



# GRAND PRAIRIE FRIENDS

## Spring 2024 Newsletter



### Donor Spotlight

## Fred and Nancy Delcomyn

If you were to look out the window of Fred and Nancy Delcomyn's house, you would see one of their personal treasures- a front yard prairie. As proud owners of their own prairie, the Delcomyns clearly treasure the beauty and uniqueness of the prairie ecosystem. Like so many other Grand Prairie Friends supporters, their support of conservation stems from a deep love of nature. Fred illustrates his feelings toward the natural world through sharing a story of driving up and down the west coast with his parents. As they overlooked a gorgeous, savannah-like view from a pass over the Sierra Nevada, Fred noticed his mom taking a deep sigh and thought to himself, **"She is refilling her soul."**

After deciding to convert the land in front of their house to prairie, Fred and Nancy reached out to GPF for aid in conducting prescribed burns. From there, they effortlessly seemed to fit with Grand Prairie Friends. Nancy served for 30 years on the Urbana Park Board, supporting the work of preserving natural areas for the community, which flowed naturally into her love for GPF. When asked why they believe in supporting Grand Prairie Friends, Nancy replied, “It’s like hitching your wagon to a rising star.”

This trust in Grand Prairie Friends led to Fred’s suggestion for a general fund endowment. As it grows and earns interest, this long-term fund will benefit Grand Prairie Friends as a steady income source. Fred speaks to the valuable niche this fund fills in our future as an organization, saying, “Not many people are willing to give to something they won’t see results from for a decade.” Once the fund was established, Fred and Nancy decided to “put some money in it and let it serve as a beacon to attract others.” They likened this to the story of ‘Stone Soup,’ where a hearty meal is made as everyone adds in the ingredients they have. In this case, the general fund serves as a bowl to hold the ingredients as the delicious soup comes together.

The Delcomyns encourage others to give in the same way. As Nancy said, **“Put your carrot or your onion into the soup!”** We are certainly thankful to Fred and Nancy for the establishment of the bowl and the first ingredients in the soup of Grand Prairie Friends’ bright and steady future.

Add to the Soup- Donate Here!



## **Share Your Comments for GPF's Accreditation Application**

Over the next two years, GPF will be working with the Land Trust Alliance to achieve national accreditation. As an accredited land trust, GPF will prove direct alignment with land transactions, operations and stewardship for a high-functioning land trust. We want this for the future of GPF, as well as to add transparency and comfort to

you, our members and donors, that deserve assurance that your time and donations are being managed in the highest level of care.

**The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how Grand Prairie Friends complies with national quality standards.**

[Read More and Share Your Comments](#)

## **Walkin' with Wildflowers**

**Sunday, May 5, 1:30-3:30pm**

Raindate: May 19, 1:30-3:30pm

Join star volunteers Nancy Coutant and Wilson Montgomery as they share their botanical expertise as you enjoy the beauty along the trail!



**Warbler Crossing**

**17487 Bypass Rd, Charleston, IL 61920**

I'll be there!

## Upcoming Events

2024 Spring Membership Meeting

***Fluddles* Documentary Viewing**



**April 26, 4-6pm**

Champaign Public Library  
Featuring Filmmaker Bob Dolgan  
Co-hosted with Champaign County Audubon Society

*Sometimes simply described as “big puddles,” fluddles appear in the spring and fall and provide habitat and forage for a diversity of waterfowl and shorebird species. FLUDDLES takes viewers on a journey to these secret, oft-fleeting wildernesses in a time when Illinois has lost 90% of its original wetlands.*

Preview Documentary



## May Mingle

May 20, 2024, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Warbler Crossing, 17487 Bypass Rd, Charleston, IL 61920

Come hear from some of the scientists conducting research on Grand Prairie

Friends property in bite-size, 5-minute presentations. These presentations will be followed by our May board meeting, which all are invited to stay to attend..

RSVP- See you there!

## **EIU LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMS AT WARBLER RIDGE**



**Making Connections: Nature and Yoga**  
Fridays, May 10, 17, and 24, 2024,  
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

The Red Shack, 17161 Daileyville Rd, Charleston, IL

Discover the perfect blend of outdoor serenity and yoga, set amidst the picturesque Warbler Ridge Conservation Area.

Designed for all skill levels!

**This is a free experience, but registration through EIU  
Academy of Lifelong Learning is required.**

Register now!



In A Natural Light II:  
Artist's Plein Air Gathering  
Fridays, May 10, 17, and 24, 2024,  
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

The Red Shack, 17161 Daileyville Rd, Charleston, IL

Artists of all skill levels (painting, writing, sketching, photographing etc.) are invited to celebrate spring and share inspirations at a plein air gathering. Please bring your own supplies and snacks.

**This is a free experience, but registration through EIU Academy of Lifelong Learning is required.**

Register Now!

# NATIVE PLANT SALE



**Online Sale**

# May 5-May 18

Sale opens at 8am on May 5th! Visit the catalogue now to prepare for opening day.

Special early access for Blazing Star Members: May 3-4

## *Creation Care*

What does it mean to faithfully steward the Earth?



*Saturday, May 18th, 9am-1pm*

**Warbler Ridge Conservation Area  
17161 Daileyville Rd., Charleston, IL**

I'll be there! RSVP

Want to volunteer?  
Email Sarah Zoppa here!





## **Riverwatch Training Workshop**

Apr 27, 2024, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Warbler Crossing, 17487 Bypass Rd, Charleston, IL 61920

Become certified as a RiverWatch community scientist and learn how to monitor water quality in your local streams! Volunteers will learn to survey habitat and aquatic life, focusing on species like dragonfly nymphs, beetle larva, midges, and snails. Workshops cost \$50 for adults.

[Register Here](#)

## **Welcome to Ambraw Woods; Public Forest Stewardship Field Day**

Saturday, Jun 22, 2024

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

3691 18th St, Charleston, IL 61920



Join us as we celebrate recent conservation advancements at Ambraw Woods Land & Water Reserve, located just across the river from Warbler Ridge. This open house will showcase the property which is

rarely open to the public, to enjoy guided tours to the tree planting site, informational booths, and children's activities.

See you there!



## Volunteer Appreciation

Grand Prairie Friends is SO thankful for all of our dedicated volunteers and we want to celebrate YOU! As a thank you to anyone who has given their time throughout the year, we will be hosting a summer party with refreshments, a raffle, and a fun guest speaker. See you there!

Saturday, Jul 13, 2024, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Warbler Crossing, 17487 Bypass Rd, Charleston, IL 61920

RSVP



## **Stewardship Saturdays**

**First Saturday of Every Month, 9-11am**

**Warbler Ridge**

**17161 Daileyville Rd.**

**Charleston, IL**

- All ages and abilities are invited to help with general site maintenance and invasive plant removal

- Tools, treats, and training!

## **Invasive Strike Team**

**Third Saturday of Every Month, 9-11am**

**Warbler Ridge**

**17161 Daileyville Rd.**

## Charleston, IL

- Help our forests and prairies by manually pulling, tugging and cutting invasive plants, planting trees and more!
- You bring the enthusiasm and we'll bring the tools!



**BLAZING STAR SOCIETY**  
**GRAND PRAIRIE FRIENDS**

Looking for a way to take your support of GPF to the next level? Join our Blazing Star Society!

Blazing Star Society members donate unrestricted, annual gifts to Grand Prairie Friends at \$1,000 and above. Members will be recognized at events, in the newsletter, annual report, and more. Additionally, Blazing Star members will be invited to **exclusive members-only gatherings and events** throughout the year!

Join Now!

## SAVE THE DATE



**GRAND PRAIRIE FRIENDS  
40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

**Join us for our Anniversary Gala in Champaign on  
October 3rd, 2024!**

## **Board Meetings**

**5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**

**United Way Office**

**5 Dunlap Ct, Savoy, IL 61874**

All Grand Prairie Friends Members are welcome to attend Grand Prairie Friends Board Meetings

**April 22**

**June 24**

**July 22**



## Grand Prairie Friends

PO Box 36, Urbana, Illinois, United States of America



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