



Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve, Inc.

Dedicated to Service in Conservation

1100 Ridge Road
Homewood, Illinois 60430
708-798-1850

e-mail address: info@homewoodizaakwalton.com

Like us on Facebook

Tax exempt non-profit 501 c 3 Organization

To our members and friends:

July/August 2019

September General Meeting---Thursday Sept 26, 2019 7:00 PM

Illinois Last Endemic Flower: The Story of the Kankakee Mallow

We have a unique and very special program planned for September. The nearby Kankakee river is only a 40 minute drive from Homewood but there are many interesting natural sites in that area such as the Kankakee River State Park and the nearby Kankakee Sands Nature Preserves both in Illinois and Indiana. But there is only one place on Earth where you can see a wild Kankakee Mallow flower. Trevor Edmonson will present to us a program that is a journey from the 1800's to present day about the discovery, the loss, and the restoration of Illinois last endemic flower. A botanical story tied to the melting glaciers, native American stewardship, and a collection of regional volunteers determined to bring the Kankakee Mallow back from the ashes.

Trevor Edmonson is the site steward for Langham Island Nature Preserve. His day job is as a Project Manager for The Wetlands Initiative where he works mostly at The Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. Trevor also authors a weekly column called "Off the Trail" for the Kankakee Daily Journal Outdoors Section.

May Election Results- Officers and Directors effective Sept 1, 2018

At our annual meeting on May 23th, the following officers were elected for a one year term and the four directors for new three year terms:

President	John Brinkman
Vice President	Gerry Tienstra
Treasurer	Dave Smith
Secretary	Greg Busler
Membership Secretary	Shawn Straney
Director Environmental Concerns	Kevin Jennings

One year Directors: John Newgard, Tony Talerico, (2 vacancies)

Two year Directors: Dirk French, John Sandala, Todd Wittenberg, Steve Wlodarski
Three year Directors: Marc Biolchin, Sam Casella, Jay Eagle, John Sailor

Mark Leschuck and Jill Sharbano recently resigned from the Board. We thank both of them for their service and contributions to the mission of the Preserve. As a result, we have two vacancies on the Board. If anyone is interested in serving on the Board and becoming an active volunteer please call John Brinkman at 708 /638-9418

New Chimney Swift Tower

The Preserve now has a welcome sign for Chimney Swifts, a very desirable bird that eats 1/3 of its' body weight every day in insects, including mosquitos. The welcome sign is in the form of a 13-foot, stand-alone chimney built under the direction of Jake Merrill, an Eagle Scout candidate from Boy Scout Troop 364 in Homewood. The project began when a member of Thorn Creek Audubon Society found that Jake was thinking about an Eagle Scout project; the member suggested he build a Chimney Swift Tower. In researching the little birds, Jake found that their population is declining due to loss of habitat. Chimney Swifts perch and nest only on vertical surfaces. They evolved to use hollowed trees, but when those became less available, they adapted to breeding in chimneys. Locally, Chimney Swifts can be seen in several places just before dusk, including the chimneys of Calumet Country Club on 175th Street. As the future on this golf course is in doubt, there's hope these birds will head a few miles east to the friendly confines of The Preserve. We're keeping our fingers crossed. In the fall, Chimney Swifts migrate thousands of miles to the Amazon River basin, especially in Peru.

The tower is located in the eastern portion of The Preserve, not far from the cull-du-sac at the end of Presidents Drive. It can be easily be seen while walking the trail along the eastern third of the Prairie Lake (the 3.6-mile loop). It can also be seen from the trail along the northern border of the Sand Pit Lakes (the Blue trail).

Jake began construction in June with a foundation of 4' by 4' and 4' deep. This was filled with concrete and rebar. Brick laying followed two weeks later. The tower consists of an inner wall of cinder block and an outer wall of common brick. At the top, stainless steel sheets extends down 3 feet; the stainless steel will prevent squirrels, racoons, and other predators from climbing into the chimney and eating the eggs. At the bottom there's a stainless steel door, which offers ventilation and can be opened during annual fall cleanings.

The project required 300 man-hours to complete. Jake's volunteers were Ian Anderson, Greg Busler, Michael Gaughan, Mick Gaughan, Joe Gliottoni, John Gliottoni, Zack Green, Sam Jones, Steve Jones, Kris McCloy, Mike McDonnell, Brianna Merrill, Jen Merrill, Keith Merrill, Collin Pawlowski, Isaac Shores, Shawn Straney, and Jim Winicky.

Special thanks goes out to John & Joe Gliottoni of North Side Construction in Chicago Heights. John & Joe volunteered their professional masonry skills and without their help, the tower's high-quality standards would not have been reached. As project manager, Jake knew that mortar was a mixture of sand, cement, & water. However, with the help of the Gliottoni brothers, Jake's crew learned the how to mix to precise specifications and how to maintain a steady flow of brick & mortar to those laying the brick. Special thanks also goes to Mike McDonnell, whose trade skills also added to the tower's overall strength and appearance. Mike is also Scoutmaster of Troop 364.

Funding for the tower came from two three generous donors. We received a \$1,000 grant from the Thorn Creek Audubon Society and a \$600 from an anonymous donor. Also, the John Maier Co, of Chicago Heights donated the stainless steel used for the predator guard and for the door at the bottom. The Preserve is very thankful to these generous donors.

While the tower is now complete, it's unlikely it will be habituated this year. However, next spring is only 7 months away and we are hopeful to have mosquito-eating residents then.

The Thorn Creek Audubon Society board commended Jake Merrill, the Eagle Scout Candidate, as follows: "There are many ways to construct a Swift Tower-and Jake chose the most durable and difficult. It is beautiful and we are so impressed." The Board of Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve seconds that emotion. Job well done Jake!

War on Canadian Teasel

After our spring efforts to poison with herbicide as many surviving first year plants as we could, we shifted into our summer campaign (2.2) of cutting the stalks as much as possible before they produce mature seed pods. With a large number of willing volunteers, we assigned territories where the teasel was present. Each volunteer was then responsible for cutting the stalks on their assigned territory. Many volunteer hours were necessary to accomplish the mission as most stalks re sprouted after cutting and needed to be cut a second or third time. So cheers and thanks to the teasel brigade warriors: Greg Busler, Dan Galen, Jim Helke, John Sandala, Kevin Jennings, Jay and Amy Eagle, Marc Biolchin, Todd Wittenberg, Jeff Maharry, Nick Cross and John Brinkman. The attack will resume in late Fall !

Herbicide Use in the Preserve

We use herbicides to control the many invasive plants that we are constantly trying to manage out of the Preserve. Two methods of spraying are used: broadcast and spot. In the next few weeks we will be using the broadcast spray method to control the phragmites. Since many of you are concerned about contact with these herbicides, both for yourselves as well as your dogs, we will begin to place small white flags next to the trails in any area where we have applied herbicides over the last 24 hours. Printed on the flags will be: "Herbicide applied recently" After 24 hours, we will remove the flags as all of the active chemicals in these herbicides are either absorbed by the plants or become inert in that time frame.

Our Largest Volunteer Effort: The July 4th Village Picnic

Continuing a tradition that began in 1975, we once again hosted the July 4th Village Picnic. This is our largest volunteer effort and in our Newsletter we always provide the acknowledgement and recognition that volunteer efforts deserve. Board members Dirk French, Steve Wlodarski, Todd Wittenburg, Sam Casella and Jay Eagle brought leadership and management to the effort. With over 40 volunteers, this event requires our

largest cadre of volunteers working over a 3 day period; we are exceedingly thankful to all of them as well as our partners that made it a success once again.

Thanks to our partners and donors:

Walt's Food Centers Homewood Disposal Twisted BBQ and Bakery

And thanks to our helpful volunteers:

Paula Newton, Ron, Pam and Ethan Tomek, Karen Smith, Aquila Wilks, Jim Wright, Dave Smith, Amy and Joe Eagle, Isaac Shores, Shawn Bader, Gabe Grover, Cindy Wittenberg, Earl Knies, Chris Cummings, Ann Jones, Carolyn Bury, John and Nora Sandala, Nancy Walsh, Rose Oslar, David Winicki, Josiah Brown, Isaac Shores, Jeremiah Lee, Gasrill Griffen, Jim Helke, Barbara and Brad Jerit, Tony, Maria and Tony Jr Talarico, Donovan Brennan, and Luis Hernandez. We apologize to anyone who we might have missed.

John Brinkman President

HOMWOOD IZAAK WALTON PRESERVE PROGRAM

Endemic Flower: The Story of the Kankakee Mallow

Thursday, September 26th 7 PM at the Cabin, 1100 Ridge Road, Homewood

Trevor Edmonson, site steward for the Langham Island Nature Preserve at the Kankakee River State Park, will present a program on the last endemic flower in Illinois, the Kankakee Mallow. Trevor will lead us through a botanical story about the discovery, loss and restoration of this unique flower. Something new to learn, this will be an eye opening program you do not want to miss.