

summer2019

friends

of the cache river watershed



Like what you see here?  
*Tell a friend!*

Western chorus frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*), photo by Michael Jeffords

# Cache Annual Meeting

AUG 29  
6.30-8.30pm



## Featured Presentation: The Spread of the Nine-Banded Armadillo

As the nine-banded armadillo (*Dasyus novemcinctus*) becomes a more familiar presence in southern Illinois, questions have arisen about its impact on the local habitat and its endemic fauna. Carly Haywood, a master's student in zoology who conducts her research at the parasitology lab at Southern Illinois University, will discuss this fascinating creature's general biology, its journey north and its potential as a carrier of Chagas disease and leprosy.

### PLUS...

- Complimentary dessert and beverages
- Door prizes
- Special deals on Cache River merchandise
- Update on Friends' projects and activities
- Presentation of 2019 Cache Champion Award

*Come one, come all! Friends of the Cache members – come and bring a non-member friend!*

Carbondale Civic Center, Room 116  
200 S. Illinois Avenue, Carbondale

(located on South 51, in between Route 13 East and West)

Free evening parking is available at meters along Illinois Avenue and in lot on west side of Civic Center.

To rsvp, please contact Paula Havlik at [phavlik@illinois.edu](mailto:phavlik@illinois.edu) or 217-649-4326.

To learn more about the Friends, like "Friends of the Cache River Watershed" on Facebook, or email [friendsofthecacheriver@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthecacheriver@gmail.com)



# What's Next

## Summer in the Swamp Hike

*Saturday, August 10, 9-11am |  
Lower Cache Access, CRNSA*

Guided hike to identify plants, birds, butterflies and other wildlife active in Buttonland Swamp.

## Six Years in the Illinois Territory: 1812-1818

*Saturday, August 10, 10-11am  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Learn about events and colorful characters in the years leading up to Illinois statehood.

## Happy 75th Birthday, Smokey Bear

*Saturday, August 17, 10am-noon  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Visit with firefighters, see fire engines, meet Smokey Bear and more!

## Sunday Story Hour: Animal Tracks

*Sunday, August 18, 2-3pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Nature-themed story and activity for children ages 3-6; please call the Wetlands Center at 618-657-2064 to pre-register, so staff can prepare activities for each child.

Kids to the Cache, sponsored by Friends of the Cache River Watershed, provides \$250 grants in the spring and fall to help local schools cover the cost of field trips to the Cache River State Natural Area and Cypress

## Reptiles in the Neighborhood

*Saturday August 24, 1-4pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center  
Heron Pond Trail, CRSNA*

Up-close interaction with reptiles native to southernmost Illinois, followed by optional herping hike at Heron Pond.

## Beat the Heat Summer Movie Series

*Sunday, August 25, 2-3pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

This episode of PBS's "Rivers of Life" features the Amazon River.

## Cache Annual Meeting

*Thursday, August 29, 6:30-8:30pm  
Carbondale Civic Center*

Food, fun, program on armadillos and lots of Cache camaraderie! Please RSVP to Paula Havlik at [phavlik@illinois.edu](mailto:phavlik@illinois.edu) or 217-649-4326.

## Take a Stroll in Section 8 Woods

*Saturday, August 31, 9-11am  
Section 8 Woods Nature Preserve,  
CRNSA*

Wear rubber boots on this hike beyond the boardwalk for a close-up look at the State Champion Water Tupelo.

## Nature Fest at Cache River Days

*Saturday, September 7, 9am-4pm  
Ullin Ball Park, Ullin, IL*

Live wildlife exhibits, nature activities, Kids' Corner and more. Registration for free canoe tours begins **August 5**: call Cypress Creek at 618-634-2231.

Creek National Wildlife Refuge. The deadline to apply for Fall 2019 is **September 30**. For more information, please contact Fran Wachter at [franceswachter@gmail.com](mailto:franceswachter@gmail.com).

## Which Grass Is Which?

*Saturday, September 7, 10am-noon  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Learn how to identify 30 different grasses of southern Illinois. (Program will be repeated October 3, 2-4pm.)

## Tupelo Trail Hike

*Saturday, September 14, 9am-noon  
Tupelo Trail, CRSNA*

Moderately difficult 2.5-mile guided hike through rolling upland forest and the low-lying swamp of Little Black Slough.

## Monarch Phenomenon

*Saturday, September 21, 10am-4pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Learn about monarchs' natural history 10-11am, then help capture, tag and release butterflies for the Monarch Watch Association.

## Sunday Story Hour: Monarchs

*Sunday, September 22, 2-3pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

Nature-themed story and activity for children ages 3-6; please pre-register at 618-657-2064, so staff can prepare activities for each child.

## Beat the Heat Summer Movie Series

*Sunday, September 29, 2-3pm  
Cache River Wetlands Center*

This episode of PBS's "Rivers of Life" features the Mississippi River.





Back row L-R: Braydon Coleman, Mark Dover, Briella Henderson, Brett Casper, Callie Mowery, Karen Mangan, Liz Jones, Brian Miller. Front row L-R: Malachi Lentz, Joe Whaley.

## Student Opportunities at Cypress Creek

**Cypress Creek** National Wildlife Refuge and Friends of the Cache are grateful for the support of partner organizations that help provide opportunities for students to work and learn about natural resource careers. These programs offer hands-on learning and skill development for interested students, as well as much needed assistance for natural resource staff. Student involvement this year included the following:

### Youth Conservation Corps

The Youth Conservation Corps is a summer employment program for students to accomplish needed conservation work while developing an understanding of and appreciation for the environment and natural heritage. This year's summer crew at Cypress Creek hailed from Goreville, Villa Ridge, Dongola and Belknap. Breanna Stout returned for another year as youth crew leader, joined by crew members Mark Dover, Briella Henderson and Brayden Coleman. With its great teamwork, this crew accomplished a tremendous amount, including habitat restoration for pollinators, maintenance of visitor access points, forest inventory, beaver dam and debris removal, facility repair, trail construction and boundary posting.

### Internships

The Refuge was pleased to partner with Shawnee Community College (SCC) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program by providing work experience in natural resource management. Malachi Lentz filled this niche over the summer, assisting with overall Refuge operations, including biology, resource management, education and outreach. Malachi will return to SCC for his associate's degree with hopes to further his education in aquatic ecology.

### AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps members for 2019-20 include Brett Casper and Callie Mowery. Brett is a returning AmeriCorps member and a recent SCC graduate. Callie will complete her associate's degree at SCC and plans to continue her studies in animal science. Brett and Callie share a passion for the natural environment and connecting people with nature. They are excited about working with area schools, as well as assisting Refuge staff and Friends members with conservation and restoration work in the Cache River Wetlands.

## Cache River Days

**Volunteers** are still needed for Nature Fest at Cache River Days, **Saturday, September 7, 9am-4pm** at the ball park in Ullin, Illinois. You'll be working in one of the festival's most popular areas, Kids' Corner, helping with nature arts and crafts. If interested, please contact Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at 618-634-2231. This full day of fun for all ages includes live wildlife displays, nature activities, free canoe tours courtesy of Cypress Creek, and more. Call Cypress Creek to sign up for limited-space canoe tours: registration opens on **August 5**.





# Earl Metheny

proudly displays his very first catch, at the free fishing clinic sponsored by IDNR at the Cache River Wetlands Center in June.



Photo: Cheryl Metheny



Photo: Keith McMullen

Several sightings of a solitary aninga (*Anhinga anhinga*) were reported in the Cache during the month of July. This rare visitor to southern Illinois is often confused with the more common double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), because of its similar size and shape. The aninga's tail is wider and much longer, and its bill is pointed, while the bill of the cormorant has a hooked tip.

## You may have noticed

a sudden increase in the number of programs this summer at the Cache River Wetlands Center. That's because site interpreter Molie Oliver has another pair of helping hands – conservation education representative Kimberly Rohling. This is the second year that Rohling has served in the six-month position, and she has truly hit the ground running, adding 20 new programs to the mix for summer and fall. Rohling is pictured leading **Sunday Story Hour**, which features a nature-themed story for children ages 3 to 6, paired with a game, hands-on

photo: Kim Rohling

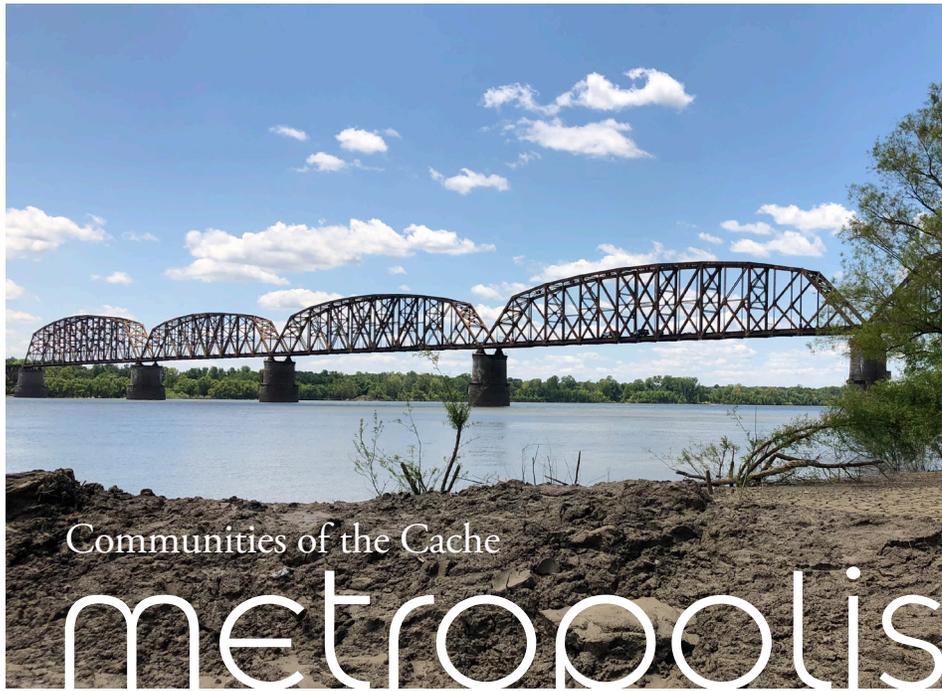


activity or outside nature walk. Upcoming story hours, scheduled on the second-to-last Sunday of each month from 2-3pm, will focus on animal tracks (August 18), monarchs (September 22), bats (October 20) and trees (November 17).

## Do You Know Who I Am?

Answer on page 5





Communities of the Cache

# metropolis

The county seat of **Massac County** can trace its origins to two adjacent pioneer settlements, Massac City and Metropolis City, both platted in 1839 by William McBane and J.H. Wilcox. The men chose the name Metropolis, which means “Mother City,” because they believed it to be the best potential site for a bridge across the Ohio River. The first courthouse was built in the 1840’s. Metropolis City was incorporated as a town in 1845, followed by Metropolis (the former Massac City) in 1859. The two communities united under the present name in 1892.

The first important business in Metropolis was a cooperage that



*Robert Stroud, the famed “Birdman of Alcatraz,” is buried at the Masonic Cemetery on North Avenue.*

employed forty barrel makers for sugar, whiskey and lard. During the 1870’s and 80’s, the renowned firm of Cutting

and Woods built many steamboats, and George and Edward Cowling operated a business running the boats to and from Paducah and Cairo. By the 1890’s, Metropolis was the most prosperous city in Little Egypt. The Irvin S. Cobb Bridge (pictured at left), built in 1917 by the Burlington Railroad to connect Metropolis and Paducah, was considered one of the most significant engineering feats of its era.

Fort Massac State Park, the site of American, British and French forts dating back to 1757, was designated the first state park in the U.S. in 1908. Famous residents of Metropolis include orator Robert Ingersoll (“The Great Agnostic”), who taught school in 1853 in the Old Cedar House at 4th and Ferry Streets; and pioneering African-American author and filmmaker Oscar Micheaux. Robert Stroud, the famed “Birdman of Alcatraz,” is buried at the Masonic Cemetery on North Avenue. In 1972, Metropolis was declared the official hometown of Superman by the Illinois General Assembly. A 15-foot bronze statue, erected in front of the Court House in 1993, presides over a four-day “Superman Celebration” held in early June each year.

*“Communities of the Cache” highlights a different town in each issue. If you’d like to share historical photos and tidbits about your community, please contact newsletter editor Paula Havlik at [phavlik@illinois.edu](mailto:phavlik@illinois.edu).*

Photo: Tony Gerard

## Do You Know Who I Am?

Answer from page 4

**Horned passalus** (*Odontotaenius disjunctus*): I’m also known as a bess beetle or a patent leather beetle. While most

of my family lives in the New World tropics, I can be found all across the eastern U.S. I like to live in well-decomposed hardwood logs, where I feed on the decaying wood. If you pick me up gently, I may fuss about it by making a sound known as *stridulation*. Adult bess beetles can “talk” to each other with 14 different sounds, and even our larvae communicate this way!



# Notes from My 3x5 Notebook

By Susan Post



**Amaryllis**, that showy holiday tradition, has two relatives in southern Illinois – yellow star grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*), found on dry sandstone bluffs during the spring, and spider lily (*Hymenocallis caroliniana*). While the Shawnee National Forest is a good place to look for yellow star, spider lily is found in the Cache. Like

its holiday relative, spider lily has long, linear leaves that appear by late spring. Look for them along the Heron Pond Trail. When Michael and I first encountered spider lily in the spring many years ago, we wrongly assumed that, since the leaves were already present, the plant must bloom in June or July. However, it took three trips, beginning in July and subsequently

two weeks apart, before we finally saw the plant flower. Spider lilies bloom in mid-August in the Cache. But, some years, the plant simply disappears without flowering. In these infrequent occurrences, the culprit is the rare Spanish dagger moth (*Xanthopastis regnatrix*), whose caterpillars, pictured at right above, totally defoliate the early-appearing spider lily leaves.



*Palm warbler (Setophaga palmarum) photographed by Jan Sundberg at 2018 mini-sit.*

## Fall Migration Mini-Sit

Birders, it's time to gather your teammates for this year's Fall Migration Mini-Sit, scheduled for **Saturday, October 5, 9am-noon**. Birdwatchers at all levels are welcome to sit back, relax and observe the fall migration in the Cache River State Natural Area. Teams will sit in their designated 17-foot circles, tallying all the birds they can identify by sight or sound during the three-hour period. All data will be recorded on eBird hotspots. Bring lawn chairs, binoculars, scopes, cameras and snacks to enjoy the morning. Afterwards, we will host a potluck at the Cache River Wetlands Center; feel free to bring a dish to share. Passers-by are welcome to visit the Wetlands Center that day to learn about open access points. To reserve your team's count circle, call 618-657-2064.

**Volunteers**, here's your chance to provide natural history education, lead crafts, games and other activities, and maybe even play the role of a misunderstood swamp critter. It's all happening on **October 27 at 2019 Boo at the Slough!** At last year's inaugural event, costumed volunteers portrayed 15 different critters of the Cache, as trick-or-treaters and their families trekked the Egret Slough Trail. Volunteers are needed to make, donate or borrow costumes, plan activities and portray critters. If you'd like to be part of the "Boo Crew," please contact Kimberly Rohling at 618-657-2064 or [Kimberly.Rohling@Illinois.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Rohling@Illinois.gov).



*Left: Mass of Cope's gray tree frog eggs attached to a small submerged branch.*

# Vernal Pools

## Essential Wetland Habitats

*A three-part series by Paula Havlik*

### Part III: Creating Habitat

In Parts I and II of this series, we discussed the critical role of vernal pools, which provide a fish-free breeding habitat for many amphibians, crustaceans and insects, and how to select a site and construct a pool on your property. Now, let's talk about a vital, final step that might be easy to overlook: creating the appropriate habitat for the residents of your new pool to thrive during multiple stages of their development.

Part of the work of creating habitat will already be done if you've selected a good location for your pool. As we discussed in Part I, since the vast majority of amphibians born in the pool will spend their adult lives nearby, we chose a clearing surrounded by woods with a semi-open canopy, and plenty of thickets, cavity trees, fallen logs and trees with good bark for hiding.

Once the pool is built, be sure to replace any topsoil, native leaf litter, sticks and stones around the shore. Sticks, logs and stones should also be added to the water itself, both fully and partially submerged. Along with aquatic plants, these additions will provide places to perch and to hide, and, perhaps most importantly, to attach egg masses. As we quickly discovered, even the smallest twigs that fall into the water may be used to anchor eggs. Also, logs, sticks and emergent plants provide "bridges" for maturing amphibians when it's time to exit the pool.

As soon as possible, add native plantings around the shore and above the waterline of your pool, to discourage invasives from gaining a foothold.

Native vegetation not only provides habitat and cover, but also helps stabilize the soil and prevent erosion of the banks. Think about plants that provide a variety of potential habitats – emergent aquatics, reeds and rushes, bushy plants that hang down into the water, and so on.

Because we needed to wait a few months to make sure our pool was going to hold water without an artificial liner, we won't be adding our native plantings until this coming fall. The following plants have been recommended for our site by Ozark Koala Ecosystem Services, the company that constructed our pool.

*continued on next page*

*Below left: Our vernal pool as it appeared in July 2019.*

*Below right: Virginia bluebell, a spring ephemeral that thrives in moist, loamy soil.*



# Vernal Pools cont.

## Emergent aquatics:

- American sweet flag (*Acorus americanus*)
- Spatterdock (*Nuphar advena*)
- Lizards tail (*Saururus cernuus*)
- Pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*)

## Plants that thrive in wet, mucky soil:

- Scouring rush (*Equisetum hyemale*)
- Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
- Winged monkey flower (*Mimulus alatus*)
- Copper iris (*Iris fulva*)
- Spotted Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*)

## Plants that prefer moist, loamy soil:

- Common elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)
- Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)
- Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- Great blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
- Orange jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*)

Early in the process, Jeremy Schumacher of Ozark Koala warned us that, quote, “Habitat isn’t pretty.” He suggested we adjust our thinking to focus on the quality of the habitat we are creating and all the creatures who will benefit, rather than worrying too much about aesthetics. Good advice, since a vernal pool in its dry stage (which we haven’t yet experienced, during this exceptionally wet spring and summer) is not necessarily a thing of beauty.

So far, though, we have found our vernal pool to be both beautiful and an endless source of joy. We’ve seen multiple generations of tadpoles grow and thrive, and caught that magic moment when a tiny, perfectly formed Cope’s gray tree froglet emerged from the water for the first time. We’ve encountered recently-emerged froglets and toadlets in our woods, fields, rock gardens and even hanging out in our basement. We’ve watched dragonflies dipping gracefully to lay their eggs in the pool and been serenaded at night by the ethereal piping of American toads, the rasping of western chorus frogs, the bleats of tree frogs and the distinctive “gunk, gunk” of green frogs.



*Joe Pye weed, good choice for a tall, bushy planting on the shore of a vernal pool.*

As we continue to work on improving habitat quality, we’ll hope to attract salamanders and other wildlife that rely on vernal pools to complete their life cycles. Based on our experience, where a vernal pool is concerned, be it large or small, simple or elaborate – if you build it, they will come!

## Become a Friend

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporting  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Lifetime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member      | <input type="checkbox"/> Current Member    |   |

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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To remain budget and environment-friendly, most communications are sent via e-mail.

Please let us know if you need to receive information via U.S. mail.

All contributions are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to Friends of the Cache River Watershed and mail to: 8885 State Rt. 37 South, Cypress, IL 62923.



**The  
Cache River  
Autotour**

**Exploring the Cache** this summer? Don't forget to pick up a free copy of the Cache Auto Tour map and brochure, available at the Cache River Wetlands Center and the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge office. Created by Friends of the Cache, the auto tour features a wealth of historical sites and natural wonders. You can also download a digital version at [www.friendsofthecache.org](http://www.friendsofthecache.org) -- just click on PROJECTS and scroll down to CACHE RIVER AUTO TOUR.