



# Friends of the Sangamon Valley

Spring/Summer 2022

Volume 23, Issue 2

## Special Events and Workshops

We're always looking for ways to keep you entertained and learning about the natural world; hence, our new workshops. Check it out. All workshops are free unless otherwise stated, but we want to know how many people to expect, so registration is required, regardless. Call the person/number listed for more information and to register.

**Carpenter Park Wildflower Hike, April 30,** 10 til noon: Bring your hiking boots and join Krystle and Davina at Carpenter Park for a guided walk and talk about native Illinois spring woodland ephemerals. See plants such as Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Sweet Cicely, and Trillium. Easy to moderate terrain. Don't forget your water and bug spray! Weather permitting, no reschedule date. Krystle/217-503-3402.

**Using a Plant Key, May 28,** 10 til noon: Ever wanted to identify a plant but Vern wasn't in earshot and you couldn't get iNaturalist on your phone? Using a plant key is an old school method that only requires some special know-how. Many keys have the advantage of being specific to a geographic area, habitat, or plant family. And they sharpen your powers of observation. Besides, any excuse to look more closely at plants is a good one. Join us at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary for a classroom session, demo, and practice. Bring a magnifying glass or loupe, and a plant key if you have one. Vern/217-525-1410.

**Prairie Days, June 4,** 1 Til 4: Our annual open house event at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary in Loami, including bird banding and hourly tours. A nice event for the whole family to enjoy the outdoors. No registration required for this one, just come on out. Vern/217-525-1410

**Insect Evening, June 25,** 8pm til ?: The night time is the right time to see lots of flying insects up close. Black lights are used as an attractant next to a white sheet suspended in the prairie, near wetlands, and other microhabitats. Come out and see who is sharing your space. Vern/217-525-1410.

**Natural Tie Dye, July 30,** 3:00 til 5:00: Join us Saturday, July 30th, 3:00-5:00 PM at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary for a Natural Tie Dye workshop. We will learn how to make several different color dyes using all natural plant based sources. \$10 per person if you bring your own white tshirt, \$15 if we provide the shirt. We will have tshirt sizes M, L and XL available. Please RSVP no later than July 15th. Checks can be made to Friends of Sangamon Valley. Davina/  
Davina.fouke1987@gmail.com

# Preserve and Project Update

## Duck Race Results

Congratulations to Highland Renewables, our first place winner of \$1000, Friends member Bill Bruse of Petersburg at second place for \$500, and Friends member Steven Simpson-Black of Springfield at third place for \$200.

It didn't take long, but our second rubber duckie race on March 20<sup>th</sup> in the Jacksonville Branch was decisive all the same. FoSV president Dick Poynter started off the race with a big thank you to all those who purchased tickets, and to Monarch Landscaping & Garden Center for sponsoring the prizes. Of the 600 ducks available, only 75 ducks did not participate.

Dick and Davina Fouke tossed in the ducks, and there were several lead changes - with ducks getting delayed in eddies. A curious muskrat even swam beneath the ducks. Friends Vice President John Justice and Robinson Woods steward Allen Andrews were at the finish line to help scoop up winners.

Thanks again to everyone who sponsored a duck. The event is planned again for next spring equinox.

The Jacksonville Branch flows through Robinson Woods, our urban preserve downstream from Pasfield Golf Course. Robinson Woods was generously donated to us by Sally Robinson. Read more about it at <https://fosvdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/robinson-woods.pdf>



Photo by Vern LaGesse

John Justice readies to haul in duckies at the finish line on March 20th.

## Controlled Burn Workshop

The Friends held their annual controlled burn workshop on March 5 at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary in Loami. The workshop was well attended, including many new folks we met for the

first time. Per usual the workshop featured some classroom instruction followed by field practice. Fortunately the weather cooperated and the attendees were able to burn off two small units at Nipper. New for this year was group planning and discussion in how to conduct burns based on property descriptions from two landowners who attended wanting to learn about burning their own property.

We got this reaction from volunteer Chris Peters, "Nomex, drip torches, different hand tools, you name it—I learned a lot about the equipment needed for a prescribed burn that day. Of course, we learned about fire behaviour, too. You don't necessarily expect the noise and the extreme heat (especially the heat!) when the fire is even just knee-high.



Rod Pool hasn't been turned away by his fellow volunteers, he's getting unobstructed weather readings using a portable "Kestrel" weather meter. The meter provides wind speed, air temperature, relative humidity, and peak wind gust speed. Photo courtesy of Chris Young.

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# WORKDAYS and EVENTS

## April

Tuesdays at Lake Springfield: April 19, 26	10 til noon
23, Saturday Gudmundson Sanctuary	1 til 3
30, Saturday Carpenter Park Wildflower Hike	0 til noon

## May

Tuesdays at Lake Springfield: May 3, 10	10 til noon
Tuesdays at Gudmundson Sanctuary: May 17, 24, 31	10 til noon
28, Saturday How to Use a Plant Key, Nipper	10 til noon

## June

Tuesdays at Gudmundson Sanctuary: June 7, 14, 21, 28	10 til noon
4, Saturday Prairie Days, Nipper	1 til 4
25, Saturday Insect Evening at Nipper	8 pm til ??

## July

Tuesdays at Gudmundson Sanctuary: July 5, 12, 19, 26	10 til noon
30, Saturday Natural Tie Dye at Nipper	3 til 5

## August

Tuesdays at Gudmundson Sanctuary: August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	10 til noon
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For workdays, call Krystle Adams at 217-503-3402 to let us know you're coming, if you need directions or have any questions. For all workdays and events, conditions sometimes change at the last minute, so check Facebook for updates or call for confirmation.

**Carpenter Park Nature Preserve:** On the north side of Springfield near the Rail Golf Course in Sherman.

**Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary:** 4506 Chinquipin Rd., north of Springfield airport.

**Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary:** 9560 Withers Rd., near Loami.

**Washington Park:** Springfield's premier park. Meet at the parking lot near the nature trail head, across from the Rose Garden. Equipment will be provided.

**Wolf Preserve:** Just past Broc More Woods, off of Boy Scout Trail Rd. near Petersburg.

Conditions may change and events may be cancelled, moved, or other events added. Please continue to check our web site and Facebook for any changes or updates or call the number above for the latest information.

**See <https://fosvdotorg.wordpress.com> or Facebook for updates**



# George Rose Memorial Workday At Washington Park

Our workday at Washington Park in honor of George Rose was off to an uncertain start due to some pretty cold temperatures on Saturday, March 12. We rescheduled for the next day, when fickle March cooperated with warm temps and bright sun. About 35 people turned out and helped restart our stewardship at the park's nature trail.

For those who may not have known him, George Rose was a volunteer with the Friends ever since our beginning, and for other organizations too. He'd been an ecologist/biologist with the Department of Transportation for many years and was one of the best botanists in the area. He was absolutely tireless in his work, outlasting people much younger than him on any given day. We thought he was going to go on forever.

We lost George in 2019, but we didn't want to lose the progress he'd made at Washington Park, and we want to honor him by keeping up his restoration on the nature trail and other areas. With support and encouragement from his daughter, Elizabeth and wife, Helen, and with permission from the Springfield Park District, the Friends held this introductory workday.

The expanding nature trail area is overgrown with honeysuckle and other invasives, and removal of these was the main focus of the work that day, especially around an unnamed tributary of the Jacksonville Branch that flows through the trail area.

The number of people there took our regular staff and volunteers by surprise. The crowd had to split up into groups to be more manageable. Elizabeth had friends from St. Louis join us; Ross Padgett, our former intern returned from parts unknown to help lead a group. Said Friends' member and new volunteer Chris Peters, "We accomplished a heck of a lot in a few short hours with such a large turnout. It took a terrific group effort to clean up the honeysuckle on the edges of the nature trail area but we made serious headway. All in all, this was an awesome workday -- both fun and meaningful. I met a lot of new people, including George's daughter, Elizabeth."

Said Elizabeth, "I really appreciated seeing the effort everyone put in at the workday event. My Dad really liked working with you all, and I know he would have loved to talk with each of you. Working alongside you all was a great way for me, and my husband, to connect with the volunteers that were so dear to my Dad. I know it means a lot to my Mom too. Thanks to everyone who came out and for your efforts to restore that corner of Washington Park."

We'll be having a George tribute workday in October 8th at Carpenter Park, another one of George's favorite haunts. More information will be in the next issue of the newsletter.



Friends volunteer, Chris Peters, and George Rose's daughter, Elizabeth Rose meet and have a chat at the Washington Park workday. Elizabeth helped us out on quite a few workdays at Revis Hill Prairie and other places when she was in high school and home from college. It's nice to have her back, even for just a day.

# Nipper Wetland Study Wraps Up Phase 2

This past fall, we wrapped up our phase 2 water sampling and monitoring of the Nipper wetlands. The Lochmueller Group finalized the report for us in March. The phase 1 report, which included data from 2018 and 2019 discussed the results qualitatively. In phase 2, with two more years of data from 2020 and 2021, quantitative evaluation was possible. There were enough data points after four years to apply statistical tests which showed whether what we saw in the data was “real” or whether it could just be variation due to chance.

Based on this type of evaluation, we concluded that the wetland cells taken together provide about 12-18 hours of retention time during peak runoff events, which slows downstream flooding. The peak flows in certain events happen at different times in each wetland as the effects of the event make its way through the system. During storm events, the wetlands reduced the amount of nitrogen, nitrate, and total and dissolved phosphorus generally by 50%, and at times up to 70-80% reduction.

Based on some of the data collected by continuous monitors showed that runoff events during the 2021 season, for instance, ranged from 15 minutes to 300 minutes, averaging about 130 minutes over 15 events for the year. And that it is often the intensity of the rainfall, rather than the total amount of rain that determines the quality of the runoff in the sub-watershed.

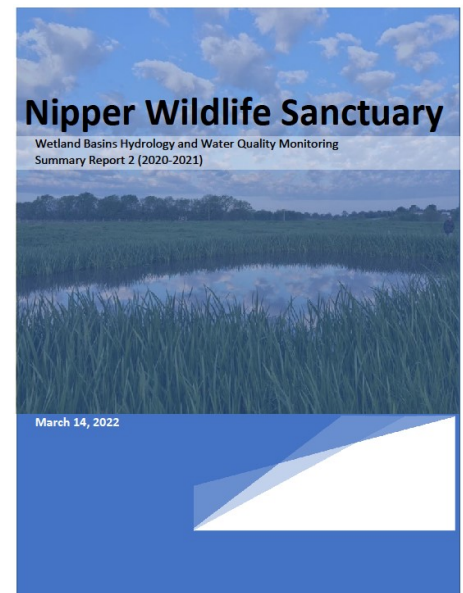
Time, retention, velocity, and other water inputs are key in reducing nutrient inputs into waterways. From the report’s executive summary: *Simply viewed, these wetlands have a small footprint, but a big impact on the landscape. Not only do they provide habitat heterogeneity within the restored prairie they provide valuable ecosystem services for the downstream watershed. Water flows through the wetland system mimic the historic hydrology of the prairie. Historically, precipitation intercepted vegetation before soils, dramatically slowing the flow, and increasing the interaction with the surrounding terrestrial environment. The constructed wetlands serve to slow flows and retain water from runoff. The retention of water leads to interaction with the adjacent terrestrial areas creating zones that provide significant nutrient uptake and removal.*

At this time, we’re not sure where we’re going with subsequent studies, but we may be collecting some initial data from elsewhere at Nipper, including the creek in the southern half of the sanctuary. We’ve certainly learned a lot and can now point to actual data that helps make a strong case for wetlands’ place in our managed landscape.

Thanks very much to all who helped out on this phase, including Bryan Cross and Joe Bartletti of Lochmueller Group who interpreted the data, guided us during Phase 2 and wrote our report; Nick Klobuchar and Krystle Adams who helped with field work; Jeanne Handy who assisted in the lab; Charlene Falco for field and lab work, and Vern LaGesse for field work, hauling the canoe around, and overall project management and coordination. A sincere thanks to the Nipper Trust for recognizing the opportunity and funding the study.

The full Phase 2 report is available on Facebook, or at [bit.ly/3NY63Cw](https://www.dropbox.com/s/kmffe4fuh2f411a/NWS_FINAL_PhaseII_Report_2022-03-15.pdf?dl=0) or if you like typing links, you can also try:

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/kmffe4fuh2f411a/NWS\\_FINAL\\_PhaseII\\_Report\\_2022-03-15.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/kmffe4fuh2f411a/NWS_FINAL_PhaseII_Report_2022-03-15.pdf?dl=0)





# Preserve and Project Update

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...And once the taller grasses started burning, it was an impressive and dramatic sight. I saw firsthand how critical a good burn plan is to keep. If you haven't done this before, check it out, you won't be disappointed!"

## Spring Burn Season

We had a short burn season this spring, thanks to the erratic weather in March. But we still managed to burn Witter's Hill Prairie, a privately-owned nature preserve, for the first time in about four or five years, Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary, Adams Wildlife Sanctuary for Illinois Audubon, and a small prairie planting Pete Gudumundson had started. Successful burns, all, but we didn't get to cover as many properties as we wanted. There is always this fall.

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Photo courtesy of M Jean Hibbs-goble

Left, If you've ever wondered what a prairie fire looks like from your front porch, here's a clue. From across the street at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary in north Springfield.

Below, another shot from our recent workshop. How to use a drip torch 101, with Vern (second from left) and Adams' Kaleb Baker (third from left) giving instruction to two attendees.



Photo courtesy of Chris Young



Photo by Vern LaGesse

Left, a real fire at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary, conducted as part of the seasonal controlled burns there. Volunteers assisted Nipper staff with a 300 acre burn unit of neighboring prairies.

## New Board Member Chris Wills

At our recent annual meeting, the Friends welcomed a new board member who came to us by way of Steve Warmowski.

Chris is communications director at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, a job he has held for nearly 10 years. Before that, he spent 22 years as a reporter for the Associated Press, primarily covering Illinois government, including Barack Obama's rise and Rod Blagojevich's fall.

Chris grew up in Metropolis, Ill., where his father was editor of the local newspaper, the Planet. He lives in the country a few miles west of Springfield with his wife, Penny. Chris enjoys movies and photography. He's excited about working with Friends of Sangamon Valley to help an important cause and learn more about caring for the land.

**Welcome, Chris!**

## Project and Preserve Update

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### Gudmundson Property

Mike Marconi, Friends member and wood worker, has completed a new conference table for us made from oak planks from Pete's barn and stable, and walnut trim from trees from Adams Wildlife Sanctuary.

We will place the table in Pete's former front room for board meetings and other meetings. It's a great addition and we're very excited about how the house is coming along.

Photo courtesy of Mike Marconi

**Save the Date! June 4, 2022 for Prairie Days.** An open house event at Nipper Wildlife Sanctuary in Loami provides a great time to enjoy the prairie in its full summer glory. We are planning tours from area experts highlighting birds, wetlands, and flowers and will have our bird banding friends from LincolnLand.



Photo courtesy of Chris Young



## Friends T-Shirts and Hats Available



Friends t-shirts are available in modern colors and styles featuring our logo by Bill Crook. Women's are available in a light weight, slightly fitted cotton/poly blend, purple V-neck with lime logo in size large (only 2 left!). Men's shirts are a light weight cotton/poly blend crew neck, lime with purple logo or a medium weight 100% cotton, grey with lime logo in sizes medium through 2X. \$20 each.

We also have low profile baseball hats, \$20.

Send payment to FOSV at PO Box 13352, Springfield, IL 62791, or you can also pay through PayPal. When ordering, please specify quantity, color, and size.



The Friends of the Sangamon Valley is a charitable membership organization dedicated to the preservation of our natural heritage by acquiring, restoring, and protecting ecologically significant lands in the Sangamon River Watershed.

Membership is available to individuals for \$30.00 and to families for \$45.00. Participation on various committees is open to members. We currently have openings on the following committees: membership, fundraising, and public relations.

### Board

Dick Poynter, President  
John Justice, Vice President  
Angi Davis, Treasurer  
Charlene Falco, Secretary  
Bob Barewin  
Dan Brill  
Bill Crook  
Peggy Goetsch  
Mike Kennedy  
Mary Lou Lael  
Patty Morton  
George Sinclair  
Jim Struebing  
Steve Warmowski  
Chris Wills

Vern LaGesse, Executive Director, 217-525-1410  
vlagesse@fosv.org

Web site: <https://fosvdotorg.wordpress.com/> Facebook has the most current updates. This newsletter is published about four times per year. Contributions are welcome.

Send membership dues or donations to PO Box 13352, Springfield, 62791 or use Paypal through our web site.

Please contact Vern or any board member regarding the group or volunteer opportunities.

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

Our membership renewal notices for 2022 went out in November, 2021. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2022 yet, please do so. Payment can be made via Paypal from our website or sent directly to us. Acknowledgements of donations will be sent electronically, if we have your e-mail address.

And don't forget about our popular Gift Membership option. If you know of someone who might be interested in the Friends, start them off with a \$20 gift of membership. A small Chris Young photo will be sent to you or your giftee with each gift membership. If each Friends member can think of one person to send a gift membership to, we can double our numbers and support. Give it some thought; you probably know somebody.

### **Going Shopping?**

Don't forget about Amazon Smile. If you're ordering a few things from Amazon, purchase those same things for the same prices at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). When you make purchases, part of your payment can go to a specified charity, and we know you'll pick us. It's no additional cost to you, and a donation for us. Don't forget!



# Thank You!

The Friends of the Sangamon Valley acknowledges donations, new members, and membership renewals received since February 21, 2022.

Susan Allen  
JoAnne Durkee  
Laura Evers  
Bruce & Deb Hanselman  
Vernon & Bonnie LaGessee  
Dr. Marilyn Robins  
Kris Travis  
Charlene Vollmer

## Elm

J. Boor  
Jeff & Debbie Bruce  
Bryan & Robin Cross  
Greta & Bob Hardwick  
Vernon Kleen  
Ann Klose  
Bill Lamarca  
Justin Lewis  
David & Michelle Tebrugge  
Menard County Garden Club

## Maple

Delinda Chapman & Marco Mulder  
Beverly Schmitz  
Steven Simpson-Black

## Walnut

William Bruse  
Marilee Cramer

### In Memory of Thomas E. Payne

Alice F. Christensen  
Martha J. Forrest  
Vern LaGessee & Charlene Falco  
Derek F. Long  
Randall & Betsy Pech  
Sergio Pecori  
Mark & Cheryl Ann Pence  
Frank C. Sugent  
Beverly & Darrell Weaver

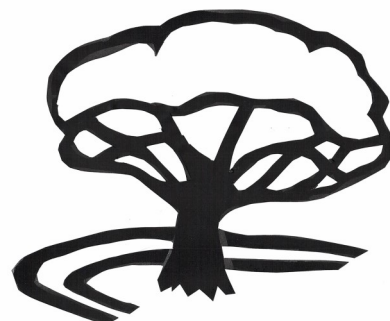
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**You can help Friends of the Sangamon Valley  
in one or more of the following ways:**

1. Become a member of Friends or make a tax-deductible cash donation.
2. Volunteer your time.
3. Donate property or other goods or tools.



**Friends of the  
Sangamon Valley**

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Friends of the Sangamon Valley  
1619 S. Pasfield  
Springfield, IL 62704  
217-525-1410  
<https://fosvdotorg.wordpress.com/vlagesse@fosv.org>

Yes, I would like to:

Be a member: \$30.00 (individual) \$45.00 (family)

Make a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donate my time. I am interested in:

Workdays \_\_\_\_\_

Fundraising Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Public Relations Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me the newsletter electronically \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**PO Box 13352 Springfield, IL 62791**