

# NEWSLETTER

Summer Issue

JUNE 26, 2018



*Educator Kim Cullen teaching a class from Noah's Ark Pre-school*

Hosting school groups is such a joy for the Nature Center. Many children get to interact with nature for the first time on a field trip to our Park. Most are excited, some are nervous, but by the end of the trip, almost all the students want to come back.

Our main goal with these field trips is to inspire an appreciation for nature. While we're at it, we add in some educational content consistent with current New York State Science Standards. This season we started our school programming in December 2017 and will end in June. There are classes almost every day through May and June. By the end of the season, we will have educated nearly 2000 students! We never could have done this

without the help of our wonderful volunteers, SCA members, and the Education Committee.

Field trip season has just ended but we are already planning ahead for next school year. Signups for next year's school groups officially begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>. With the help of the Connect Kids to Parks Field Trip Grant, many schools can send classes to the Nature Center for free. This wonderful New York State grant reimburses schools for their trips to help ensure our children can foster meaningful connections with the outdoors.

Field trip season is extremely busy, but it is so rewarding to lead programs for school groups. We hope we've inspired some young naturalists!

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON SERIES - ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED JULY 2, 1932

## Plots of Grass for Beautifying

### Used to Advantage Near Flower Beds

#### Used Also in Decorating

*Long, Uncut Grass in Cities and Villages Detracts from Pleasantness – Fields of Timothy in Country Please*

Fields of tasseled timothy undulating gently as the wind blows over it are one of the pleasing sights of the early summer, but long uncut grass in the city has not the same attractiveness. Being out of place there it loses its attractiveness and one unclipped yard can spoil the effect of a whole street of well-kept lawns.

Long green ribbons of closely clipped grass edging the road make always the most beautiful streets. Trampled, muddy, uncut curbs outside the walks detract much from the lawns within, however well kept. Some villages have discovered this added attractiveness and even on vacant lots require a strip be kept mowed next to the walk.

A somewhat newer idea is the use of grass in the garden. First this took the form of grass paths between the flower beds, but now it often becomes the central motif, a plot of grass which serves by its smooth greenness to set off the edging flowers to the best advantage. It gives a place to walk comfortably about, or to sit and enjoy the garden. The idea of growing flowers, like vegetables merely to use in the house has quite passed out of style.

Flowers in the best planned gardens now serve to add interest and beauty, to give a colorful edge to the grass mats, to but a touch of bright and harmonious color here and there.

If your garden has not yet a smooth velvety grass rug, a seat, and a bit of shade where you may sit and enjoy the fruits of your labors then do incorporate such a spot at once and see how much pleasure it will give you.

- Reprinted with permission from the Watertown Daily Times.

## ART FOR NATURE



*Artists painting outside during the plein air Art for Nature event on June 6<sup>th</sup>*

Thank you to Dani Baker, creator of Cross Island Farms' Enchanted Edible Forest Garden, for sponsoring the first Art for Nature in the gardens. Seventeen artists, recruited by Jan Byington, painted in the Plein Air event during the day. Their work was for sale during a wine and cheese reception that evening to benefit the Capital Campaign at the MAC Nature Center. Thank you to the public who came to support this event and to Dani and Jan for coordinating it!

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## FROM THE DIRECTOR



*A section of our newly cleaned and repaired Geology wall*



*Life-sized heron*

We have some talented people working at the Nature Center this year! Our Student Conservation Association (SCA) members have been here since January, and our seasonal park staff recently joined us. During this busy period of transition and renewal, the contributions of our staff are vital. I want to acknowledge their dedication and draw attention to what they have accomplished.

SCA member Andrew Fuellner has been revitalizing our geology wall and creating a garden of native grasses in the space between the wall and our building. He uncovered the true colors of the geology wall with a power washer, then painted, varnished, and mounted the signs that correspond with the rocks. He is building a meandering stone path through the grass garden that will lead to one of our named benches.

SCA member Rosie Friend has been working closely with Kim during our spring field trip season. She teaches school groups almost every day. To help guide other teachers, she created docent cards for our butterfly unit and is creating fact sheets to go with our pelts and skulls. These cards should help future staff and volunteers deliver consistent information when giving fur talks or leading school programs.

SCA member Dana Reinstein has been diligently taking pictures of programs, exhibits, and projects since her arrival in January. Dana, a fantastic photographer, took many of the pictures you see in this newsletter. She formats the newsletter and manages our social media presence.

SCA member Michelle Knuepfer painted a beautiful life-sized heron that will be used in future programs. She has also been busy designing the bags that will line North Field Loop during our Luminaria Hike in October. It takes a lot of work to cut designs into over 500 bags!

Three wonderful seasonals, Milo Beebe, Chelsea Broughton, and Kara Coon, returned this year. They jumped right in as soon as they arrived. Chelsea is working to revitalize the kiosk across from our main entrance by repainting the map and designing new materials to display in the cases. The phoebe nesting in the kiosk tried to attack her at first, but now Chelsea has befriended the little bird. Milo has been making new plant identification signs for our butterfly house that are just gorgeous. Kara has been busy drafting exciting new summer programs and activities, including a Scrappers Activity Book all about our resident Eastern chipmunk.

Lauren Eggleston is our only new seasonal staff member this year. She has taken over caring for our animals, is building a small trailside library of field guides and children's books, and is helping Russ to rebuild the cast iron bench that sits up on the Narrows Trail. Lauren is full of good ideas and is always willing to help.

Stop by the Nature Center soon to see what else our wonderful staff is up to!

- Molly Farrell, Environmental Educator II

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

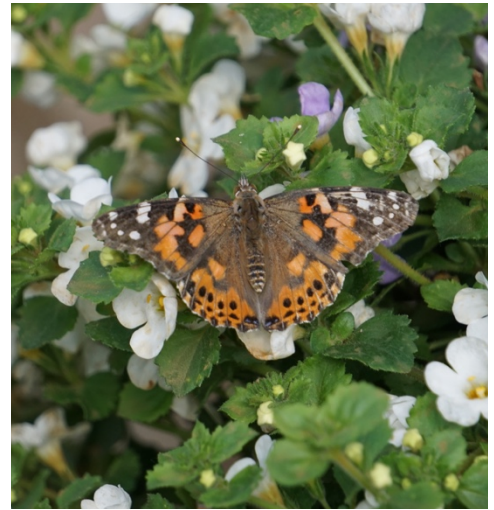
## SCENES FROM AROUND THE CENTER



*1<sup>st</sup> grade student releasing butterflies raised by his class*



*Kerry Roberge with Janessa Richmond, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher from Sherman Elementary*



*Painted lady butterfly in our Butterfly House*



*The group of volunteers who helped with I Love My Park Day on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you!*

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE



*Matthew Elliott and Stefanie Kring*

The Northern New York Community Foundation awarded a total grant of \$75,000 in support of the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center's capital campaign. The Foundation provided a \$50,000 grant to help with enhancements to exhibits and educational opportunities at the nature center. A \$25,000 matching grant was also awarded to help establish and build an endowment fund for the organization at the Community Foundation. Each contribution to the endowment fund will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$25,000. The endowment fund at the Community Foundation will be a permanent, charitable fund to support the Nature Center's mission and work in perpetuity.

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## THE FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER

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 following members joined or renewed their commitment recently:**

Donald & Linda Blauvelt	Thousand Island Park, NY
Tom & Irene Carman	Wellesley Island, NY
Richard & Helen Fuhrman	Theresa, NY
Mike & Amy Phelps	Naples, FL
Elizabeth Benson & Timothy Cummings	Hingham, MA
Norm & Laurie Itjen	Elba, NY
Gregory Smith	Rome, NY
JR Miller	Alexandria Bay, NY
Dani Baker	Wellesley Island, NY
Becky & Frederick Wollin	Clinton, NY
John Tucker	Cape Vincent, NY
Heather & Jonathan White	Watertown, NY
Tom & Mary McNeil	Wellesley Island, NY
Bill & Tina Siebels	Gouverneur, NY
Tara Parmiter	Brooklyn, NY
Susan Mowers	Wellesley Island, NY
Chase Miller	New York, NY
Andrew Kane	Liverpool, NY
Janice and Michael Douglass	Cortland, NY
Hunter Horton	Wellesley Island, NY

**Thank you!**

The Friends of the Nature Center Board wants to acknowledge the five Board members whose terms have ended. Kerry Roberge and Barbara Butts have served as President and Vice-President, respectively, for 21 years. Jane Arras, Nancy Boynton, and Lynn Morgan have each served for 11 years. They have devoted much time and effort with the current renovation, writing grants, assisting with school groups, and much more. Thank you for your many contributions.



Like us on Facebook for real-time updates and the calendar of events!  
Minna Anthony Common Nature Center – Friends  
<https://www.facebook.com/MACNatureCenter/>



Follow us on Instagram for entertaining photos!  
[@friendsofmacnaturecenter](#) and [@scrappers\\_the\\_chipmunk](#)

### **The Board of Directors for The Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.**

Matthew Elliot

*President*

Barbara Eldridge

*Vice President*

Andrew Kane

*Treasurer*

Joseph Leskoske

*Secretary*

Jeffrey Hanna

Hunter Horton

Sue Johnson

Stefanie Kring

Chase Miller

JR Miller

Susan Mowers

Taylor Robbins

Jeffrey Weldon

Heather White

Jonathan White

### **Park Employees**

Steve Cline

*Park Manager*

Molly Farrell

*Nature Center Director*

Kimbrlie Cullen

*Program Coordinator*

### **Friends of the Nature Center Employees**

Darlene Sourwine

*Volunteer Coordinator*

Patty Davis

*Bookkeeper*

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## RENOVATION UPDATE

When the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center opened in August of 1969 in Wellesley Island State Park, those in attendance at the dedication of the building hoped it would endure long into the future. They hoped the Nature Center would stand as a dedication to Minna's love for education in nature. If Minna were alive today, I have no doubt that she would be astonished and humbled by her legacy.

Nearly fifty years later, the Nature Center is still thriving. This is not just because the walls were built strong and the roof sturdy, though that certainly helps, nor is it only to the credit of those dedicated to the Center's success, though, again, that's awfully important to have. No, this sort of longevity comes from the magical combination of a good place, wonderful



*Interactive touchscreen game about animal sounds in the Wetland Discovery Room*

people to breathe life into it, and a community to utilize the space. People must not only wish for success, but roll up their sleeves and help make it happen.

This combination is exactly what we have here at the Nature Center. It's why we are well into our second and even third generation of families who visit every summer. Parents and grandparents are eager to share their own childhood experiences with their little ones. The Nature Center has become a place that weaves families and nature into a beautiful tapestry of memories, tradition, and hope for the future.

It has been a joy to help take the Nature Center into its next half-century. Working alongside the Friends, a host of wonderful



*3<sup>rd</sup> graders from Dexter Elementary exploring the new exhibits*

donors from the community, the park staff at Wellesley Island, the State Parks Regional Maintenance Crew, and the Regional Capital Facilities Unit for State Parks, I had the chance to witness firsthand how much talent, energy, creativity, and love has been poured into this building.

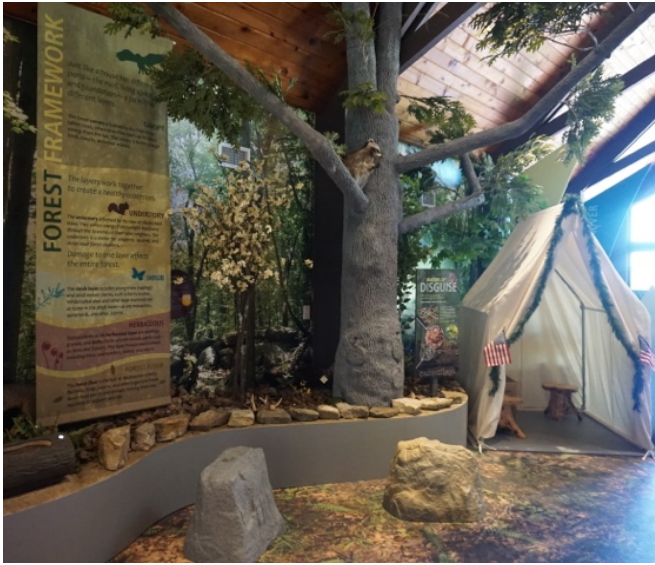
The renovation design was painstakingly created to by our regional engineers, and the actual renovations showcase by our Regional Maintenance Crew. Their unsung talent has been invaluable to this process. Meanwhile, our Friends have been working hard on a capital



*The River exhibit with the drivable S.S. Minna and a fishing game*

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## RENOVATION UPDATE



*The Forest exhibit with an enterable tent and taxidermy animals camouflaged in the tree and surrounding area*

campaign to raise funds for and develop our new exhibits. And of course, our donors have been steadfast throughout. I would like to thank them for the vote of confidence that came with each gift. Every bit helped make it possible for this project to move forward.



*The Wetland exhibit featuring a beaver pelt, skull, and log chewing*

Our goal throughout the conceptual development right up until the moment when the last exhibits were installed has been to engage visitors. We want children and adults to feel inspired with a love for the outdoors and the call to become stewards of the Earth. Despite all the changes, we've tried to preserve the things that so many loved about the old Nature Center. Many people who come in to see the new space say that it still "feels the same." We love to hear that it reminds them of their childhood.

It's an honor for us to become part of the fabric of your family's history. We hope that



*Rose Harvey, New York State Parks commissioner, giving a speech during the ribbon cutting ceremony*

going forward, all visitors can use the Nature Center as a gateway to the outdoors. That they may find a sense of peace, rejuvenation, and even awe at the realization that we are all connected to each other and our environment. We hope you leave feeling more connected to the rhythms of the natural world, and to your friends and loved ones too. We hope you will join us as we embark on this exciting next chapter of the journey for the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center. Onward with joy!

- Peyton A. Taylor, Regional Director

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SUMMER PROGRAMS 2018

315-482-2479

## **Voyageur Canoe Program**

*Most weekdays beginning July 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00am-11:00am*

**\$4 for adults, \$2 for children under 13**

Come and spend a few hours helping to paddle our 36-foot Voyageur Canoe while learning about the history of the Voyageurs and the ecology of the St. Lawrence River. We will also have evening canoe tours on some Thursdays and Fridays. Pre-registration is required. Must be 5 years or older to participate. To safely paddle the canoe, we need to have 8 passengers 18 years or older. Call the Nature Center at (315)-482-2479 to register or for additional information.

## **Kayaking with Molly**

*Most Fridays in July and August 9:30am-12:00pm*

**\$10 per person**

Participate in an American Canoe Association (ACA) Smartstart Kayaking class, look for signs of wildlife, and learn about River ecology as we paddle along the shorelines of Wellesley Island State Park. The ACA's Smartstart paddler orientation is perfect for anyone new to kayaking and will reiterate proper paddling technique for more experienced paddlers. Feel free to bring your own kayak, but we have kayaks for all participants. The program will start in our parking lot. Pre-registration is required. Must be 13 or older to participate. If you need to rent a kayak, please register before the day of the program.

## **Story Walks**

*Thursdays; July 5<sup>th</sup>, August 2<sup>nd</sup> 10:00am*

Hike through woods looking for pages of a book that have been hidden along the trail. Explore the trails while traveling through a storybook! The books will vary from week to week so you can come all summer!

## **Westy's Birds of Prey**

*Fridays; July 6<sup>th</sup>, July 27<sup>th</sup>, Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup> 10:00am*

Rick West will be returning this summer with his live birds of prey. Rick's programs will be held at the Park Pavilion located near our marina. This program is made possible due to funds from renting our boats.

## **Spider's Fishing Programs**

*Saturdays; July 7<sup>th</sup>, July 21<sup>st</sup>, August 11<sup>th</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup>*

Basic Fishing: **11:00am to 1:00pm**

Basic Fly Fishing: **1:30pm to 3:30pm**

Join Spider on the Nature Center dock as he shares his knowledge and love of fishing. Spider brings a limited number of fishing poles, hooks, bobbers, and worms. If possible, please bring your own tackle to allow for more participation in the program. Spider's classes are free thanks to the support of the Barbara and Daniel Butts Enrichment Fund.

## **Slash Bash at Keewaydin State Park**

*Saturday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am-3:00pm*

Join us at the Keewaydin pool to celebrate summer. Participate in three noodle races for the chance to be the 2018 Keewaydin State Park Noodle Champion! Prizes will be awarded to the top three racers. We will also have other games and fun activities for the whole family!

## **Yoga on the Lawn**

*Wednesdays; July 11<sup>th</sup>, July 25<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, August 15<sup>th</sup>, August 29<sup>th</sup> 10:30am*

Come join Barb Eldridge for a gentle yoga class on the side lawn of the Nature Center! Yogis of all abilities are welcome. Bring a mat if you have one! We will have a few spares.

## **Trail Tales**

*Thursdays; July 12<sup>th</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup> 10:00am*

Perfect for pre-school aged children (3-5 years old), accompanied by an adult. A naturalist will first read a story or two to the children and then lead the group in an activity (a hike or craft, weather dependent) themed to match the stories.

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

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SUMMER PROGRAMS 2018

315-482-2479

## **Summer Concert on the Lawn – The Buskers**

*Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup> 4:00pm-6:00pm*

Join local musician, Kathy Sommer and her band *The Buskers* for a summer concert at the Park Pavilion. Lawn chairs and leashed dogs are welcome.

## **Discovering Wild Mushrooms – Hike and Discussion**

*Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm*

Learn about many different species of mushrooms, and search for them along our trails with Jean Fahey, President of the Central New York Mycological Society.

## **Children's Fishing Derby**

*Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> 12:00-3:30pm*

**\$2 entrance fee**

Join the fun at our fishing derby for children 14 and under! Prizes will be awarded for the longest, heaviest, and most fish caught. Fish must be taken with rod and reel; all legal baits will be allowed. Pre-registration is appreciated.

## **Tall Tales from Nature**

*Thursday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, and*

*Thursdays; August 9<sup>th</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm*

Listen to professional storyteller, Lynn Morgan, tell engaging folktales about nature from around the world. Her tall tales are interactive, involving songs and audience participation. Lynn will entertain the whole family!

## **Clarkson Seminar Series**

*Saturdays; July 21<sup>st</sup>, August 11<sup>th</sup>, September 8<sup>th</sup>,*

*October 13<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30pm*

Featured speakers will include professors, scientists, and environmental advocates. Topics will include St. Lawrence River health, environmental economics, and species of local concern. Light refreshments and snacks will be

served, and there will be social time before and after the seminar to talk with the featured speaker.

## **Boater Safety Course**

*Sundays; July 22<sup>nd</sup>, August 19<sup>th</sup> 8:00am-4:00pm*

**\$10 certification fee for people 18 and older (optional)**

The course will be held at the Park Pavilion down by the marina. Adult and children are welcome to participate. Please call Gary Kocher at 315-486-5230 to pre-register. Pre-registration is required and space is limited.

## **Thousand Island Woodturners**

*Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-2:00pm*

Come watch a demonstration of the fundamentals of woodturning. You can go home with a handmade pencil and more!

## **Otter Creek Community Picnic**

*Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup> 5-7pm*

**\$12 for TILT supporters, \$15 general admission, children under 12 are free**

The Thousand Islands Land Trust (TILT) invites you to the third annual community picnic! Will include live music, food, and activities and games for children. TILT would appreciate pre-registration: Sign up on the TILT website, call the office at [315-686-5345](tel:315-686-5345), or email [events@tilandtrust.org](mailto:events@tilandtrust.org).

## **Edible Plant Hike**

*Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> 10:00am*

Join Catherine Landis (PhD) from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry for an edible plant hike. Learn how to identify some of the edible plants on Wellesley Island and discover why they are important. Distance hiked will be about 1 mile, depending on participants.

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



*8<sup>th</sup> grade student Emma Graveline planting pumpkin seeds*

This is the beginning of a great relationship. The Alexandria Bay Central School's agriculture teacher, Matt Greene, and his agriculture class have agreed to collaborate with the MAC Nature Center to plant and grow our 500 Autumn Festival pumpkins. They offered to have the class start our pumpkin seedlings in the school's greenhouse!

When the seeds have germinated, and are about seven inches tall, they'll be ready to plant in the Nature Center's pumpkin garden. Mr. Greene and his class will come to the Nature Center to help plant the seedlings. We are very grateful that Mr. Greene and his agriculture class are helping to ensure a fun day for the children at our 2018 Autumn Festival!

- Darlene Sourwine,  
Volunteer Coordinator

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Front Desk Operations

#### *Ongoing Trainings*

If you enjoy talking to people and witnessing nature in action (you never know what will walk in the front door!) then come learn about the ins and outs of our front desk. You are bound to learn more about the Nature Center, be shown plenty of trailside pictures, and learn the answer to the question "what's the best loop to hike?" if you become one of our volunteer front desk attendees. This is a much needed and appreciated volunteer position! Please let Darlene know if you are interested in working the front desk and we will set up a time for you to come be trained.

**Please pre-register by calling the Nature Center at 315-482-2479**

## CLARKSON SEMINAR SERIES



*Audrie Miller with Dr. Johnson*

Our first seminar on May 12<sup>th</sup> featured Dr. Glenn Johnson, a biologist from SUNY Potsdam. Dr. Johnson discussed Blanding's turtles and brought a live specimen to share with the audience. Visitors of all ages learned about the range and reproduction of the Blanding's turtle, as well as what is being done to protect this threatened species.

### Future seminar topics will include:

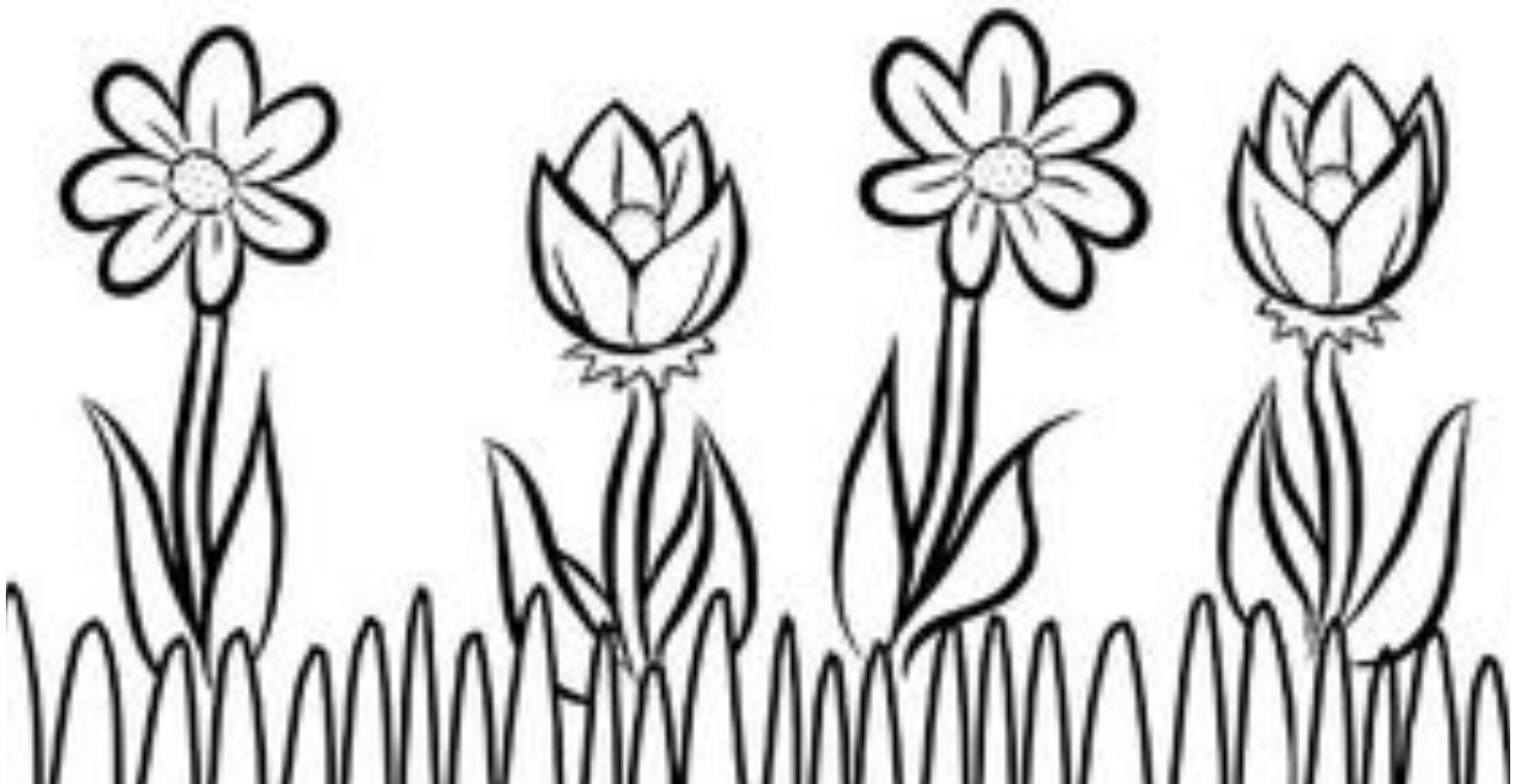
American Eel Specialist

Economic Valuation of Ecosystem Services

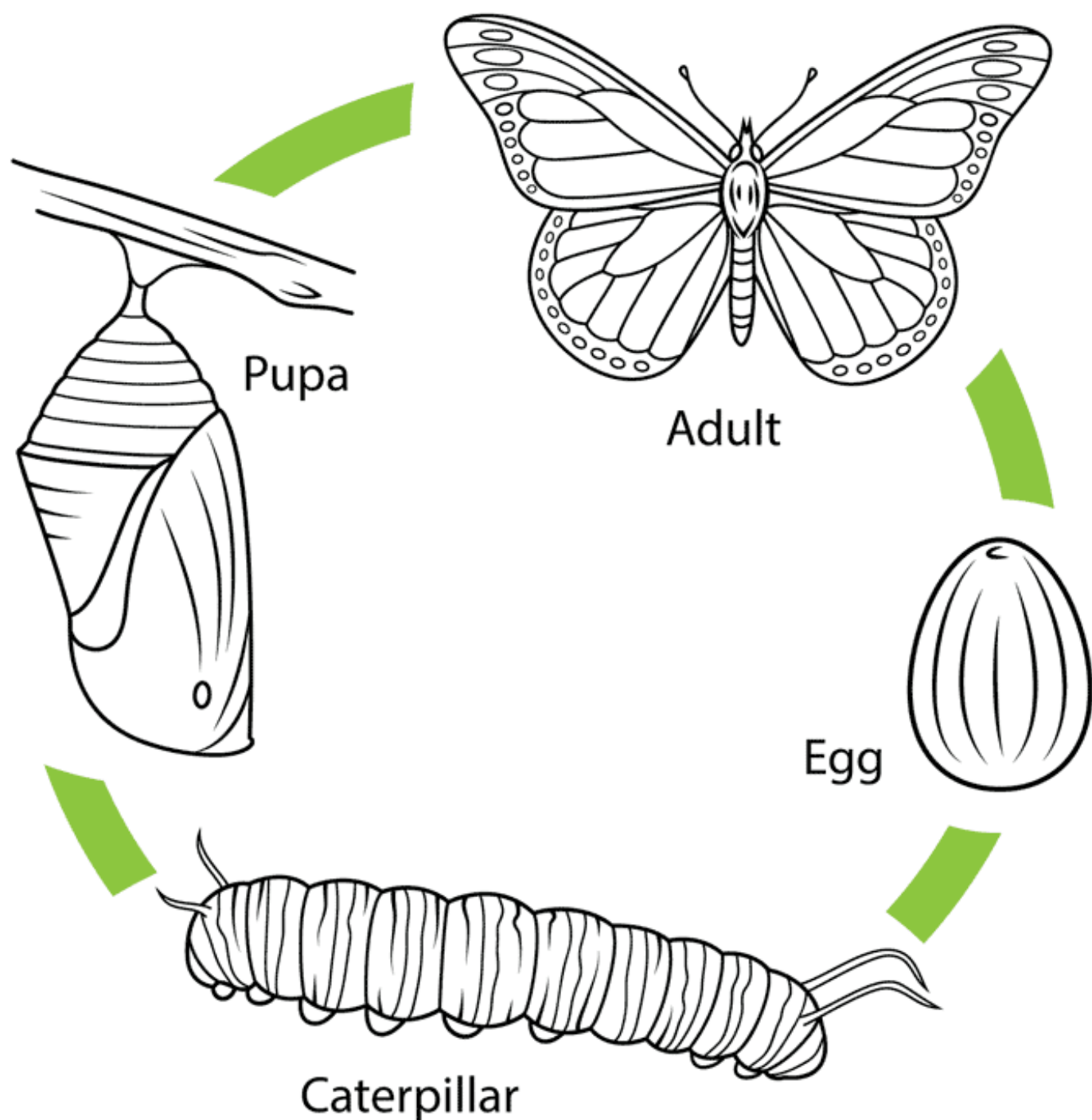
Social and Ecological Importance of Large Rivers

Climate Changes in New York State

# Butterfly Coloring Pages



# Life Cycle of a Monarch Butterfly



# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## THE GIVING TREE

Support the Nature Center by donating at least \$500 and become a part of our building with a leaf on our donor tree! Your support will help with our new interactive displays and exhibits which teach, provide entertainment, and offer a link between the Nature Center and its trails.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check enclosed. Please make checks payable to: **Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.**

☐ Please charge my credit card: ☐ Amex ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ My company's matching gift form is enclosed.

\$

Leaf Inscription (Please print clearly)

Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2 (Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3 (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4 (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

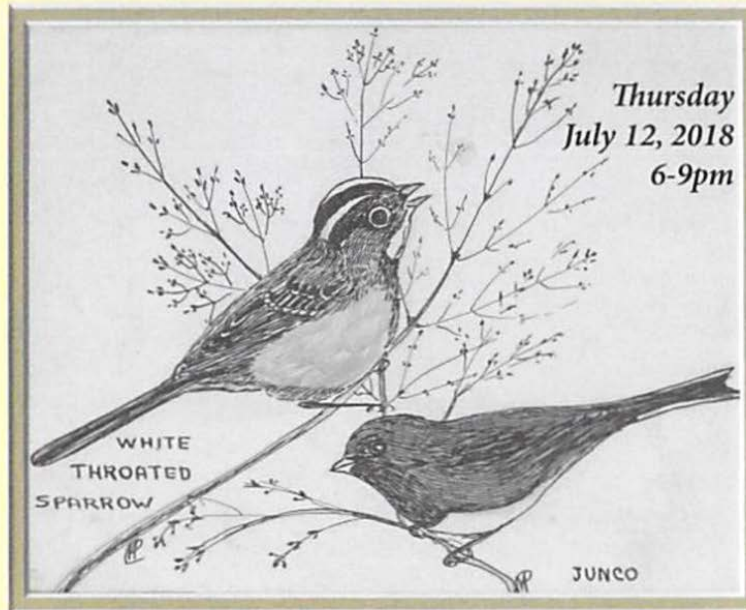
PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO:

P.O. BOX 6523 WATERTOWN, NY 13601-6523

# THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

## NIGHT FOR NATURE

*Save the Date!!*



*Join us at the Newly Renovated  
Minna Anthony Common Nature Center!*

### **You're Invited to Night for Nature!**

- Select Beer-Wine Bar
- Hors D'oeuvres by The Clipper
- Live Music by the Buoy Rockers

Help support this special event by becoming a sponsor! Sponsor opportunities from \$250.00 to \$2,500. You will receive two tickets and your name on the table tents.

Tickets are \$75.00 per person  
Payment due by July 6, 2018.

Mail checks to:  
Friends of the Nature Center, Inc  
PO Box 6523  
Watertown, NY  
13601

Friends of the Nature Center, Inc.  
Minna Anthony Common Nature Center  
Wellesley Island State Park  
44927 Cross Island Road  
Fineview, NY 13640

Hours of Operation:  
Museum 8am-4pm  
Trails open sunrise to sunset



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**