

Branching Out

Summer 2013

The warm weather is here, a time to appreciate the unique and rare habitat in Huron Woods. This newsletter serves to educate landowners about the plants and animals with whom we share this precious place. We extend to you a warm invitation to attend our Habitat Stewardship events to add to your knowledge about our natural heritage.

Coming Events

Tues. July 30 7 p.m. Ian Jean “Forest Walk”-meet at mailboxes in front of clubhouse

Tues. August 6th 8 p.m. “Stargazing Party”-meet at middle beach entrance with dessert to share

Fri. August 16th 7 p.m. Larry Cornelis “Return the Landscape”-at HW clubhouse, lower lounge

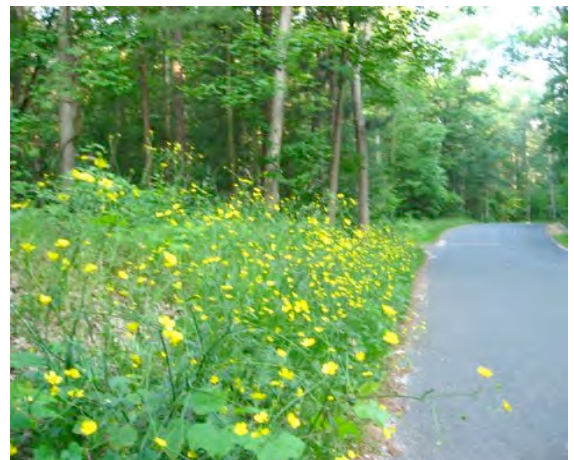
Sat. August 31st 1:30 Catherine Jimenea “The Reptile Atlas”-HW clubhouse, lower lounge

Sat. Sept 7th 1:30 Haley Hartford “Biodiversity” -HW clubhouse, lower lounge

The spring edition of Branching out focussed on the ground cover plants comprising the forest floor. This edition covers the forest edge and the understory, two other critical areas of a healthy Carolinian and Oak Savanna forest.

The Forest Edge

Biodiversity of wildflowers delights our senses through the growing season with waves of colour and shape variations. But these plants offer more than beautiful scenery. Their pollen supports a wide variety of insects which, although sometimes a nuisance to humans, form a critical support for birds and reptiles, which, in turn, provide food for predators in the forest. All play an important role in diverse food chains which maintain the complex web of life in our forest woodlots. These wildflowers need sun to flourish. Roadsides provide ample light for their abundant growth.



The Understory -its role in our multidimensional forest

- ~provides visual privacy for homeowners
- ~provides a sound barrier from traffic and general noise
- ~protects trees from wind damage
- ~floral displays provide pollen for butterflies and other insects
- ~protects windows from sand entry during storms close to lakes
- ~provides a sheltered nursery for young trees and shrubs
- ~provides nesting stages for birds
- ~provides visual screen for wildlife like deer

Witch Hazel is one shrub that dominates the understory in our area and the only shrub that blooms in the autumn.



Historically, witch hazel has been used as a medicinal treatment for a wide variety of afflictions. A wide variety of uses for witch hazel extracts and potions have been recommended over the years.

15 Purported Uses for Witch Hazel : To control skin blemishes, soothe and heal diaper rash, shrink bags under the eyes, soothe and reduce external hemorrhoids, relieve varicose veins, soothe poison ivy and poison oak, treat chicken pox blisters, heal bruises, soothe razor burn, treat and soothe a nasty sunburn, treat dry skin, heal and soothe various cuts and bruises, take the bite out of bug bites, refresh tired eyes and to make your own deodorant. Be sure to consult your doctor or pharmacist first.

Other shrubs dominate the understory in our forests: serviceberry, choke cherry, flowering dogwood, fragrant sumac, new jersey tea and many others lend fragrance and colour to our lives from May to late September, and play important roles in the life of a healthy diversified forest.(The complete list in the Native Vegetation for the Grand Bend to Port Franks Corridor was enclosed with your Branching Out Spring Edition)

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