

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023 Issue



White water lilies (Nymphaea odorata) adorn Eel Bay. Photographed by Jeffrey Hanna.

Summer has officially arrived at the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center. This is my absolute favorite time of year. The weather has been gorgeous, and our woods and marshes have come alive with beautiful sights and songs. From the loons calling to each other, the bullfrogs chatting in the marsh, and the soon-to-be emerging water lilies, it is a remarkable place to be. I am pleased to see so many people enjoying all of the fabulous activities we have been offering. One of the new favorite events is the Full Moon Hike, offered once a month here at the Nature Center. Staff and volunteers make each of these picturesque evenings memorable by taking visitors on a guided hike to watch the full moon rise over the horizon.

This summer the Friends of the Nature Center will be hosting our annual Night for Nature on July 13th. We hope that you will all join us for a spectacular evening and support the Nature Center's mission to provide environmental education programming, focus on

conservation of location ecosystems, and encourage children and adults to enjoy the outdoors together. Our Friends board members and Nature Center staff have been working tirelessly together to prepare for this event. I would like to personally thank photographer Lesa Plantz for her beautiful loon pictures used for our invites, flyers, and even Benefit Auction flyer. I would also like to thank artist Dawn Supernault who drew the feathers for our invites and table tents.

Lastly, it is my pleasure to welcome Robb Myers to our board. We are so excited to have him join our team! I look forward to the opportunity to serve you this year and hope to meet many of you here at the Nature Center.

Robin Colello-Poplaski
Board President
Friends of the Nature Center

The Minna Anthony Common Series

Wild Flowers Are Discussed

by **Minna Anthony Common**

July 26, 1932

*Reprinted with permission from the
Watertown Daily Times.*

Not by any means do all the wild flowers belong to early spring, but in mid-summer instead of hiding in the woods they seek the open fields and the marshes.

Midsummer blossoms seldom show the dainty pastel colors of spring woods' flowers. Tints, shades, delicate gradations of tone are not for them but rather they open forth in all the boldness of the primary colors, especially yellow and blue. A gorgeous mass of red is lovely, but nature realizes it looks too hot on a midsummer's day, and reserves such displays to dispel autumn's chill.

White is the favorite summer color. Everywhere it may be seen separating the blues from the yellows and the purples from the blues. It harmonizes the color scheme into a perfect whole, and gives a hint the gardener should be quick to imitate. Nothing serves so well to give effectiveness to the flower garden as does the judicious use of white.

The white-dotted daisy fields are mostly gone, but Queen's Ann's lace (please don't call it wild carrot) makes strips of frilly white along the road ways; sweet clover, sometimes white and sometimes yellow, banks the fences; while mayweed confines itself to the hard trampled barnyards and cattle lanes. Yarrow, flat-topped, very white and never common, prefers hard, dry, inhospitable clay banks. It is not really a wild flower in the United States for centuries ago it escaped from the settlers' gardens. Its cultivation dates back to the ancient Greeks and the vulnerable heel of Achilles. In recent years it is again coming into its own in our gardens having acquired some colors other than white.

Probably the biggest floral offering of the fields just now is the display of showy blue bugloss. Acres and acres of it cover the shallow soil on the limestone flats between Clayton and Cape Vincent and near Gunn's Corners. From a distance the spikes resemble very much the garden delphinium. Examined closely the single flowers are most attractive with long projecting antlers and some touches of pink. The leaves are extremely prickly for the plant is really a thistle. When a field of its clear blue is flanked by a field of light yellow mustard the effect is dazzling. Even the farmer, who sees his soil thus gone to waste, must get some slight compensation from the beauty of color.

Little patches of blue chicory grow along the roadsides. The color is perfect; the single flower is lovely, but the scragginess of the plant must be overlooked. "Gentlemen's ruff" is its nickname and truly the flower does resemble the stiff, frilled collars affected by the dandies of Queen Anne's time.

Tansy buttons are the gayest of the yellows; St. Johnswort has a much deeper color; and Elecampane is the palest of all. In any fence corner where all these are blended together there seems to be a splash of sunshine even on a cloudy day.

The summer color scheme of white, yellow, and blue is carried out even in the water flowers, and we find in bloom in midsummer the white arrowheads, the white and yellow water lilies, and the blue pickerel weed.

Not many summer flowers have a pleasing fragrance. Their colors are so flaunting they do not need sweet odors to attract the insects and nature seldom gives any quality which is not needed. But despite this lack of lower odor, a drive about the country is in no way disappointing for there is no more delightful fragrance than that of new mown hay, which in midsummer is the height of its season.

Perhaps grasses should also be included when discussing summer wild flowers for there are dozens of kinds and many are truly beautiful like the iridescent foxtail grass of the meadows, the flimsy poverty grass of the dry hilltops and the deep red rice-cut-grass of the marshes. So when we think of midsummer wild flowers we must consider open fields, meadows and river banks rather than woods, and we shall then realize there are as many and as beautiful blossoms as in the spring. ■

From the Director

Dear Nature Center Community,

Welcome back sunshine, snowbirds, and all the splendors of summer. Our busy season has launched, and the Park is in full swing! *I Love My Park Day* is our version of a “season-opener,” and this year the Nature Center saw fifty-one volunteers make over the Nature Center grounds. Before: winter... after: spring! A sincere *Thank You* to all the caring individuals who made time to volunteer! Please, see photos of this annual event on page 3.

One of the perks of the busy season is the swell in seasonal staff. We have an excellent team this year! Our crew of Environmental Educators include Bridget Foley, Ian McTavish, Grace Tolla, and Cecelia Thompson. Notably, Cecelia has been volunteering at the Nature Center since she was thirteen years old and is now employed with us through Jefferson County’s Summer Youth Employment Program! Colin Withers returns as the Nature Center Gardener. Our newest hire, Anneliese Hardman, will be serving as our Curatorial Assistant. We continue our partnership with the SCA/AmeriCorps through the NYS Parks Corps – we are happy to welcome Seth Blair to the role of Environmental Education Steward. We are also now in our third year of the Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward Internship – a partnership between the Nature Center, Thousand Islands Land Trust, and Save The River. This year’s talented Deedy Intern is Skylar Schmitt. Read more about some of the Nature Center’s new faces on page 9.



Garter snake coiled in Nature Center’s clove current. Photographed by Seth Blair.

We hope you will join us on a public program this summer. Please see our highlighted summer programs on pages 5-6. We conduct daily programs in July and August, so please check our Facebook page or website, or pick up a program schedule in person at the Nature Center. There is something for everyone this summer. We hope to see you soon!

Gabriela Padewska

*Director, Minna Anthony Common Nature Center
Wellesley Island State Park*

For Your Consideration

National Moth Week

National Moth Week (NMW) is held globally during the last full week in July. This year’s NMW is happening July 22–30. Take this opportunity to become a “moth-er” and celebrate the beauty, life cycle, and habitats of moths. Visit nationalmothweek.org to learn more.

Twelfth Annual *I Love My Park Day*



Thank you to the fifty-one volunteers who came out to celebrate the 12th annual *I Love My Park Day*! We were truly honored to have NYS Assemblyman Scott Gray take time out of his day to join us. Once again, our friends from Save The River were here to help with a shoreline cleanup, staff from Kohls Cares came out in force to assist, and everyone from our Park community chipped in to weed, rake, mulch, and wash benches. THANK YOU to all of our caring volunteers for lending a helping hand to give back!



THANK YOU to the following 46 *Friends* for joining or renewing their commitment recently

Olga Harbuz	Black River, NY	Don & Maggie Lort	Wellesley Island, NY
Gary Phillips	Cape Vincent, NY	Scott & Laurie Mahoney	Freeport, ME
Mike & Jean Kimber	Fayetteville, NY	Helen Brennan	Clayton, NY
Ann Ward	Alexandria Bay, NY	Norm & Laurie Itjen	Elba, NY
Pat & Dory Sheldon	Wellesley Island, NY	Shelley Lofberg	Wellesley Island, NY
William Mattingly	Theresa, NY	Jennifer Coon	Millbrook NY
Mark Walczyk	Watertown, NY	Giff & Sue Lewis	Webster, NY
Susan & Harold Johnson	Watertown, NY	Bernard & Barbara Forth	Fayetteville, NY
Dr. Tom & Karen Allen	Fairport, NY	Phyllis Schwartz	Camillus, NY
Edward & Margaret McNally	Wellesley Island, NY	Anne Dyet	Grand Island, NY
Kate Johnson	Watertown, NY	Ken Sachse	Wellesley Island, NY
Heather & Jonathan White	Watertown, NY	Eileen George	Fairfax Station, VA
Lori Arnot	Clayton, NY	Daniel Keohane	Natick, MA
Marion Huntley	Fineview, NY	Chuck & Libby Spaulding	Cortland, NY
Addison & Barbara Vars	Wellesley Island, NY	Jeff & Janet Staples	Clayton, NY
Edward Gillett	St. Petersburg, FL	Thousand Islands Association	Clayton, NY
Anna Napoli	Wayland, MA	Dawn Rusho	Clayton, NY
Ted Meylor	Westfield, NJ	James & Kathleen Fenn	Wellesley Island, NY
Christopher Brown	Beltsville, MD	Lynn Pyke	Wellesley Island, NY
Louise Strayer	Tucson, AZ	Matt & Sara Elliott	Fayetteville, NY
Glorian Reinman	Clayton, NY	Norman & David Cushman	Watertown, NY
John & Pat Peach	Clinton, NY	Rozalia Berlin	Queens Village, NY
Bonnie Gray & Agnes Chrietberg	Richmond, KY	Libby Benson	Hingham, MA



Summer Highlights

Preregistration recommended.
Please call **(315) 482-2479** to register.



Scan to see the full
calendar of events on
our website

The Nature Center offers programs daily in July and August! For a full listing of our events calendar, please visit our [website](#) or [Facebook page](#), or give us a call. All programs meet at the Nature Center and are free unless otherwise stated.

RECURRING EVENTS

FULL MOON HIKE

Monday, July 3 // 8:45 p.m. *Buck Supermoon*
Tuesday, August 1 // 8:15 p.m. *Sturgeon Moon*
Wednesday, August 30 // 7:15 p.m. *Blue Moon*

Join us on our trails for monthly full moon hikes! Please wear sturdy hiking shoes, layered clothing for warmth, and bring your own headlamp and/or flashlight. Following the hike we'll host a bonfire and snacks! Program subject to weather. Please call to preregister.

RIVERKEEPER TRAINING & KAYAKING

Thursdays in July (except 7/13) and August // 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Come learn about how you can become a Riverkeeper volunteer while brushing up on your kayaking skills! Perfect for those new to kayaking or more experienced paddlers wanting a refresher on proper paddling technique. *Save The River* will help us learn about the various factors that threaten the health of our river and what you can do to help. Must be 18 or older to participate. Participants will receive a t-shirt and an invasive species guide. \$10 per person.

ADIRONDACK RAPTORS

Friday, July 7 // 1:00 p.m.
Friday, August 4 // 1:00 p.m.

Join Mark Manske of Adirondack Raptors and his educational birds for an exceptional opportunity to get up close and personal with live birds of prey!

TALL TALES FROM NATURE

Friday, July 21 // 10:00 a.m.
Thursday, August 3 // 10:00 a.m.

Listen to fun and exciting folktales from around the world, retold by professional storyteller Lynn Morgan. Stories are for all ages. Lynn encourages participants to be a part of her wonderful stories.

LIGHTS OUT

Friday, July 7 // 10:00 a.m.

Learn about the effects of light pollution in *Lights Out* by Marsha Diane Arnold. Marsha is an avid night sky lover and tells a story of a fox and beetle on a journey to find their beloved dark sky and twinkling lights. Readers will follow these two characters and meet several other friends along the way. After the story, take part in activities from the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).

MUSHROOM HIKE WITH JEAN FAHEY

Friday, July 21 // 1:00 p.m.

Jean Fahey, President of the CNY Mycological Society, will be at the Nature Center to teach about the wild mushrooms that grow on Wellesley Island. Learn how mushrooms grow, followed by a hike to look for wild mushrooms on our trails.

HAAS THE GREAT BLUE HERON: THE BEGINNING OF AN ADVENTURE

Saturday, July 22 // 10:00 a.m.

Join *Save The River* for a reading of *Haas the Great Blue Heron* written by local author Juliane B. Flora. This heartwarming story is about a father great blue heron who anxiously awaits the arrival of his chick. Learn about the fascinating world of this amazing bird and its habitat along the St. Lawrence River. After the reading, kids can explore a great blue heron nest, test their wingspan, and try out other fun hands-on heron-themed activities.

CYBERCHASE DAY

Friday, July 28 // 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 5 // 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Summer can be a great time to build your child's science, technology, engineering, and math (#STEM) skills in a way that doesn't require a lot of worksheets. The Nature Center has teamed up with WPBS to offer Cyberchase workshops and activities. Sign up to receive free videos and activities from the PBS KIDS show #Cyberchase, sent right to your phone! Text STARS to 30644 to sign up today and start getting texts!

CARE OF MAGICAL CREATURES

Monday, July 31 // 1:00 p.m.

Our creatures have been petrified! Help us find them all in this Hogwarts-inspired scavenger hunt. In celebration of Harry Potter's birthday, join us for this fun activity followed by a movie.

MY LITTLE BOOK OF PAINTED TURTLES

Friday, August 4 // 10:00 a.m.

My Little Book of Painted Turtles was written by local author Hope Irvin Marston. Youth can follow along as the story is read aloud, learning about a new family of painted turtles. In this story, kids learn what turtles eat, who their predators are, and how painted turtles protect themselves. They'll also learn the basic life cycle of a turtle; from egg to hatchling to adult. After the story, take part in an activity that explores how items sink or float.

SPIDER RYBAAK MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S FISHING DERBY

Saturday, August 19 // 9:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

Join the fun at our fishing derby for children 14 and under! Prizes for: Longest, Most Fish Caught, and "Luck of the Draw." BYO: Bring Your Own Bait & Tackle. Fish must be taken with rod and reel; all legal baits allowed. Derby fee is waived in honor of Spider Rybaak. Prizes sponsored by the Barbara & Daniel Butts Enrichment Fund.

The Friends of the Nature Center invite you to a
Night for Nature

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023, 5-9 P.M.

Minna Anthony Common Nature Center
Wellesley Island State Park

315.482.2479



Hors d'oeuvres by The Clipper Inn
Complimentary Wine & Beer
Music by The Shadows
Rick West's Birds of Prey
Silent Auction

Visit macnaturecenter.com to purchase tickets or call (315) 482-2479.



\$75 prepaid

\$85 at door (after 7/9)

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Thomas and Leah Neely



NNY Community Foundation • Uncle Sam Boat Tours • Griffith Energy
W.D. Bach Excavating & Marine Construction • Weldon and Weldon Financial Coaching
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3RD ANNUAL

FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER BENEFIT AUCTION



SUPPORTING MAC NATURE CENTER

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 15
6-9 PM**

*Cleaning out? Donate!
Looking for rare finds?
Mark your calendars!*

DONATION DROP-OFF

Dates & Times from 7/30-8/13*

Every **Friday**, 4:00-7:00pm

Every **Saturday & Sunday**, 9:00am-1:00pm

**Need to donate sooner? Donations accepted after 7/15.
Please call.*

Two Locations

1. **Wellesley Island State Park:** 44927 Cross Island Road (at parking lot before toll booth)
2. **Town of Alexandria Bay Recreation Center:**
39 Bolton Ave., Alexandria Bay

Volunteers will be there to assist you at drop-off.

Please Donate

New or gently used:

- cars & boats
- household items
- kitchenwares
- lawn & garden supplies
- working electronics
- antiques

For questions or to request pickup: (315) 482-2479

FACEBOOK LIVE AUCTION Tuesday, August 15, 6-9 pm

Preview Days at Alex Bay Rec Center: Saturday 8/12, 9:00am-1:00pm

Sunday 8/13, 9:00am-1:00pm

How to Bid:

1. Log onto Facebook. Search "Don Peck Auctioneer" and click on his page.
2. Live auction will begin at 6pm, click on video to expand.
3. Place bids in the "write a comment" section and hit enter. Good Luck!



Pick up: Wednesday & Thursday, August 16 & 17, 1:00-7:00pm @Alex Bay Rec Center

AUCTION SERVICES DONATED BY DON PECK, AUCTIONEER

www.facebook.com/Don-Peck-Auctioneer-110239281142170

New Faces at the Nature Center



Robb Myers, Friends of the Nature Center Board Member

Robb Myers grew up in western Pennsylvania in a small mountain town in the Laurel Highlands. From an early age, Robb was always involved in outdoor activities. Through college and into his early military career as an Army Officer, he spent a lot of time traveling and exploring different parts of the United States. Robb served for sixteen years on active duty, during which time he earned his Master's of Science in Environmental Science Policy and Management. He is an avid outdoorsman and conservationist. Robb and his wife Alyssa, returned to the North Country in 2019 after being stationed in the Midwest. Robb and Alyssa decided to retire in the area to continue raising their family. They have two younger children, William and Amelia. Their family enjoys the river, the lakes, and the boundless forests of the North Country. Robb is currently the Director of Operations for an environmental consulting firm in Alexandria Bay. He and his family look forward to many years of enjoying the area and continued support to the Nature Center and the local community.



Skylar Schmitt, Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward

My name is Skylar and I am the Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward this summer! I am originally from Croghan, NY and recently graduated from Clarkson University with a bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in anthropology. Ever since I was a kid I have loved nature and everything to do with the environment. I am excited to apply my passion for the environment into three different organizations (Minna Anthony Common Nature Center, Thousand Islands Land Trust, and Save The River) this summer. So far, my first two weeks at the Nature Center have been so much fun and I am so excited to see what is next on this summer-long adventure!



Seth Blair, Park Corps Environmental Education Steward in Gardening and Land Stewardship

Hello everyone! I'm Seth and I love sharing the outdoors with my son and fiancé. My son turned three this June and he loves riding on the golf cart to see all that nature and Lake Ontario has to offer. I like sitting on the beach with my family and I enjoy fishing with my friends. Upstate and Northern New York has always been my home, providing great opportunities for recreation and education. I am very excited to be giving back to the parks that made me who I am today.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center support environmental education programming that fosters conservation of local ecosystems, encourages outdoor recreation, and inspires our visitors to develop an increased respect for the natural world.

The Friends of the Nature Center, Inc. works in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.



**New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation**

**THE FRIENDS OF THE
NATURE CENTER, INC.**

BOARD MEMBERS

- Robin Colello-Poplaski, *President*
- Jeffrey Hanna, *Vice President*
- Jeffry Weldon, *Co-Treasurer*
- Jonathan White, *Co-Treasurer*
- Karen Allen, *Secretary*
- Lori Arnot
- Jane Arras
- Richard Gefell
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- Joseph Leskoske
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- Meredith Sullivan

WELLESLEY ISLAND STATE PARK

- Steven J. Cline, *Park Manager*
- Paula Torino, *Assistant Park Manager*

**MINNA ANTHONY COMMON
NATURE CENTER**

- Gabriela Padewska, *Director*
- Kimbric Cullen, *Education Coordinator*
- Darlene Sourwine, *Outreach Coordinator*
- Dana Higgins, *Visitor Services Assistant*
- Gary Phillips, *Maintenance Technician*

Mark Your Calendars!**NIGHT FOR NATURE****Thursday, July 13****5:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.**

Join the Friends of the Nature Center for the eighth annual *Night for Nature* gala! Live music, good company, all for a good cause! Complimentary beer, wine, hors d'oeuvres are included. Your generous support benefits our mission to continue Minna's legacy of education, conservation, and preservation. We look forward to seeing you! *Learn more on page 7.*

BENEFIT AUCTION**Tuesday, August 15****6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.**

Support the Nature Center by participating in the Friends of the Nature Center's third annual Facebook Live Benefit Auction. Donations will be accepted on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 7/30 until 8/13. Live auction will take place on August 15th from 6–9pm. Bidding starts promptly at 6:00 p.m. All proceeds support the Friends of the Nature Center Inc., the 501(c)(3) nonprofit partner of the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center. *Learn more on page 8.*



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

**Minna Anthony Common Nature Center**

Wellesley Island State Park
44927 Cross Island Road
Fineview, NY 13640
(315) 482-2479

HOURS OF OPERATION

Trails Open Sunrise to Sunset Daily

May–October (Operating Season):

Nature Center open daily
9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.*

***Extended Hours in July & August**

Saturdays and Sundays
9:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.



Thank you, **The UPS Store** of Alexandria Bay,
for your quality printing services.