

The St. Croix Current

Volume 34, Number 1
Winter 2015

Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

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www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org

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Hudson, Wisconsin 54016
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"The mission of Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center is to foster appreciation and inspire stewardship of the natural world. We accomplish this 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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Field Notes

By Jen Vieth

Ice crystals glisten on the long needles of the white pines. Fox tracks snake across the fresh snow. Energetic chickadees chatter amongst themselves as they flit from branch to branch. Winter has arrived in the St. Croix Valley in all its frosty glory.

As Midwesterners we embrace winter and wear it as a badge of honor. We not only survive winter—we revel in it. For some it is the opportunity to observe northern birds that over-winter in our area, for others it is the chance to enjoy ice-fishing, snow-shoeing and skating. Whatever your fascination with the season, winter is a great time to get outdoors and reconnect with nature. The benefits of time spent in nature are well-documented, from improved healthy longevity, to lower rates of depression, lower levels of anxiety and increased creativity.

One of the fascinating things about nature is that there is always something new to discover. It may be new to you, such as the tiny larvae that over-winter in a Goldenrod gall. Or it could be entirely new to science, such as the new frog species discovered in New Jersey this year. After 33 years we are still discovering new things at CNC. This fall we found Southern Flying Squirrels and Northern Saw-whet Owls for the first time. It wasn't that those species weren't present before, it's just that they remained hidden from our eyes. Equally fascinating is international research into the seasonal movements and population fluctuations of Saw-whet Owls. Traditionally thought to be a non-migratory species, recent evidence suggests that some of these tiny owls migrate hundreds of miles along well-established routes every fall. At the local level, CNC documented a first-year female Saw-whet Owl on our Minnesota Campus November 9, 2014 that had been banded in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan on September 5, 2014. That's a distance of over 821 miles. Incredible for a creature that weighs less than seven Oreo cookies.



Saw-whet Owl, by Jason Mandich

In a world where everything seems to have been done before, nature is a horizon of undiscovered wonders and interconnectivity. And it is this gift of wonder, investigation and discovery we can give to our children. This is the spark that Carpenter Nature

Center ignites in hundreds of families and thousands of visiting students. CNC's naturalists are scheduling a full year's events for 2015, starting with terrific winter programs: Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes, Owl Prowls and Maple Syrup Making. We'll host the amazing "Masters of the Sky" program at the end of February and the Hastings Area Birding Festival in April. As you plan your goals for the year, be sure to include participating in the 30th annual Apple Blossom Races. Whether you walk, run or volunteer-it's a wonderful community event and a great excuse to spend time outdoors.

Upcoming Programs

Reservations are required

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

Natural Challenges

CNC encourages visitors to increase their fitness level and get outdoors. We offer programs on a variety of topics, exploring various habitats at CNC and learning several outdoor skills.

Owl Prowl and Snowshoe Hike

January 9 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. on the Minnesota Campus
February 6 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. on the Wisconsin Campus*

Local bird experts Kevin Smith and Dwight Smith will guide a moonlit hike while looking and listening for owls. At this time of the year many of the Midwest's 12 native owl species are hooting, tooting and whinnying to attract mates. If there is adequate snow cover snowshoes will be provided, or bring your own. Program fee is \$6 or \$4 for "Friends of CNC."

Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hike

January 30 & March 6 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Enjoy a winter night under the moonlight with a relaxing snowshoe hike. After the hike, warm up by the fire and enjoy some fresh popcorn and hot cider. Snowshoes provided or bring your own. Program fee: \$10 or \$7 for "Friends of CNC."

Snowshoe Hikes

January 24 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. on the Wisconsin Campus*
February 22 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. on the Minnesota Campus

Enjoy the winter wonderland on snowshoes, exploring some of the lesser known trails at CNC. Look for animal tracks along the way and other signs of animal activity. Snowshoes provided for ages 10 and up, or bring your own. If there is inadequate snow cover for snowshoeing we'll still go on a winter hike to look for animal tracks. Program fee is \$6 per person or \$4 for "Friends of CNC."

Home School Program: Birds

April 17 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.



CNC's Home School Programs are created to offer students in home schools (ages 5 and up) an opportunity to meet other children, take part in environmental education programs, and enjoy the outdoors. Students will go on a bird hike, dissect owl pellets, and see live birds. Learn about the characteristics of birds and their habitats. Dress appropriately for the weather. Program fees: \$6 per student or \$4 "Friends of CNC."

Scout Day: Wilderness Survival Skills

February 7 10:00 a.m.

Learn winter survival skills and make new friends while visiting CNC for our Scout Fun Day! Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts ages 8-11 are welcome to participate. They will learn the essentials, including how to build a fire, shelter, and rescue signal, as well as basic first aid for the cold. Bring a bag lunch if you want to stay for an optional self-guided Animal Tracks Hike in the afternoon. Visit our website for more information and to learn about specific badge requirements fulfilled by this program. Program fees: \$6 per student or \$4 for "Friends of CNC."

Making Maple Syrup

March 15 & 28 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Welcome the coming of spring by joining in the tradition of making maple syrup. We'll hike to the "sugarbush" to tap 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. Program fee: \$6 or \$4 for "Friends of CNC" and children under 10.

Pruning Apple Trees

March 21 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Whether you only have a couple apple trees in your backyard or you operate an orchard, join CNC's Horticulturist for a session on pruning apple trees. See what a difference proper pruning can make and learn about the theory behind pruning. Walk through the orchard to see examples of properly pruned trees and participate in a pruning exercise. First hour will be indoors. Program fee: \$20 or \$15 for "Friends of CNC" (includes apple tree pruning manual).

MN Starwatch with Mike Lynch

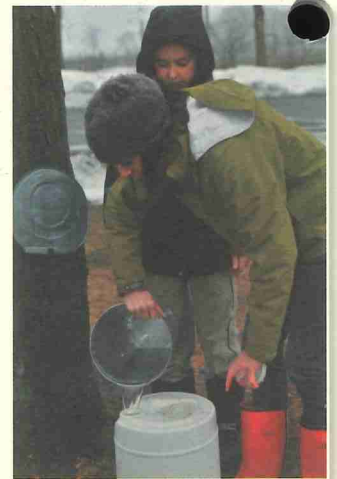
April 24 8:15 – 10:00 p.m.

Join WCCO Radio Meteorologist Mike Lynch to watch the great celestial show in the sky. Get to know the constellations and some of the stories behind them. We'll use two large telescopes that are among the biggest mobile telescopes in Minnesota for close-up views of Jupiter, star clusters, nebulae, galaxies and other wonders. You'll get a package with user-friendly star and constellation maps, a telescope-buying guide, and more. Even if it's cloudy you'll learn a lot, have a great time and get a Mike Lynch "Cloud Check" for a future Starwatch Class. Dress for the weather and bring a lawn chair. Recommended for ages 8 and up. Program fee: \$15 or \$12 for "Friends of CNC."

Backyard Gardening for Nature

April 25 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Over a 3 year period Michelle Kalantari converted her Richfield yard of mostly sod to a vibrant landscape with 70% native plants and no more grass to mow. She will take us on a photographic journey of the changes made and the resulting biodiversity of life that found its way into her garden, and show you how to do the same. Michelle was inspired by her work at The Nature Conservancy to preserve biodiversity and decided to extend their mission into her own back yard. FREE



*** Wisconsin Campus programs will meet at 300 East Cove Road in Hudson**

Preschool Storytime

Fridays 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

January 16 Signs in the Snow
February 13 I ♥ Owls
March 20 Syrup Season
April 10 Signs of Spring
May 1 Rabbits



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. We will go outside for every program so be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. Program fee: \$5 per child or \$3 per preschooler for "Friends of CNC"; no charge for accompanying adult. *CNC Story Time programs have been partially funded through support from Target.

Bird Banding

Minnesota Campus Bird Banding:

Fourth Fridays

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

January 23 • February 27 • March 27 • April 24

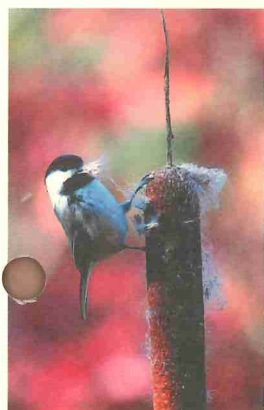
Wisconsin Campus Bird Banding: April 11 9:00 – 12:00 p.m.*

Have you ever wondered what bird banding is all about? Bird banding records can help us learn how long birds live, where they travel, when and where they migrate and many other interesting facts. Carpenter Nature Center has been banding birds for over 30 years and meets weekly to capture, record, band and release songbirds. Donations of bird seed or suet will be greatly appreciated in lieu of a program fee.

* Wisconsin Campus Bird Banding will take place at
300 East Cove Road in Hudson

Upcoming Events

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



Paul Blanchard

Earth Day Birding Festival

April 18 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Celebrate birds and conservation at the Hastings area Earth Day Birding Festival. This is the third year the Hastings Environmental Protectors has teamed up with CNC for the Birding Festival. Some of the highlights are an "Introduction to Birding" class, a "Raptors 101" class, bird banding demonstrations, and guided bird trips in the Hastings area. Program Fee: \$5 or \$15 with a box lunch. RSVPs required.



30th Annual Apple Blossom Races

May 17

8:00 a.m.

We are already looking forward to the 30th running of the Apple Blossom Races. The half marathon is one of the most challenging and beautiful half marathons due to its hilly route past many of the St. Croix Valley apple orchards. The 10K takes runners through the woodlands and savannahs along the CNC's trails. The 5K is a fast straight route down St. Croix Trail. Bring your kids for the FREE 2K Fun Run following the other races (approximately 11:00 a.m.) All proceeds support Carpenter Nature Center's K-12 environmental education programs and habitat protection. You can register online at www.carpenternaturecenter.org or call 651-437-4359 for a registration brochure. Sponsorships make this event possible. If you are interested in donating food, awards or funding please contact Clare@CarpenterNatureCenter.org.

Masters of the Sky

Presented by the World Bird Sanctuary

February 28 & March 1

11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.
& 3:00 p.m.

The World Bird Sanctuary staff from St. Louis, Missouri, will be coming to Carpenter Nature Center to present educational program about birds of prey, our environment and what we can all do to protect birds and their habitats worldwide.



Journey Photography by Chris and Kristy




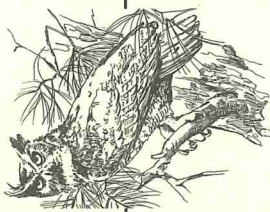











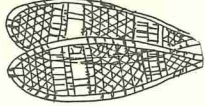



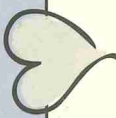


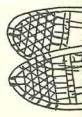

Learn about the fascinating world of raptors and see live hawks, eagles, owls, falcons and vultures from around the globe up close in free-flight. Reservations and prepayment required. These programs will sell out.

2015 DATES TO PUT ON THE CALENDAR

St. Croix Valley Scramble July 20
Apple Shack Opens around Labor Day
Autumn in the Valley Gala September 13
Raptor Release September 26
Apple Fest October 10 & 11

2015 Calendar of Events at Carpenter Nature Center

Phenology from 2014 (with additional entries from CNC's past phenology notes)

			Jan.	New Year's Day – CNC Closed 10 Snowy Owls South of Hastings	8 Hours and 51 minutes of daylight	
4 Full Moon	5 Chickadees singing spring song (2010)	6 	7 60+ hours below 0°F	8 	9 Public Program: Owl Prowl and Snowshoe Hike	10
11 2 Robins in birch tree (1995)	12 	13 Starling's beaks turning yellow (1998)	14 	15 	16 Preschool Story Time: Signs in the Snow	17 Cars driving on river ice (1999)
18 	19 	20 Cardinals singing spring song (2010)	21 	22 	23 Public Bird Banding	24 Wisconsin Campus: Snowshoeing and Animal Tracking
25 	26 	27 Schools closed due to cold - high of -6°F	28 Schools closed due to cold – low of -22°F	29 	30 Adult Moonlight Snowshoe Hike	31 
1 Feb.	2 Groundhog Day	3  Full Moon	4	5	6 Wisconsin Campus: Owl Prowl and Snowshoe Hike	7 Scout Day: Wilderness Survival Skills
8 	9 Coyote spotted in North Ravine (2003)	10 Sun Dogs visible	11 St. Croix Lake/River near Hudson partially open (1993)	12	13 Preschool Story Time: I ♥ Owls	14  Valentine's Day
15	16 Pair of Pileated Woodpeckers near Admin (2009)	17 	18 Honeybees active (1997)	19 	20 First tree tapped for maple syrup (1998)	21
22 Snowshoe Hike	23 	24 Opossum under	25 	26	27	28 Master of the Sky (World Bird

[illegible]

People Profile

2014 Volunteers Of The Year



From Left to Right: Mary Clohisy, Tammy Johnson, Jo Bailey

This quarter we proudly shine the spotlight on our Volunteer of the Year. This year the Volunteer of the Year is not an individual but a group of people - the core of our Autumn in the Valley Gala committee. These three ladies have consistently worked to make the Gala a success year after year. They have spent hundreds of hours planning, prepping, and producing an event that is fun, elegant, and successful. Thank you Jo, Mary, and Tammy for your dedication and generous giving of your time and talent; you're the cream of the crop and we appreciate how much you do for us.

Meet our Education Intern Jessie Eckroad

Jessie Eckroad began working at CNC in September and will stay for the 2014-2015 academic year. She recently graduated from Southwest Minnesota State University where she majored in Environmental Science and Sociology and minored in History. Since she began working at CNC, she has had fun working with school groups, helped to harvest pumpkins this fall, cared for the animals, spent time learning from the bird banders, and has begun updating the Interpretive Center. With the help of volunteers, she has already repainted the IC walls and refinished the floors. She will be updating displays in the coming months. Jessie grew up in Darwin, Minnesota and enjoys spending time at her family's cabin on Upper Trelipe Lake, going to the movies with her boyfriend, and doing craft projects when she has free time.



If you or someone you know is interested in an internship at Carpenter Nature Center this year, now is the time to apply. We are offering internships in Environmental Education, Horticulture and Communications. For more information check out our website: carpenternaturecenter.org/programs/internships

Volunteer Spotlight Yvonne Szatkowski

We are pleased to shine our Volunteer Spotlight on Yvonne Szatkowski. Yvonne started volunteering in 2001 and has since put in over 600 hours. Yvonne is active with the bird banding crew, helps with many special events and projects, helps with outreach programs, is our much appreciated aquarium cleaning guru and even proof-reads this newsletter! Thank you Yvonne for your dedication to CNC. Your can-do attitude, willingness to pitch-in whatever the task, and wonderful sense of humor is a great addition to our volunteer corps. The staff at CNC salute you.



Meet our Horticultural Intern Nick Jauch

Nick graduated from Concordia University in December 2014 with a major in criminal justice and a minor in Environmental Science. Nick has experience with invasive species, bear research, trapping porcupines for population research and has spent many hours volunteering for the Saint Paul Police Department. Nick came to CNC with interest in environmentally friendly orchard management. He gained experience with fruit production and Integrated Pest Management, and we know with his great work ethic and variety of experience he will be successful in whatever he pursues. We are grateful for all of his help this fall.



WHERE AT CNC?

You can find this 4 foot tall beaver sculpture in the CNC Visitor Center. It is here on loan from local recycled metals artist Dale Lewis. We are proud to be the new (temporary) home to a beautiful sculpture. Please stop by to admire Dale's great work and enjoy the intersection of art and nature.



Memorials & Honorariums

We wish to express our appreciation for the following gifts:

In Honor of Lyla Davies from Julie & Todd Sieben
In Honor of Vickie Batroot from Anonymous
In Honor of Brenda & Paul Irvin's marriage from Donald Buck
In Honor of the CNC Staff from Mary Jo Synnott

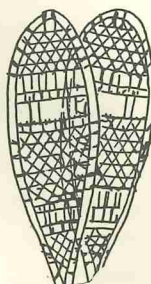
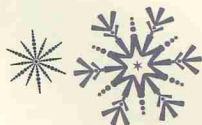
In Memory of Mark W. Berg from Bill & Betty Berg
In Memory of Ian McConnell from Katharine Widin
In Memory of Howard W. Akins from Keith & Rosie Sorenson.
In Memory of Mary Skinner from Katie Fritz.
In Memory of Dr. E.R. Jonas from Dennis & Daryl Donath

In Memory of Mary Marzolf from Tom & Molly Bachinski, Steve & Robin Cady, Mr. & Mrs. Geri Campbell, Kathleen Caufield, Mary & Joe Cloutier, Corinne & Philip Costano, Jan Cuccia & Karl Nilsen, John & Kim Dupre, Gary & Mickie Griswold, Mary Pat Finnegan & Scott Holmes, Kathy & Don Holmes, Mike & Meghan Gander, Bob & Linda Gander, Inta Gravitas, Roger Groetsch, Molly & Mike Haglin, Beth & Tom Hansen, Jeff & Teresa Henn, David & Mary Hense, Art & Elaine Jacobson, Frank & Joan Klein, Ernie Koukal, Roger Larson, Terry & Kathleen Letourneau, Lana & Ji Li, Mary Jo Lindeberg, Margie MacNeill, Tom Marzolf, Norm & Shirley Matzek, Deb McIntire, Monica Mitby, John & Ronda Morin, Tony & Diane O'Gorman, Mark Pappenfus, Mike Pappenfus, Rebholz Family, Tom & Marge Ryerson, Al & Barb Schrank, Bob & Kathy Setzer, Sievers Family, Kate & Wade Skramstad & Family, Stidham Family, Carmen Swanson, Greg & Jen Vieth, Mary Pat Walkerstorfer

In Memory of RoseMary Eisenmenger from Gene & Doris Benson, Marty & Helen Boehne, Ron & Cate Edlund, Linda & Harlow Galbreath, Mike & Barb Giguere, Jim & Peggy Gladu, Leonard & Arlys Eilts, Bill & Lori Eisenmenger, Bill & Nancy Eisenmenger, Diana Elling & Eddie Greene, Mayme & Steve Johnson, Jeff & Nancy Keene, David & Dagni Li, Rose Mason, Jim Carter & Victoria Miller, Jim & Kay Morpew, Shirley Nelson, Paul Oby, Linda Polglase, Janet Scheuneman, Don & Diane Schuette, Bennet Siers, Gary & Jeanette Siers, Jane Stordahl, Brenda & Steve Storey, Lorraine Strobel, Leatrice Taylor & Family, Greg & Jen Vieth, John & Betty Wright, Pat & Steve Wright

DID YOU KNOW...

Snowshoe rentals are FREE for volunteers & "Friends of CNC" and only \$5 for everyone else. We need a 6 inch base of snow. Call if snow conditions are questionable. Ages 10 and up.



VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer Information Meetings for persons interested in becoming volunteers at Carpenter Nature Center will take place on January 21 and February 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the visitor center. Please call 651-437-4359 to let us know you are coming.

Winter Volunteer Opportunities

Classes this season will include: Winter Birds, Winter Fest, Survival, and Making Maple Syrup. Volunteer help will be appreciated for these classes.

Help will also be needed in various capacities for upcoming public programs such as the Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes, Masters of the Sky, and Maple Syrup Making. In March, help will be needed not only for the maple syrup programs but also to gather and boil the sap into syrup. If you are interested in helping with any of the above activities, please contact CNC at 651-437-4359.

Our **Spring Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup** will take place on Earth Day, April 22 at 6:30 p.m.. Please bring your favorite litter grabber; cookies provided for an after-task treat.

Mark your calendars for the **Apple Blossom Races** on Sunday, May 17. We'll need lots of volunteers to help make this event a success.

We like to thank our volunteers throughout the year, but if you see a volunteer in action April 12-18, give them an extra Thank You - It's National Volunteer Week!

FRIENDS OF CARPENTER NATURE CENTER

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 State _____ Zip _____
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☐ I'm interested in learning more about the Tom & Edna Carpenter Society



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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:

Shop Vac for Pavilion, Snowshoes in children's sizes, Black-Oil Sunflower Seed & Thistle, AA Batteries, Thumb Drives, Microwave

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. And remember that donated items are tax deductible.



CNC News & Events

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

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



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Trails and interpretive exhibits are open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A trail map (with a self-guided 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. To join our email list contact: Clare@CarpenterNatureCenter.org.