions blooming	12 Garter snake near farmhouse	3	14	Astronomy with Mike Lynch	16
) 17	18	19 Ohio Buckeye blooming	20	21	Bird Banding in 22 Visitor Center Earth Day	23
24	25	26 Last week of banding juncos	27	28 Arbor Day	30 14 Hours 12 minutes of daylight	

# People Profile

# Advisory Committee Board Member Bio

Jim Nielsen is a member of Carpenter's Advisory Board and first connected to CNC through his young children. "They were thrilled by the programs and summer camps. It really opened their eyes to the joys of our natural world."



After retiring from the Army as a

colonel, Jim stayed home to raise his two young daughters. "It turned out to be the biggest, most worthwhile adventure of my life," he says. "Steph and Kristin loved learning about critters - from tadpoles and butterflies to coyotes and owls. Carpenter made learning about our river habitat fun." His favorite CNC event? Autumn in the Valley with a table full of friends. "The more friends we bring to CNC, the better [off] we all are."

Jim volunteers hundreds of hours each year. He helped coordinate the first All About Owls event, writes and edits Carpenter's Annual Report, is a Sustaining Friend of CNC, and joined the Thomas & Edna Carpenter Society by naming CNC in his will. Jim is a writer, a teacher, and likes spending time on horseback, especially trail riding in the Rockies.

# **Meet Our Interns**

When our summer intern, **Hayley Peters**, completed her education internship she decided to stay on for a fall Horticulture internship to learn more about the apple orchard and the Integrated Pest Management program. With the busy fall season in the orchard, Hayley spent the majority of her time harvesting, sorting, bagging and selling apples. She also



helped with the fall special events and with the sales area in the Apple Shack. She would like to eventually get a job in forestry or with the DNR but, that will have to wait for awhile since she will be deployed in March with the Minnesota Army National Guard, serving on convoy security missions in Kuwait and Iraq.

Our new Environmental Education intern, **Summer Hendrickson**, joined us in September and will be here through June 2011. She is



also a part-time intern with Friends of the Mississippi River. Summer earned an Environmental Science degree from UW-River Falls. After a busy fall of orchard classes, other school groups, public programs, and animal care, Summer feels quite comfortable teaching students and handling our critters. She looks forward to snowshoeing and the maple syrup season. Summer is thrilled about the experience she is

gaining and plans to keep her career outdoors by being a steward to natural places and educating others to join.

# Volunteer Spotlight

In this issue we proudly shine our Volunteer Spotlight on a wonderful lady who has helped out tremendously as one of our

visitor greeters – **Kay D'Agastino**. Kay started volunteering in April of 2009 and has since logged in close to 200 hours as the Saturday morning greeter in the Visitor Center. Kay does a wonderful job making visitors feel welcomed to CNC. She makes sure things are tidy and clean for



Kay teaches 5 year old Colin about CNC's western Hognose Snake

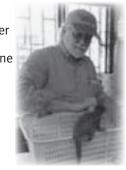
visitors, and sometimes gets out her favorite program animal, the hognose snake, to show visitors. Thanks Kay for your hard work and dedication to CNC. We are glad you share your time and talent with us and our visitors. Our hats are off to you!

# Get to know our Friends of CNC

You might recognize **Everett Janssen** as our Saturday afternoon

Visitor Center interpreter and greeter, or perhaps you've met him in his role as a volunteer at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota. About ten years ago Everett thought about retiring and bought a magazine to find out what he was supposed to do in retirement. After looking at glossy photos of golf courses and housing complexes he realized that his idea of retirement was different. He decided to dedicate his time and energy helping the environment. Today his guiding principle is "that the only way to

balance humankind and the natural world





Orphaned Ocelot

is to remove land from the decision making process-thereby taking it out of harm's way".

In addition to volunteering at Carpenter Nature Center Everett also spends time in Costa Rica working with www. KidsSavingtheRainforest.org. This is a grass roots organization which educates

children about the rainforest, preserves rainforest habitat,

rehabilitates injured animals and serves as a sanctuary for permanently disabled animals. Many of the injured rainforest creatures were hit by vehicles while they were trying to cross the many roads which now slice through the rainforest, interrupting the rainforest canopy of trees and vines. Other arboreal creatures were electrocuted trying to cross un-insulated electrical lines. One of the group's wonderful successes has



Endangered Mono Titi Monkey using KSTR Monkey Bridge

been establishing a system of canopy-level blue rope 'overpasses' for monkeys and sloths.

Everett officially joined Carpenter Nature Center as a "Friend of CNC" in 2004, and recently became our first online sustaining "Friend of CNC" through the www.givemn.org.

# Memorials & Honorariums

We wish to express our appreciation for the following gifts:

Jim & Judy Freund in memory of Marilyn Rose Griggs Darleen, Laurie, Dave, Jon & Jodi Hanson in memory of Lloyd L. Hanson Toni & Sharon Lewandowski in memory of Carol Johnson Daryl & Jan Standafer in memory of Ron Keller

Kandy Hagen, Karl & Linda Hagen, Richard & Mary Marzolf, Joe, Marsha & Leo Mose, Bob & Kathy Setzer, Greg & Jen Vieth in memory of George Lindeberg

Elaine Starz Tonolli in memory of Gene Starz Daryl & Jan Standafer in memory of Pat Walsh Chuck & Kathy Roberts in memory of Mary E. Wilhelmy

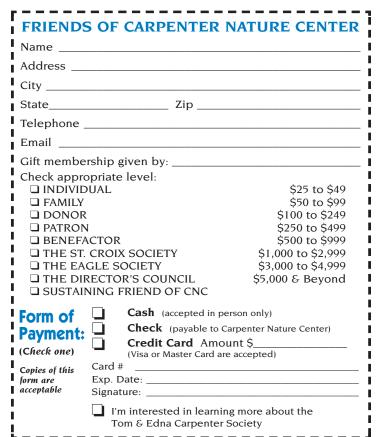
Minnesota Historical Society made a gift in honor of Sherri Gebert Fuller

Jim & Judy Freund, Donna & Kirit Mody, Ralph & Linda Larson, Joseph & Sue Meyers, Jr., Daryl & Nancy Skaar in honor of Gary & Mickie Griswold's wedding

Brittmarie Hogan in memory of Georgia Eleanor Voss Finstad Bob Garber in memory of Lorraine Garber Tammy Johnson & Don Kern in memory of LeRoy Johnson Carmen & Willard Swanson in memory of Agnes Larson Richard & Mary Marzolf in tribute to George & Ella Marzolf



To receive important updates and program notices please contact Jennifer@CarpenterNatureCenter.org to be added to our email list.







Tom & Edna Carpenter shared their dream to leave their lands for future generations to enjoy. While they did not have any children themselves, as one visitor put it 'We are all really the Carpenters' children'. A truly wonderful legacy. To find out more about naming Carpenter Nature Center in your will, please contact Jennifer at 651-437-4359 or Jennifer@CarpenterNatureCenter.org





A favorite spring wildflower is the Bloodroot (not truly an ephemeral as the plant grows all summer long) which can be found along CNC's woodland trails.

While we start this issue of the newsletter in the grips of Jack Frost and Old Man Winter, by the end of April we will be seeing the green shoots of fiddleheads and the ephemeral spring wild flowers.

### **VOLUNTEER CORNER**

Volunteer Information Meetings for new volunteers will take place on Wednesday, February 23rd and Wednesday, April 27th at 7:00 pm. These informal meetings are for those interested in becoming part of the volunteer crew of CNC. Please call 651-437-4359 and let us know you are coming.

# Volunteer Opportunities for the Winter and Spring at CNC

Volunteer help would be appreciated for the following classes coming this season: Winter Birds, Survival, Winter Fest, Adaptations, and Maple Syrup Making.

Help will also be needed for the upcoming public programs. The Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes, Birds of Prey, and Maple Syrup programs will need volunteers in various capacities. Besides the public Maple Syrup program, in March we will need volunteers to help process maple syrup which would include gathering sap and running the evaporator. If you are interested in helping process maple syrup please contact CNC at 651-437-4359.

Our spring Adopt-A-Highway cleanup will take place on April 10th 1-3 pm.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for the Apple Blossom Races on May 15, 2011 where we will need lots of volunteer help.



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Marty Lynch	Maintenance Foreman
John McPherson	Horticulturist
Phil Gruis	Orchardist

### PLEASE INFORM US IF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGES

### **CNC Wish List**

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

Vacuum cleaner (in good Kleenex working condition)

Black Oil Sunflower Seed & Suet extension cords

6 wheeler for the orchard

Staple gun and staples

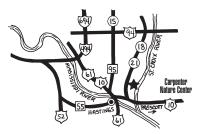
A book list is available if you are interested in purchasing a book for use in programs or for the CNC library. Just give us a call at 651-437-4359. Remember that donated items are tax deductible!

Follow us online: www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org, Facebook, Twitter, or www.givemn.org.









Trails and interpretive exhibits are open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
A trail map (with a selfguided trail) 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.