

## Volunteer Opportunities

Open to the public year-round

### HABITAT RESTORATION

Do you want to help save the environment—but only have a couple hours to spare? Individuals, students, small groups, and families with children over age six can contact a Site Steward listed



below to participate in restoring native habitat at Conservation Sites. No experience is necessary. Wear sturdy footwear and clothing appropriate for outdoor work and weather. Some sites offer service opportunities for larger groups—contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (815) 338-6223 or DBeck@MCCCDistrict.org to learn more.

**Alden Sedge Meadow, Alden**  
First Saturday of each month.  
Dan Wilson, (815) 403-7976

**Alden Sedge Meadow South, Alden**  
Third Sunday of each month, 1–3:30 p.m. Judy and Jack Speer, (815) 648-1372 or smwaters@intergate.com

**Boger Bog, Bull Valley**  
Fourth Saturday of each month, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.  
Ders Anderson, (815) 455-1537

**Coral Woods, Union**  
Kathleen Roberson,  
(815) 245-4093

**Cotton Creek Marsh, Island Lake**  
First and third Sunday of each month, 1–3 p.m.  
Mike Bouska, (815) 759-0731

**Fel-Pro RRR, Cary**  
Nancy Williamson,  
(815) 459-0931

**Fox Bluff, Cary**  
Connie and Paul Ridl,  
(847) 854-5109

**Glacial Park, Richmond**  
Third Saturday of each month, 1–4 p.m. Meet at Lost Valley Visitor Center.  
Ed Collins, (815) 678-4532

**Grundstrom Woods, Wonder Lake**  
Second Saturday of each month, 9:30 a.m.–12 p.m.  
Chuck and Ann Dubsky,  
(815) 728-9199

**Harrison Benwell, Wonder Lake**  
First Saturday of each month, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Pat and Emily Heald, (815) 575-1684

**The Hollows, Cary**  
Irregular Sunday schedule, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Margie Szymanskyj, (815) 479-0988

**Lake in the Hills Fen, LITH**  
Irregular Saturday/Sunday schedule, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
John Scott, (847) 658-6241

**Pioneer Fen/Dutch Creek, Johnsburg**  
Third Saturday of each month; 9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
Robert Roe, (847) 668-8559, rroee66@gmail.com; <http://sites.google.com/site/dutchcreekvolunteers/>

**Pleasant Valley, Woodstock**  
Feb. 13, Mar. 19, Apr. 2, May 8, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Greg Rajsky,  
(815) 814-5055 or quirkeaceae@yahoo.com

To receive more information on volunteering, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (815) 338-6223 x 229 or DBeck@MCCCDistrict.org

### Mark your calendar

Registered District volunteers are welcome to attend the following programs. Not a registered volunteer, yet? Contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (815) 338-6223 to get started.

#### Education Volunteers Quarterly Gatherings

RSVP to Trish at (815) 479-5779

**SPRING: Monday, February 7, 7–9 p.m.**

Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park, Ringwood

**Topic:** "Change is in the Air: Glacial Park's Wetland Restoration and Related Species"

**SUMMER: Tuesday, May 17, 7–9 p.m.**

Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Rd., Crystal Lake

**Topic:** "What's Bugging You?" What irritates or scares us in nature? Let's separate myth from reality and find solutions.

#### Wildlife and Plant Monitoring Programs

Interested in monitoring plants, frogs, butterflies, plants or dragonflies on District sites? Visit [www.mccdDistrict.org/web/ge-monitor.htm](http://www.mccdDistrict.org/web/ge-monitor.htm) for more information or call the Volunteer Coordinator at (815) 338-6223 for details.



**NEW VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!**

#### S.W.E.E.P.— Safety Watch Education and Environmental Program

**Orientation Meeting Wednesday, April 27 at 7 p.m., Location to be announced.**

If you have a favorite Conservation Site that you visit regularly or are a neighbor to a District site, you may be just the person the District Police Department is looking for to join the new S.W.E.E.P. volunteer

program! Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, complete a background check, attend an orientation, and attend (optional) monthly meetings to learn about safety topics is optional. Time commitment and hours are flexible. S.W.E.E.P. is a year-round program, but will be most active during warmer months when sites are busiest. Volunteers will visit their site on a regular basis and engage in activities such as hiking, fishing or bird watching. Their purpose is straightforward – to act as an extra set of eyes and ears for the Police Department, reporting unsafe conditions or suspicious behavior. The increased awareness of volunteers will be a proactive deterrent to potential crime issues like graffiti, property damage or other undesirable behavior. S.W.E.E.P. volunteers *are required* to attend the orientation. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Denice Beck for information and to sign up.

## Get to Know Our Volunteers



### Bob Williams ...photographer and citizen scientist

**Q. Why do you volunteer for the Conservation District?**

**A. Bob Williams:** "It may sound corny but it's just fun! It's a good, easy way to give back to my community and the environment. I love having lots of good reasons to get outdoors and enjoy nature."

The pictures on this page may seem familiar to regular Landscapes readers because they have appeared in past

issues. They are the work of volunteer Bob Williams. Notably, the Northern Flicker and Icy Oak photos were featured on the cover of the 2008 and 2009 winter issues. In addition, his swallowtail butterfly appears on the District's volunteer brochure cover; symbolically representing the transformation and uplifting experience volunteering can provide. This image is also perfect in describing two of William's volunteer interests – photography and butterfly monitoring.

Williams categorizes himself as a nature photographer, "I do better with animals and landscapes, than I do with people." He enjoys shooting special photo assignments, but laughs that he needs plenty of time to complete them.

"Since retiring, I'm busier than ever! The time I spend looking for photo opportunities depends on how much free time I have available. But, I almost always have my camera with me and



will stop and take some shots if the opportunity arises."

Like many of his bird photos, Bob photographed the Northern Flicker while monitoring for Project FeederWatch, a winter-long bird survey run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. He sits comfortably by the bay

window in his home and observes the birds at his backyard feeders. Not surprisingly, a photo of an American Tree Sparrow by Williams was featured on a Project FeederWatch newsletter.



Bob Williams

Williams is well-respected in the area for his pictures of birds, butterflies, trees and landscapes and was recently recognized in Volo Bog's 2010 Nature Photo Contest and The Art of the Land 2010 Photography Contest hosted by The Land Conservancy of McHenry County. "I have been interested in photography for most of my life, but didn't take it seriously until after I retired in 2003." Hardly a week goes by now that he doesn't submit his photos to the Daily Herald's amateur photo contest. He's chuckles, "If I don't get a photo in the newspaper at least once a month, friends call to ask if I've stopped taking pictures."

Williams is also active with the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network (IBMN) as a volunteer citizen scientist since 2003. "It's an enjoyable, fun activity I can do on nice summer days – a walk in the woods so to speak," said Williams. He accepted an assignment at Gladstone Fen in Bull Valley, an important wetland site for butterflies in McHenry County.

Through his experience he learned that monitoring can be rewarding. Monitors must remain very focused while on route to ensure observations are recorded accurately. So when he first began monitoring, Bob found it helpful to take photographs of the butterflies to be certain they were identified correctly. This turned out to be a practical way for him to enhance his close-up wildlife photography skills. In 2008, Williams received special recognition from the IBMN for his contributions to butterfly monitoring at Gladstone Fen and Boger Bog Conservation Area. Bob was the first butterfly monitor at Boger Bog, which opened in June 2008, and he helped coordinate the butterfly census route. As time allows, Bob's next volunteer effort is to hopefully get more involved at Boger Bog by attending future habitat restoration days to assist in removing brush and restoring the wildlife habitat.

#### Calling All Photographers!

The Conservation District welcomes the donation of photos for use in marketing material, publications and the website. Nature shots featuring plants, animals, insects, or landscape scenery, as well as people and children enjoying nature or recreational activities in the Conservation District sites are accepted. Digital photo submissions should be taken on a camera featuring five mega pixels or greater and have a minimum dimension of 1200 pixels. Photographers will be credited in all photos used. Submit photos by e-mail MCCD@MCCCDistrict.org or McHenry County Conservation District; Communications Dept., 18410 US Highway 14, Woodstock, IL 60098.