

# Friends of the Sangamon Valley

Fall 2023

## Join the celebration!



### FOSV marks 25 years with Oct. 28 event at new headquarters

Join us as we celebrate the Friends' 25th anniversary with a beautiful autumn event at the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary! Cozy up by the fire, enjoy some autumn treats, listen to music on the lawn, take a guided hike or explore on your own. There will be plenty of activities for all ages. We'll be there 2-5 p.m.

We are excited to share this wonderful place with our members and introduce it and our mission to other folks who care about protecting and stewarding natural areas in the Sangamon River Watershed.

Local musician Silas Tockey will share classic rock, country, folk and blues songs, along with heartfelt originals. Tockey makes any event memorable with his acoustic guitar and soulful voice.

If you have any questions, please call 217-494-3115 or email [fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com](mailto:fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com)

## From the director ...

By **Angela Funk**

As the Executive Director of the FOSV this year, it has been exciting to visit and learn about our properties, dive into stewardship planning goals, and meet the volunteers, board members, and members who share a passion for this wonderful organization.

I have been passionate about nature since ... well, about 3 years of age. This love continued through schooling and into my professional career of 32 years working in land acquisition, protection, and stewardship, nature center administration, and environmental education. Friends of the Sangamon Valley seemed the natural fit moving forward.

I have been working hard to establish partnerships with many other local like-minded organizations. Converting our newest property, the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary (GWS), into the first-ever headquarters for the organization has been a

**Continued**



*If you are interested in learning more about how you can help, whether through planned giving, sponsorship, volunteering, or sharing your talent, please give me a call.*

**217-494-3115**

# Message from the President

By Dick Poynter

Well, it has been the better part of a year since we hired our new Executive Director. Angela Funk has been a great addition to the team! If you haven't met her yet, please come to one of our upcoming events and say hi to her and her husband, Eric.

So much has been accomplished this year, thanks to Angela and a great number of volunteers who have generously donated time and effort. You should see our headquarters! I hope all of you can find time to visit Gundmundson Wildlife Sanctuary (4506 Chinquipin Road, Springfield, just north of the airport, along the river).

I also hope you'll consider getting involved in some way, such as:

- Volunteering at a work day
- Making a contribution
- Donating items on Angela's Wednesday Wish List
- Helping with land/property stewardship
- Just coming by to say hello.

**KEEP IT GREEN!**

## From the director ...

**Continued from p. 1**

priority. A meeting space, wildlife observation area, and interpretive trails have been established. We are excited to share this amazing space with YOU!

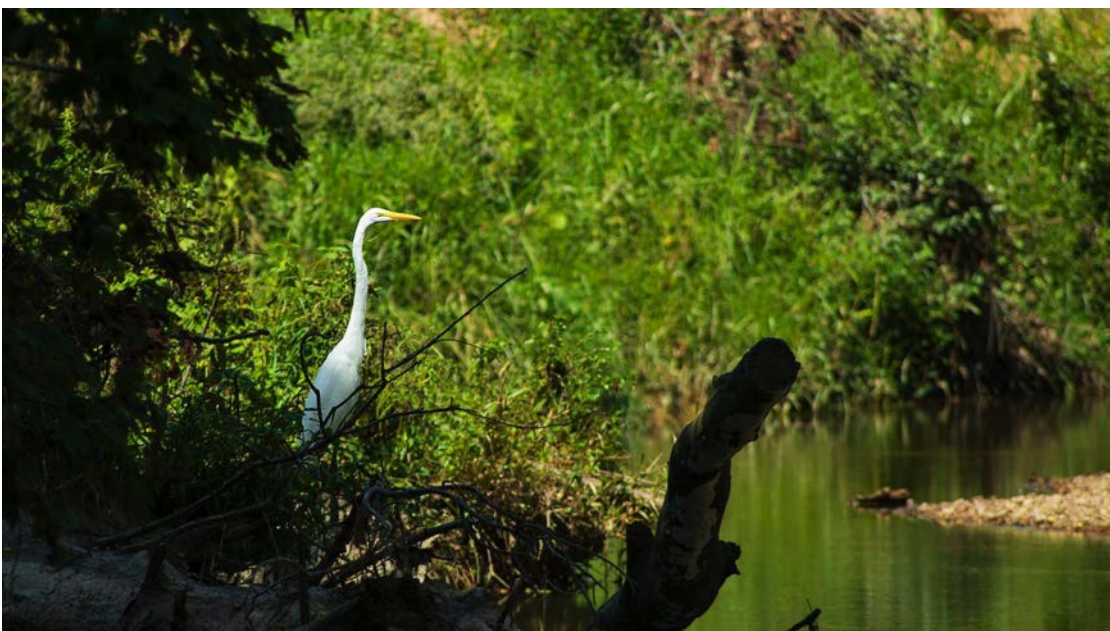
Find out more information in this newsletter regarding our October 28 th Autumn Celebration event.

A mapping project has been completed which not only details each of our 10 properties but includes a macrosite map exhibiting their location in relationship to the Sangamon River Watershed.

I have met with other landowners with a desire to protect their land in perpetuity.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help the FOSV, whether through planned giving, sponsorship, volunteering, or sharing your talent, please give me a call. I'd love to have you visit the GWS and learn more about the present and future of the Friends of the Sangamon Valley!

Thank you for supporting the Friends and our mission to preserve and protect natural areas within the Sangamon River Watershed!



Great egrets are summer visitors to Illinois. If they haven't left yet, they will soon. They winter in the southern U.S. and in central America. Photo by Chris Wills.

**Do you have any nature photos you'd like us to feature on Facebook or in our next newsletter?**

Email Chris at [chrisbwills@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbwills@gmail.com)



# Events

Oct.

28

Fall  
Celebration



Join us as we celebrate the beauty of autumn and the FOSV's 25th anniversary! We'll gather at Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

You can roast marshmallows, explore the walking trail, discuss the site's flora and fauna, tour the FOSV's new headquarters, and offer your ideas on the group's priorities for its second 25 years.

Free music! Free snacks! Free nature!



The Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 4506 Chiquipin Road, Springfield, just north of the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport. From Route 29, turn West on Camp Sangamo Road. Take the first right onto Chiquipin Road and proceed a half mile to just before the curve. Look for the flag at the end of our lane on your right.

Nov.

9

Conservation  
Summit



All environmental/conservation organizations and agencies are invited to attend this summit hosted by the Friends of the Sangamon Valley at the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary (located just north of the Springfield airport). This event, co-hosted by Illinois Audubon and Lincoln Memorial Garden, is designed to bring the leaders of local organizations together to discuss goals, initiatives, and planned future programs and initiatives. We will learn about each other, how we can support each other, and why working together can make us all stronger.

Thursday, Nov 9, 11a.m.-2 p.m.  
Enjoy a campfire, social time, and collaborative planning for the future.

If your group is interested in being a part of this exciting effort, please contact Angela Funk, FOSV Executive Director at [fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com](mailto:fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com) or call 217-494-3115

Nov.  
**24**

## Chainsaw Safety



How do you start a chainsaw safely? Where should you stand when that tree starts to fall? Find out at our chainsaw safety clinic.

Bring your own saw or use one of ours. We'll even provide lunch!

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Space is limited, so reserve a spot by contacting Angela Funk at 217-494-3115 or [FOSVexecutivedirector@gmail.com](mailto:FOSVexecutivedirector@gmail.com).

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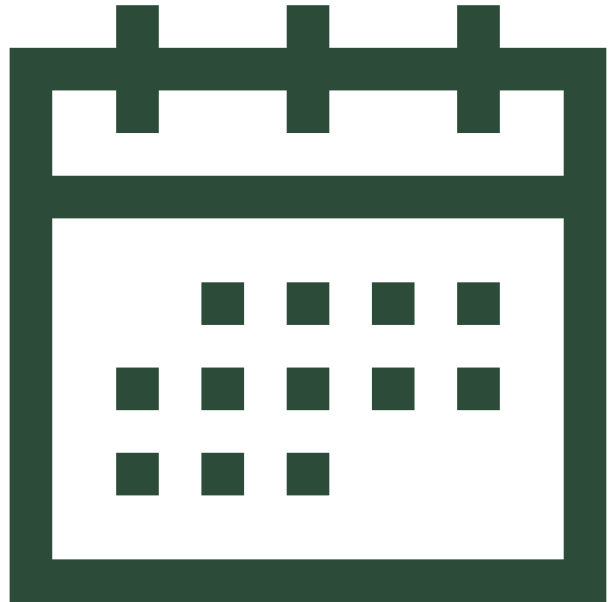
## Bob Barewin leaves board of directors

Bob Barewin has decided to step down from the FOSV Board of Directors after many years of service. He is spending more time out of state with his family and cannot attend as many meetings as he would like. Happily, he has agreed to continue offering his legal advice if the FOSV needs help.

Please join us in thanking Bob for his many years of service to the FOSV and to the Springfield community.

**Fun  
Ahead**

## Mark Your Calendars



Brown bag events Jan. 18, Feb. 15 and March 21.

See "Updates" for more info.

## Wednesday Wishes

Thank you to everyone who has responded to our "Wednesday wishes" on Facebook. We appreciate your generosity. If you haven't seen them, here are some wishes we're still wishing.

- a donation of quality mulch or woodchips for our trails and landscaping projects
- a chimney sweep to check out the wood stove at our headquarters
- someone to sandblast our patio furniture
- help cleaning the gutters at our Gudmundson headquarters





# Fighting the Invaders

## A creepy winter vine

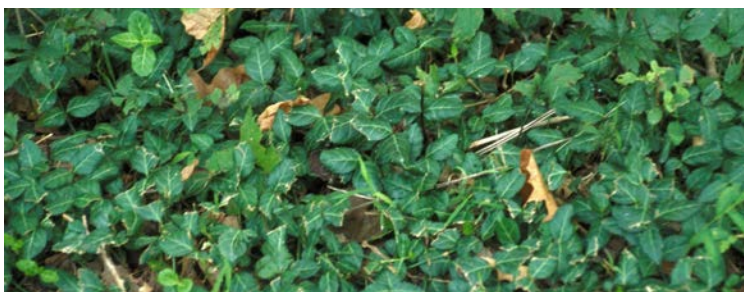
By **Mike Kennedy**

Of course, it's wintercreeper – *Euonymus fortunei*, a vine with leaves that stay green well into December or beyond if the weather is mild.

Wintercreeper is one of the tougher invasives that the stewardship crew deals with. Brought over from Asia as an ornamental ground cover, this aggressive, shade-tolerant vine forms dense mats across the ground and climbs up trees and other objects, where it branches out horizontally several feet and produces flowers and seeds.

Wintercreeper vines can be 6 inches in diameter and can grow 50 feet or more up trees by attaching themselves with aerial roots that grow into the bark of the trees and are difficult to remove without damaging the bark of the tree. We've also noticed dense growths of wintercreeper at the base of large trees creating a moist microclimate that keeps the tree bark wet. This densely matted groundcover severely limits the regeneration of native woodland plants.

We find it more frequently in natural areas close to urban areas where many homeowners still use wintercreeper as a groundcover. Birds eat the seeds of wintercreeper and are probably the main source of spreading it into natural areas. Prescribed fire burns can top kill wintercreeper, but herbicides are usually required to control large infestations.



### **Pulling wintercreeper**

***Small mats of wintercreeper can be removed by hand. Start at the edge and pull the vines gently and slowly so the roots are pulled up with the vine. You can roll up the vines as you work, ending with a large ball of vines that should be sealed in a bag and thrown away or solarized to thoroughly kill the vegetation before composting. Do not leave the pulled vines in contact with the ground; they will re-root and start growing again.***  
**Source: Sustain.IU.edu**



# Stewardship Update

The Tuesday work crew continues ongoing efforts at Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary (GWS), removing invasive species, tearing down old fences, and maintaining trails.

While working on a trail that parallels the bluff over the Sangamon River, sugar maples growing along the edge of the trail were being removed. As the crew was taking out the maples, they were surprised to discover many large red oaks along with some smaller white oaks, bur oaks, and shagbark hickories behind the wall of maples. The maples were so thick you could not see the trunks of these large oaks, and looking up into the canopy all you could see were maple leaves.

Fast-growing, shade-tolerant sugar maples out-compete oak trees, so the crew has been removing the sugar maples amongst these oaks to promote the growth of healthy oaks and to increase understory herbaceous plants. The big red oaks are at a point where a few of them will need to be thinned out too, but having too many oaks is a much better problem to have than not having enough.



James Mann Photography

Left column: A northern red oak and the northern red oak's leaves in autumn.

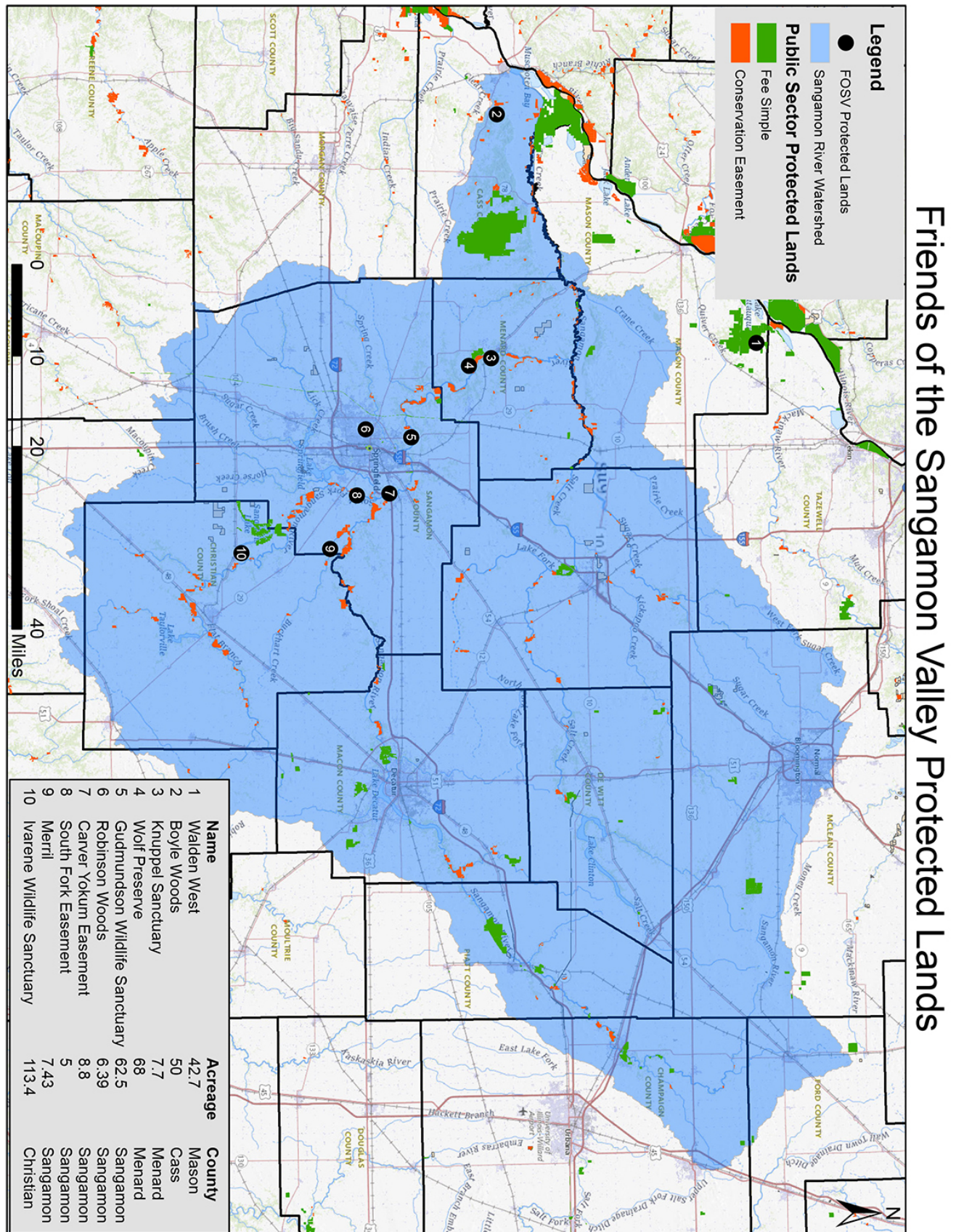
Right column: Volunteers working at the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary.



# Thanks to you!

Take a look at all the wild places you're helping to preserve by supporting the Friends of the Sangamon Valley! We worked with David Holman, an Illinois mapping and GIS expert, to create maps of every FOSV property and this comprehensive overview of the Sangamon River Watershed.

FOSV owns eight properties (358 acres) and protects two others through easements (13.8 acres). The property is scattered across five counties.





# Updates

## FOSV lands pollinator grant

Friends of the Sangamon Valley's application for the Soil and Water Conservation District's Pollinator Planting has been approved! This fall we will be converting eight acres of pasture to pollinator plots. This program will cover 75% of the cost of the project. Illinois native plants will be established to provide nectar sources and larval host plants.

If you are interested in helping with the 25% (\$1500) let us know. We look forward to sharing this area with pollinators and YOU!



## 'Brown bag' events with new partners

We're teaming up with the Illinois Audubon Society, Lincoln Memorial Gardens to offer informative "brown bag" events this winter. Bring your lunch, learn something new, meet other nature lovers and discover volunteer opportunities. 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

### **Jan. 18 - Lincoln Memorial Gardens**

John Martin will offer an introduction to astronomy and Brian "Fox" Ellis will end the afternoon with a Native American star story.

### **Feb. 15 - Illinois Audubon Society**

Join us for an introduction to common winter birds and the Great Backyard Bird Count with Matt Hayes. We will discuss bird topography and field marks. Afterward, we will observe birds at the feeders and put these new skills to practice.

### **Mar. 21 - Friends of the Sangamon Valley**

Enjoy a brief hike and introduction to leading nature hikes and hike etiquette with Angela Funk and Brian "Fox" Ellis. Basic interpretation skills include birds, botany, and general ecology. Afterwards, representatives from local nonprofits will present a variety of volunteer opportunities for the upcoming year.

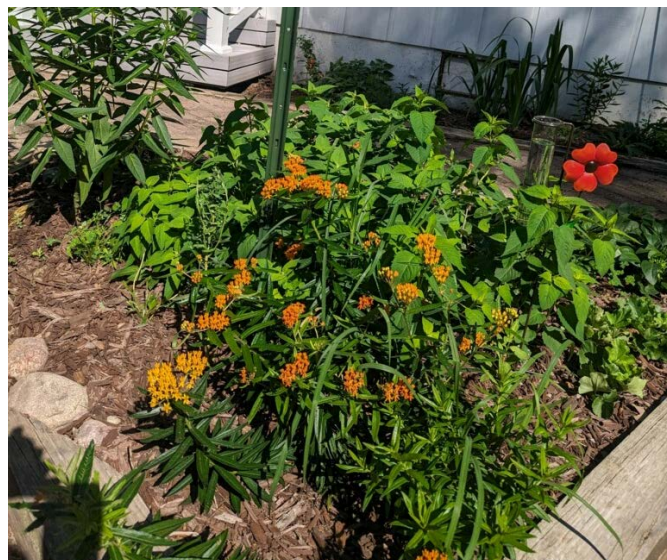
Registration will be open soon. If you are interested in attending, send an email to [fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com](mailto:fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com). As soon as registration is live you will receive a message with more details.





# Thank you to ...

- Tri-County Stump Removal of Springfield for a great non-profit discount on stump removal at our HQ. With the balance paid by an anonymous donor.
- Amber Barnhart for purchasing four bags of No-Mess bird food at Wild Birds Unlimited.
- Maureen Squires for donating house plants for our HQ.
- Rudin Printing for donating 3 cases of copy paper.
- 3 B's Natives for donating native plant plugs used to landscape at the HQ.
- Anonymous donor for our affiliate membership to the Illinois Audubon Society.
- Stella Coffee & Tea for having a book and plant sale with proceeds to benefit the FOSV. (\$250)
- We are so appreciative of the folks who help at our HQ by mowing, removing exotics, and continuing to clean up the outbuildings and house.
- Bob Croteau and Bill Bruse for all of their "handy-man help"-installing new lights, updating electrical, building repair



Above: plants donated by 3B's Natives.

Below: the logo of Wild Birds Unlimited, which has also donated to the FOSV.



## We need YOUR help keeping our feeders full!

We are excited to announce that our transformation of the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary (located just north of the Springfield airport) into our headquarters is moving forward every day!

We have established a feeding station and wildlife observation area that will be available to members and groups soon. Thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited-Springfield for assisting us in our efforts. They have donated feeders and feed to get us started.

Here's how you can help.

We are using the following WBU products. Just tell the WBU staff that you are purchasing items for FOSV and they will enter the promo

code 'ENJOY20' for 20% off of the purchase price of birdseed and other products. They will then alert us that there is a gift to pick up!

- Cranberry Seed Cylinder
- No Mess Blend
- Finch Blend

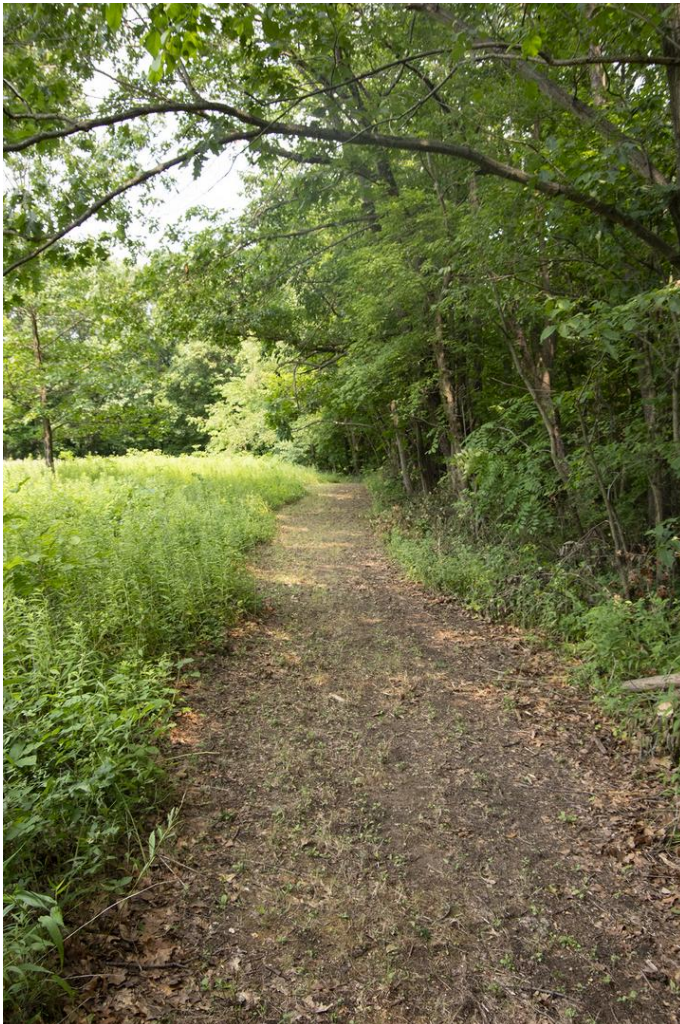
Other items on our wish list include a bird bath, doormats, hummingbird feeders, bird houses, advanced pole systems, and any other items that you love and want to share to make our setting more inviting for wildlife and human visitors!

Wild Birds Unlimited-Springfield is located at 1930 S. MacArthur in Springfield.



# Making the most of Pete's gift

The late Pete Gudmundson gave the FOSV an incredible gift when he left the organization his house and property along the Sangamon River. We are determined not to let his generosity go to waste. Board members and volunteers have spent countless hours at what is now the Gudmundson Wildlife Sanctuary. Thanks to paint, repairs and hard work, the house is on its way to being a meeting center where the Friends can host events. We've been clearing invasive species and even creating a short walking trail so that visitors can appreciate nature there. Take a look!





# You can help!

Your membership helps the FOSV accomplish so much. Thank you for the support! But you are welcome to support us in other ways, too. You could help at special events or lend a hand on work days or help maintain trails ... and much more. We invite you to answer the questions below and then send us the form. You can mail it to 4506 Chiquipin Road, Springfield, IL 62707 or email to fosvexecutivedirector@gmail.com ... or just call us at 217-494-3115

## Friends of the Sangamon Valley Volunteer Interest Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Do you have any special skills, training, or talents to share with FOSV? (i.e., technology, horticulture, grant writing, wood working) \_\_\_\_\_

What days are you available?

- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday
- ☐ Saturday
- ☐ Sunday

What is your seasonal availability?

- ☐ Spring
- ☐ Summer
- ☐ Fall
- ☐ Winter

What is your availability?

- ☐ Morning
- ☐ Afternoon

How many hours month would you like to volunteer each month? **8-12?**      **2-4?**      **2-5?**

**Do any of these volunteer opportunities sound good? Circle what interests you.**

### Site Steward

Take responsibility for stewardship at a particular natural area with guidance from FOSV staff. Work independently or with others to plant natives, remove invasives, collect seed, and be the eyes and ears for the site.

### Weekly Workdays

Pitch in at workdays at various properties every Tuesday from 10 a.m.-noon. Volunteers may remove invasives, plant natives, collect seeds, or perform general clean-up.

### Photographer

Capture photos of our properties and events. Help us build our photo library!

### Fundraising

Help us procure support from local businesses. Seek out donations of items that we need for operations and for our annual auction. Write grants and help identify supporters.

### Prescribed Burn Assistance

Participate in burns of prairies and woodlands under the leadership of staff or contractors, with tasks assigned based on experience. All tools and safety equipment are provided. Tasks include monitoring, suppression, ignition, control, and mop-up.

### Special Events Support

Help set up and/or assist at various events.

### Gudmundson Docent

Lead groups interested in touring the GWS. We will train you and provide you with reference materials.

### Grounds Care

Do you love mowing? We need help with that. Or you could monitor trails to keep them free of branches and make sure their signs are legible.

### Facility Care

Use your plumbing, carpentry or electrical skills to repair HQ. Or just help with seasonal tasks like cleaning gutters.



Friends of the Sangamon Valley  
4506 Chinquipin Road  
Springfield IL 62707

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Springfield, IL  
Permit No. 213

Return service requested

**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**

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.

Friends of the Sangamon Valley

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and check to: **Friends of the Sangamon Valley**  
**4506 Chinquipin Road**  
**Springfield, IL 62707**