

NEWSLETTER

Spring Issue

MARCH 24, 2017



INTERDEPENDENCE IN CONSTRUCTION

Minna's article reprinted in this newsletter discusses the misguided rationale for killing hawks. She deliberates how a perceived threat (whether real or imagined) carries significant consequences. Nature, after all, is an incredibly complex system that depends on vast numbers of organisms to coexist.

Human interference, through the addition, removal, or limitation of one species effects this complex interconnected web. This web of relationships, called interdependence, is highlighted in Minna's writings and the central, unifying theme for our new exhibits.

Unfortunately, it looks as if the grand opening of the renovated Nature Center will be delayed due to the interdependence of the building's structural safety and mother nature.

Recently, structural damage caused by fifty years of natural wear was uncovered in the North wall in the Grand Exhibit Hall. As a result, the State will work hard to fix and stabilize the wall. Fortunately, it is a problem more money, time, and resources can fix...

Rest assured, we will continue to provide the excellent and consistent outdoor education our members, school children, and the community expect. We can't wait to see everyone soon!

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON SERIES - ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AUGUST 7, 1948



NOT ALL HAWKS ARE INJURIOUS HUNTER MUST STUDY BIRDS BEFORE KILLING THEM

COOPER'S HAWK WORST ENEMY

Most Members of Hawk Family Aid Mankind By Destroying Rodents – Only Two Chicken Killers Listed and Both Are Hard to Catch.

According to most bird books hawks are listed among the “permanent residents” or birds which remain all the year in the same locality in which they nest; but most bird books are not compiled for northern New York. A hawk may stay here in the winter and so may a robin, but neither bird avails itself of the privilege very often. Hawks do, however, return to our fields rather early in the year.

Last week three different kinds of hawks were seen sailing about over the fields near the city: the pigeon hawk, the marsh hawk, and the sparrow hawk.

The marsh hawk was so named because he is a frequenter of swamp lands, nesting among the sedges and cat tails and hunting his food over the low wet marshes.

The pigeon hawk was so named because of his marked resemblance to the passenger pigeon, once so plentiful, but now extinct. The shape, size, color, and even the manner of flight is said to be similar. The food habits are entirely different, for the passenger pigeon was a vegetarian and ate only grain and weed seeds while the pigeon hawk is a meat eater and demands a diet of mice, grasshoppers, lizards and such delicacies.

The sparrow hawk received his name neither from his chosen haunts nor from his shape and color, but from what was supposed to be his favorite food. By order of the Biological Survey at Washington, 320 sparrow hawks were killed in the interests of science, and their stomach contents analyzed. The results showed many interesting things. Fifty were empty. All but 20 of the rest contained insects, or spiders. About one half held mice, moles, snakes, or some such small creatures, but only one out of seven contained birds. None contained poultry.

Everyone with a desire to kill every hawk he sees should first study the birds and their food habits. Not many years ago all hawks were condemned because of the well known fondness for a chicken diet that some of their number were known to possess. Then under the direction of the Biological Survey, Dr. A.K. Fisher carried on an extensive investigation which covered a large territory and which took several years of careful work.

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

It was found that hawks, far from being harmful and destructive, are a positive assistance to the country. They eat mice and insects in unbelievable numbers. Every mouse whether in house, or grain field, corncrib, barn, or meadow, surely eats one cent's worth of useful food in a year. Some must consume much more than that. If a hawk eats only one mouse a day, a very conservative estimate, for it has been proved they often eat 20 a day, it would have saved the world \$3.65 in a year.

The chicken season is short while the mouse season lasts the whole year through. Even the hawk's worst enemy knows he rarely catches large chickens so for convenience sake let us consider the one's he does catch as worth 30 cents each. The bird would have to kill twelve chickens before his "mouse a day" account for the year would be balanced. Now some hawks prefer mice to any other food and such a bird, keen-eyed and untiring is going to catch many times one a day.

There are two wicked killers – falcons – among our hawks. They are both very difficult birds to see and harder still to shoot. They are not the big red-tailed or red-shouldered ones whose sinister shadows throw the chicken yard into panic as they sail about overhead so gracefully, nor are they the big one of the

marsh land, nor the little gray or red-brown ones of the fields.

No, they are shadowy, swift, nondescript colored murderers that, true to their trade, strike unexpectedly from ambush and rush back to cover before we are able to recover ourselves from the surprise. These two – long, slim birds which never scream nor soar – are named Cooper's hawk and sharp-shinned hawk. They came under the head of *accipiter*, a company which by its misdeeds has blackened the whole hawk tribe, while they themselves receive very little punishment for their sins. The Cooper's record, according to the name Dr. Fisher, showed two-thirds the stomachs examined contained birds, mostly poultry in season, and no mice, while only two out of the total 133 held any insects. The other, the sharp-shinned, called *Accipiter velox* because of his speed, is too small to catch any but the very youngest chickens, but he is a wicked killer of small birds, so there is only one chicken-killer out of the seven hawks which live here summers!

All this shows why before the hunter goes forth to kill he should know his birds.

- Reprinted with permission from the Watertown Daily Times.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Although deer take much of the blame for carrying ticks, ground mammals, like mice, are highly efficient Lyme disease transmitters. This NPR story speaks to this little known fact and the potential risk this year.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/03/06/518219485/forbidding-forecast-for-lyme-disease-in-the-northeast>

Remember to like us on Facebook for realtime updates and the calendar of events. Look for "Minna Anthony Common Nature Center - Friends."



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sometimes I feel winter is the most variable season of them all. Some years it is bitterly cold with lots of snow and some years it is very mild with little to no snow. Certainly this winter has proven to be the latter. The lack of snow prevented us from using our snowshoes until early March but we are hoping for a few more late winter snowfalls so we can venture out on snowshoes again before putting them away for the season. Our snowfall seems heavily dependent on river ice so when I look out the window at the river, I have my fingers crossed that the ice I see will persist and continue to thicken.

The lack of snow in early winter did not deter our patrons though. We had the largest crowd yet attend our First Day Hike. It was a beautiful winter day and 75 people pictured to the right decided to join us for a hike on snow covered trails to welcome in the New Year. We also had a group of high school students from the Outdoor Experience Club at Indian River brave a foggy, rainy night to come to the Center for a moonlight night hike. The hike was the first outing for the newly formed group and the students' first experience walking in the woods at night. The eight students thoroughly enjoyed trekking through the dark woods learning about how their senses are altered by the dark. We are hopeful the group will come back soon.



We have had a lot of fun this winter watching a porcupine that has been performing impressive feats of agility on trees over Eel Bay. The porcupine is not a fan of Darlene because she frequently sneaks after it to take pictures. It has even been known to cross the fence line to see how the construction is going! We are convinced it is the same porcupine we used to watch while eating lunch out the back windows of the Nature Center. The winter habitat of the porcupine was displaced by the noise and activity of the construction

so we suspect the porcupine wanted to venture over to see when it could get back up to the trees behind the building.

We are busy working on setting up our spring and summer program schedule and are very excited about some of the new programs we will be offering this year. We hope to see you at the Nature Center soon!

- Molly Farrell, Environmental Educator II

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS JOINED OR RENEWED THEIR COMMITMENT RECENTLY:

The Friends of the Nature Center appreciate our members and their continuous generosity. Such steadfast support, through the construction and the capital campaign, allows us to continue to provide the community and school children with critical natural education.

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Leslie Mitchell | Gouverneur, NY |
| Erik Daly and Family | Manlius, NY |
| Joan Davison | Highland, NY |
| Michael and Sandra Geiss | Clayton, NY |
| Donna Gipperich | Alexandria Bay, NY |
| Carolyn Glass | Tampa, FL |
| Leslie and Fritz Hager | Wellesley Island, NY |
| Norm and Laurie Itjen | Elba, NY |
| Manford and Victoria Jerome | Wellesley Island, NY |
| Carolyn Marlowe | Glen Park, NY |
| Tom and Mary McNeill | Wellesley Island, NY |
| Kareta and Dennis Olshfski | Philadelphia, NY |
| Peggy Osbourn | Houston, TX |
| Bill and Tina Siebels | Gouverneur, NY |
| Don and Sheila Smith | Wellesley Island, NY |
| Anne F. Thompson | Pardeeville, NY |
| Susan E Waterman | Camden, NY |
| Caroline E. Batterson | Sackets Harbor, NY |
| Marion Huntlry | Fineview, NY |
| Elizabeth O'Neill | New York, NY |
| Tom and Pat Williams | Theresa, NY |
| Sarah Elliott | Roslindale, MA |
| Maddox Jobson | Theresa, NY |

Thank you again!

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

Kerry Roberge

President

Barbara Butts

Vice President

Jonathan White

Treasurer

Jane Arras

Secretary

Nancy Boynton

Sue Johnson

Chase Miller

Lynn Morgan

Joseph Leskoske

Heather White

Matthew Elliott

Barb Eldridge

Andrew Kane

Susan Mahoney

Stefanie Kring

Park Employees

Steve Cline

Park Manager

Molly Farrell

Nature Center

Director

Kimberly Cullen

Program Coordinator

Friends of the Nature Center Employees

Darlene Sourwine

Volunteer

Coordinator

Patty Davis

Bookkeeper



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

Volunteer Opportunities

Canoe Training

*Tuesday, June 27th and Wednesday,
June 28th, 9am*

We are modifying our canoe training this year to provide more time to practice paddling, steering, and running our program for both staff and volunteers. The first day of the training will be designed to help staff and volunteers learn the interpretation needed for the canoe program and gain an understanding of the basic flow of the program. The second day will be used to go over program logistics and to practice maneuvering our 36' newly restored canoe. We may need to reschedule these trainings for a later point in the week if the weather is inclement.

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**

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Where has the winter gone? There's the expression, don't blink or you'll miss it! I must have blinked, because it's gone. But winter or not, we are so fortunate for our volunteers to brave any type of weather to head to the Nature Center to work. Kathy Morris who is our weekly Sunday volunteer, worked on our store inventory. Though a seemingly painstaking, meticulous job, Kathy completed it in two Sundays!!

We are also grateful for Kathy Leskoske who, because of the many other talents she shares with the Nature Center, handed down her all natural dog biscuit recipe to another volunteer, Ellie Goldacker. Ellie has kindly taken over baking our dog biscuits, a real task since the



Nature Center's hiker ratio is 1:3 dogs per human, both coming in from a good day's hike, a bit hungry. Betty Ryan has been "checking in" with us all winter looking for tasks to bring home. We successfully kept her quite busy cutting out supplies for Kim's, our environmental educator, upcoming school programs.

One of our other year round volunteers, Barb Hearn, has recently been recruited to be part of the a training to teach people how to monitor traps for the invasive emerald ash borer. We call this "bug trap training." She was recruited by Molly over the phone, with the basic description of her task being that bugs were involved. She bravely still said yes, then showed up at the Nature Center seeking further explanation of exactly what the job entailed. It was quite hilarious watching Barb's facial expressions while she listened to Kim fill her in on the job description, which involves checking traps and looking for Emerald Ash Borers. After saying good-bye while walking out the door we heard Barb saying, "bugs, I can't believe I'm working with bugs!!"

We are thankful for all the volunteers who bundle up and take the drive to the nature center ready to do any "odd winter task." Although the 50-degree temperatures and the date on the calendar aren't synchronized, we are preparing for the 2017 summer season. We are certainly looking forward to greeting all our volunteers back for another exciting year at the Nature Center.

So, if you don't mind getting your hands dirty, your feet wet, or maybe even counting bugs, or you just enjoy working the reception desk and talking to the Nature Center patrons, I encourage you to join our awesome team of volunteers. No matter what you enjoy, you can't help but love being a part of the natural side of life!! Please call me to volunteer at the Nature Center!

- Darlene Sourwine, Volunteer Coordinator

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

NATURE CENTER PROGRESS



The new addition and front entrance will welcome visitors for years to come!



Here is a profile view of the new store windows looking toward the parking lot.



Molly and Darlene carefully reexamine the plans and measure dimensions. Darlene can't wait to fill the new store with nature focused treasures!



Kim playfully mimics a large mouth bass in the framing for the new aquariums.



The grand exhibit hall, ready for new exhibits, will amaze, enthrall and inspire thousands of eager visitors.



The river-side of the Nature Center will have a new patio, with named bricks from our patrons, and dueling pergolas to view 1000 Island sunsets over Eel Bay.

I Love My Park Day

*Saturday, May 6th,
9am-3pm*

Show your Nature Center some love! Join with other volunteers to spruce up the Nature Center for spring and get it ready for another busy summer season.

This is the day when we get out our mop buckets, sponges, garden trowels, rakes, and clippers and get to work making our Nature Center beautiful.

Lunch will be provided. Visit <http://ptny.org/ilovemypark/> for more information and to preregister.

You can also preregister by calling the Nature Center (315-482-2479). Preregistration for this event is required.

I LOVE MY PARK DAY
www.ptny.org

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SPRING PROGRAMS 2017

315-482-2479

Children's Fishing Derby

Sunday, July 8th, 12:00-3:30pm

Come join in the fun at our fishing derby for children 14 and under! There is a \$2.00 entrance fee that will go towards supporting future programming at the Nature Center. Prizes will be awarded to participants in three categories: the longest, heaviest, and most fish. Fish must be taken with rod and reel; all legal baits will be allowed. Preregistration is required.

Trail Tales

Saturdays, March 18th, April 15th, May 13th, and June 17th, 10am

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.

North Country Earth Day at the Thompson Park Zoo

Saturday, April 22nd, 10am to 4pm

Come join the Earth Day celebrations at the Thompson Park Zoo! Learn about the natural world around you and the importance of protecting our natural resources. Discover new places and ways to enjoy the outdoors.

There will be numerous family friendly activities and many different organizations will be at the event, including the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center.

For additional information, call the Thompson Park Zoo at 315-782-6180.



TILT's 3rd Annual "For the Trees" Arbor Day Community Event

Saturday, April 29th, 9:30am

Join TILT at Zenda Farms Preserve for our 5th annual community event in celebration of Arbor Day. In the five years of its existence, we have planted over 150 trees along our Lois Jean and John MacFarlane Trail, and we hope to plant many more this year, with the help of volunteers. Bring the whole family to get their hands dirty and also enjoy workshops, hikes and exhibits from TILT and our partner organizations including the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center, Cross Island Farms, Indian River Lakes Conservancy, NYS Zoo and Thousand Islands Arts Center. Lunch for volunteers will be provided at Zenda. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer by emailing volunteer@tilandtrust.org, by calling the TILT office at 315-686-5345, or by signing up here. 3rd Annual "For the Trees" Arbor Day Community Event

20th annual Ready Set Fun Bookfest at the Bruce M. Wright Memorial Conference Center in Watertown.

Saturday, May 13th 10-1

A literacy-based event which uses a series of interactive activity booths provide by many organization, like the Nature Center, to connect literacy to a variety of real-world situations which a child may build experience.

Memorial Day Weekend Plant Sale

May 28th -30th, 9:30am-3pm

Help the Nature Center raise funds to maintain our gardens at our Annual Memorial Day Weekend Plant Sale. We will have an assortment of native flowering plants and more for sale. Incorporating native plants into your landscaping can help provide valuable food resources and shelter to local bird and wildlife species.

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SPRING PROGRAMS 2017

315-482-2479

Kayaking with Molly and Save the River

*Saturday, July 22nd, 5:30-7:30pm and
Saturday, August 26th, 9am-noon*

**\$10 per person. Must be 13 or older
to participate.**

Come learn about how you can become a Riverkeeper Volunteer while brushing up on your kayaking skills! Molly will teach the ACA course Smartstart Your Kayak which is perfect for anyone new to kayaking and will reiterate proper paddling technique for more experienced paddlers. Following the kayak training, Kate Brehany from Save the River will talk about various factors that threaten the health of our river and what you can do to help. You will have plenty of time to look for wildlife and explore our shoreline! Participants will receive a T-shirt and an invasive species guide. Please call for additional information and to preregister.



Otter Creek Picnic

Friday, June 23rd, 5:30-7:30pm

ILT and Hearts For Youth Organization (HFY) invite you to bring your family and friends to enjoy the second annual celebration of open space and the youth of the Thousand Islands region! The Otter Creek Community Picnic will feature fascinating and fun exhibits from TILT and HFY's conservation and community partners, including environmental, cultural and community organizations from throughout the Thousand Islands region. Children's games and activities (including a petting zoo and pony rides) will be available, and live music will keep your toes

tapping. Classic picnic fare will include hotdogs, hamburgers, salads, and desserts and drinks will be served to wash it all down. So we are sure to have enough for everyone, TILT would appreciate advance reservations: Sign up online, call the office at 315-686-5345, or email events@tilandtrust.org.

Zenda Farms Picnic

Friday, June 9th, 5:30-7:30pm

Here comes summer! The Annual Community Picnic at Zenda Farms is fun for the whole family, with fascinating exhibits, games, and of course, your favorite hamburgers, hotdogs and picnic fare! Tickets are \$12 for TILT members and \$15 for non-members. Kids under 12 are free. Please preregister with TILT by calling 315-686-5345 or registering online.

Little Hawn Library at MACNC

Beginning May 1st

We are very excited to be partnering with Hawn Memorial Library this year to start a free library at the Nature Center. Stop by and borrow a book or add books to our little library. We have an assortment of books for all ages that were donated to use by Hawn Memorial Library. We are calling it the Little Hawn Library at MACNC. The Hawn Memorial Library will be leading a weekly story time program at the Nature Center this summer. Stay tuned for more information!

Westy's Birds of Prey

Friday, July 7th, 6pm

Friday, July 21st, 10am

Thursday, August 3rd, 6pm

Rick West will be returning this summer with his live birds of prey. Program location may vary due to weather or construction limitations.

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

SPRING PROGRAMS 2017

315-482-2479

Boater Safety Course

Sunday, July 23rd 8-4pm

Sunday, August 20th 8-4pm

The course will be held at the Park Pavilion down by the marina. Adult and children are welcome to participate. There is no charge for the course but you will be expected to pay the \$7 day use fee to enter Wellesley Island State Park. If you are 18 or older there is a \$10 fee payable to NYS OPRHP for your certificate. Please call Gary Kocher at 315-486-5230 to pre-register. Pre-register is required and space is limited.

Spider's Fishing Programs

*Saturdays, May 27th, June 10th, July 1st,
August 12th, September 2nd, & October 14th*

Two programs are offered each day:

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

**Basics of Fly Fishing from 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 you can bring your own tackle, it will allow for more participation in the program. This is a free program but donations are appreciated to defray the cost of this and other programs.



Slash Bash at Keewaydin State Park

Saturday, July 15th, 10am-3pm

Join us at the Keewaydin pool to celebrate summer! Participate in all three of our noodle races to be eligible to be the 2017 Keewaydin State Park Noodle Champion! Prizes will be awarded to the top three finishers in the championship race. We will have more games and other fun activities for the whole family! Come and spend the day at the pool!

Continuous Programs

Junior Naturalist Program

This summer visit the Nature Center and become a Junior Naturalist. This three part series is full of fun activities to do outside. Complete all three packets and receive a Junior Naturalist patch. This program is recommended for ages seven and up. There is a \$4 program fee to cover the cost of the patches.

Natural Birthday Parties at the Nature Center

Make this a birthday special for your child with a Natural Birthday Party at the Nature Center. Children ages 5 to 12 can choose from seasonally appropriate themes such as Turtles, Exploring Ponds, Trees, Beavers and more. Call the Nature Center for more information or to schedule a party.

**Members \$45;
Nonmembers \$60.**



THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS!

Members of the Friends of the Nature Center provide the critical means and resources necessary to support the cherished education and preservation found here. Most of our members rejoin annually and for that we are continually grateful.

Birch - \$25 Quarterly newsletter, 10% discount at our gift shop, discounts on some program fees, and a Minna Anthony Common T-Shirt (redeemable at the Nature Center).

Maple - \$75 Quarterly newsletter, 10% discount at our gift shop, discounts on some program fees, and a Minna Anthony Common T-Shirt (redeemable at the Nature Center).

Oak - \$150 Maple level benefits and a 2017 *Empire State Pass* that grants unlimited day-use vehicle entry to ANY New York State Park until March 2018.

Hickory - \$250 Maple level benefits and a 2017 *Empire State Pass* that grants unlimited day-use vehicle entry to ANY New York State Park until March 2018

Please call or visit our website for more details - <http://macnaturecenter.webs.com/>

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.

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Thank you supporting the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center by becoming a member of our Friends organization or by making a donation. We hope to see you soon!

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State/Prov: _____

Zip/Code: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

I would prefer to receive our newsletter via email.

I would be interested in volunteering at the Nature Center.

Alternate mailing address? _____

Yes, I want to help.....

This is a:

New Membership Renewal

Donation

General Donation amount: _____

Membership Level:

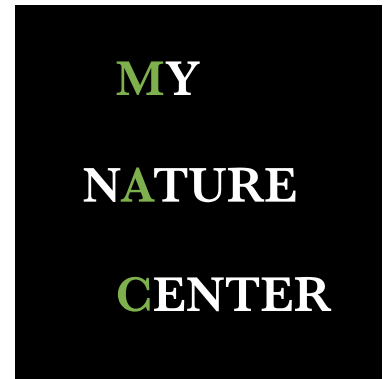
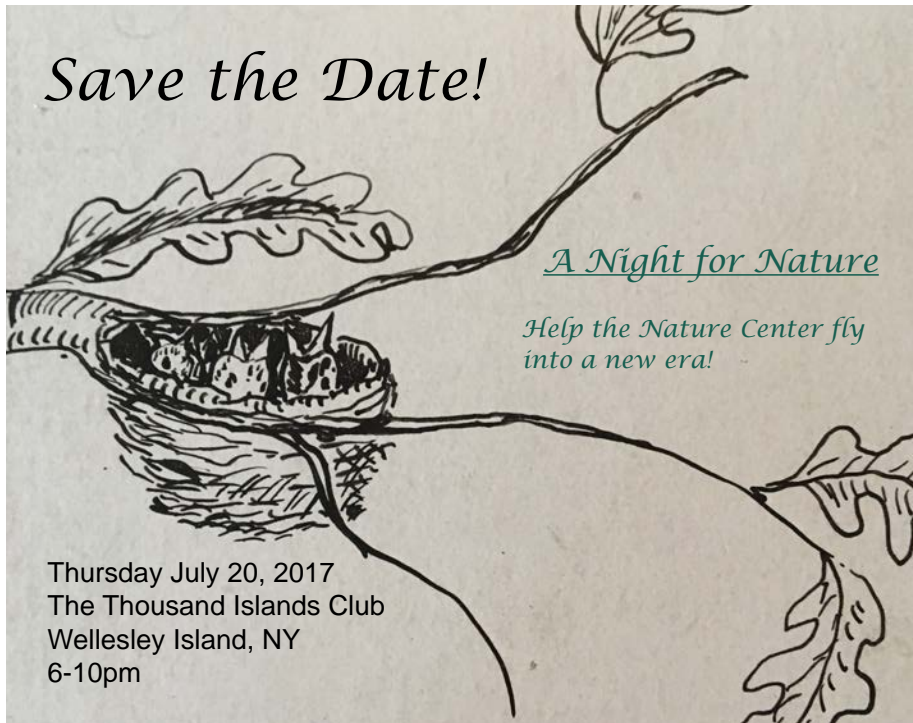
Birch (\$25) Maple (\$75)

Oak (\$150) Hickory (\$250)

Please make checks payable to "Friends of the Nature Center". We cannot accept credit cards at this time.

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



Goal: \$600,000

Raised: \$47,741

The capital campaign is under way..

Please consider our naming opportunity for a holiday gift!

www.macnaturecenter.com

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**