
THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

NEWSLETTER

Spring Issue • MARCH 6, 2020



Signs of spring: stonecrop emerges from a leaf littered forest floor.

The Rhythm of Spring

One must appreciate Minna Anthony Common's attentiveness to the world around her and how wonderfully attuned she was to nature and the changing of the seasons. A founding member of the North Country Bird Club, her passion for ornithology was contagious. Her writing and teaching helped novices and experts know what to look for, listen for, and when.

Three generations later, as technology grows omnipresent; as work and community duties occupy precious time; we must remember to stop and listen to the rhythm of the seasons. Whether at home or at the Nature Center, remember to take time to

welcome our feathered friends and others back to their neighborhoods.

We have many activities planned this spring to help you in this rejuvenating endeavor. Come with your children or grandchildren to listen to a story before heading outdoors, or come take a "mindful meander" with one of our fabulous new SCA members. As always, we welcome new volunteers and appreciate their unique talents and strengths. Volunteering at the Nature Center is a great excuse for a trip to the woods! We hope to see you on the trails soon!



Birds Starting to Arrive Here

by Minna Anthony Common

This has been a winter of waiting. There was no snow. There were no snowbirds, until it seemed the time was past. Then came a real storm and with it the snow birds. There was no cold weather. There were no grosbeaks. Then came a few cold days with Canada much colder and with it the grosbeaks. There was no “sugar weather” and there were no early birds. Then the farmers decided to tap the trees anyway and the early birds decided to come despite the snow blanket. Now there was a rain and bare ground and apparently enough fishworms to satisfy the pioneering robins.

But the robins did not come alone for when on Friday they began their early morning concert, the song sparrows joined with them to make a ringing chorus.

Starlings that have been giving us what music they could are now quite beneath notice. They have been all we have been hearing for so long we had begun to think them musical. Since Friday we have again put their record in the pigeon-hole marked “Failures.”

Nor were robins and song sparrows the only travelers that day. A flock of red-winged blackbirds was near Adams Friday morning and by evening had reached Brookside Creek. A sparrow hawk came along, too. He probably was not really with the blackbirds, but the same roving spirit prompted him to come to the same place at the same time. Sparrow hawks are useful little gray and white birds with an inordinate fondness for mice in their diet. By a strange coincidence their call is “kitty, kitty.”

Even these were not the only birds that felt, March being nearly spent; “moving day” could not be put off longer. Numbers of our one and only American lark, a little chap called horned lark because of the tufts of feathers above his eyes, appeared in small flocks wherever there was any bare ground in the country. He is not a resident here, in fact he lingers only a short month, for he is on his way to the far north. The lover of bird music would find it worth the effort to hear this lark sing. Neither fence post nor telegraph wires are his stage, but his rich and beautiful melody is always delivered in true lark style from the sky.

The first of the meadowlarks have also come to the grassy fields. In spite of their name they are not larks at all, but cousins of the blackbirds and the orioles. Their clear whistle is almost as spring-like a sound as the piping of the hylas. It does not at all resemble the lark’s, either in sound or in manner of delivery, for the meadowlark flutes from the ground or some low perch, never from the sky.

Without doubt many more birds have arrived in our immediate vicinity, but this is a fair number to try to see and hear.

Reprinted with permission from the Watertown Daily Times.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Thawing ice at the Narrows.*

Dear Friends,

Snow still covers the ground, but there is now a palpable optimism as we begin to feel the nascent presence of spring. The ice fishermen can still rely on a frozen Eel Bay, but other parts of the river are thawing. The ground is thawing too and signs of life, green and soft, are peaking through. The same can be said of the Nature Center. The off-season becomes school program season, and soon local children will be visiting the Nature Center daily.

It's an exciting time of year! We recently welcomed three new SCA team members to Wellesley Island. These

fledgling Environmental Educators are in the best of hands under the tutelage of our Education Coordinator, Kim, and SCA Supervisor, Lauren. We have already seen great progress. Robin, Veronica, and Sydney are a great fit for their roles. I know they will become an integral part of the MAC Nature Center team.

Spring is my favorite time of year. It heralds a sense of renewal, and Mother Nature orchestrates a magnificent performance. I am also looking forward to the diverse lineup of programs and events we have in store for you. There is something to do every weekend! Join us on a hike or attend one of our many social events – we look forward to seeing you soon.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gaby".

Gabriela Padewska
Nature Center Director

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

**Have you checked out
our social media
pages lately?**

There is lots going on,
stay connected with us!



Like and follow us on **Facebook** for updates and our Calendar of Events.
@[MACNatureCenter](#)



We have two **Instagram** pages, more choices for your digital 2-minute nature break!
@[friendsofmacnaturecenter](#)
@[scrappers_the_chipmunk](#)

NEW TEAM MEMBERS

We are thrilled to introduce our 2020 Student Conservation Corp (SCA) members: Robin, Sydney, and Veronica! NYS Parks partners with the SCA to build the next generation of conservation leaders. Welcome aboard!

In addition to developing and leading environmental education programs alongside our staff, each SCA member will be working on an individual focus area throughout their term. Robin's focus area is exhibit animal care; Veronica's is publicity and social media; and Sydney's is outdoor stewardship and the Butterfly House.



Left to right: Robin Hall, Veronica Hayes, Sydney Kelly



Robin Hall

My name is Robin! I was born and raised in Pensacola, Florida. If you're wondering where that is, it is in the western part of the panhandle right before Alabama (Its nickname is Lower Alabama). I learned how to swim before I completely figured out how to walk so odds are, you'll always find me by water! I graduated this past May with my bachelor's in environmental management. I'm so excited to share my knowledge with kids and explore such a diverse area. Joining the SCA has given me the chance to step out of my comfort zone and learn about a whole new place!



Veronica Hayes

Hi my name is Veronica Hayes and I am so grateful to be a part of SCA! I'm from Richmond, Virginia but feel deeply connected to Western North Carolina because I attended college at Appalachian State University. I love sustainability, mountains, and butterflies. I look forward to becoming a more experienced environmental steward, and I can't wait to share the beauty of Wellesley Island State Park with people from all over the world!



Sydney Kelly

Hi! I'm Sydney. I'm from a little town in southern Virginia called South Hill. I studied environmental science and globalization at Virginia Commonwealth University. I enjoy exploring new places and learning about different cultures. I also enjoy spending time on the lake with my family. Throughout my time in SCA and AmeriCorps, I look forward to continuing my learning of the environment and to use this knowledge to give back to the community.

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS



Volunteer Educator Lynn Morgan teaching a school program

I was hired in 2006 as the Coordinator for our school field trips and specialized environmental education. Over the 14 years I have been here our field trip program has blossomed to become an essential curriculum enrichment for local schools. Many students have never been in the woods to experience the outdoors. The Minna Anthony Common Nature Center has become a *tool to connect the unconnected*. We are not just teaching fact; we are teaching students how to love and appreciate the outdoors. This starts the desire to help the environment and to

protect what we have. There is great satisfaction to see a child who is afraid in the beginning transform into wonder and excitement. Without our field trip program that child might never form a strong connection with the environment.

We have a very strong, passionate education team at the Nature Center. Due to high demand we rely on Volunteer Educators to work alongside staff Environmental Educators. Each volunteer has gone through extensive training to learn updated curriculum and best practices in environmental education.

I love what I do. I work with so many amazing people. Many thanks to all of you for this amazing program, it wouldn't be where it is without you! I would like to personally thank our Volunteer Educators that have supported us by donating time to teach the next generation. These passionate people have made a positive impact in so many ways. I cannot thank the following people enough! **Mary Ellen Carol, Lynn Morgan, Nancy Boynton, Barb Eldridge, Heather White, Joe Leskoske, Sue Chapman, and Nancy Kuhl.**

If you have a passion for teaching and for the environment, please give me a call. I would love to have you on our education team! Help the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center help children connect to the natural world.

Kimbrie Cullen
Education Coordinator



Volunteer Educator Nancy Boynton leading a school group

**THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SEVENTY MEMBERS FOR JOINING OR
RENEWING THEIR COMMITMENT RECENTLY**

Matt & Sara Elliott Fayetteville, NY
 Tom & Irene Carman Wellesley Island, NY
 Jeff & Linda Batts Fernandina Beach, FL
 Kathleen Hummel Clayton, NY
 Chuck & Libby Spaulding Cortland, NY
 Allen Newell Hammond, NY
 Dr. & Mrs Anthony Ferrari Fairport, NY
 Jan Byington Clayton, NY
 Dan & Maggie Lort Wellesley Island, NY
 JR Miller Alexandria Bay, NY
 Peter & Bess Carl Manlius, NY
 Susan & Ted Mowers Wellesley Island, NY
 Andy & Holly Kane Liverpool, NY
 Megan Martin Redwood, NY
 Mary McNeill Syracuse, NY
 Robin Frost Alexandria Bay, NY
 Richard & Leslie Tolman Chesterland, OH
 Bill & Tina Siebels Gouverneur, NY
 Tom & Irene Tinney Clayton, NY
 Roger & Maggie Reid Fayetteville, NY
 Eliz Benson & Tim Cumming Hingham, MA
 Norm & Laurie Itjen Elba, NY
 Leah & Tom Neely Redwood, NY
 Dani Baker & David Bender Wellesley Island, NY
 Jennie & Michael Moore Needham, MA
 Patrick & Meredith Sullivan Clayton, NY
 Bruce Alexander Dexter, NY
 Susan & John Johnson Watertown, NY
 Jill Bouvier Elbridge, NY
 Judy & Darrel Rippeteau Washington, DC
 Michael Parkes Endicott, NY
 Rick & Michelle Gefell Watertown, NY
 Manford & Victoria Jerome Fineview, NY
 Steve & Nellie Taylor TI Park, NY
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Harold & Sue Johnson Watertown, NY
 Barbara Butts Vero Beach, FL
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 Caroline Batterson Sackets Harbor, NY
 Duane Chalk Fishers Landing, NY
 Mark Walczyk Watertown, NY
 Steven Baker Fairfield, CT
 Brian & Cierra Trickey Redwood, NY
 Tara Parmiter & Ray Ratcliff Brooklyn, NY
 Chase & Sarah Miller New York, NY
 Liz Baroody-Solomon Pittsford, NY
 Janice Douglass Cortland, NY
 Louise Strayer Tucson, AZ
 Tom & Karen Allen Fairport, NY
 Steve Pullinger Palmyra, VA
 Jim & Kathy Fenn Wellesley Island, NY
 Susan Whitney Wellesley Island, NY
 Brian & Kate Breheny Clayton, NY
 Bernard Slate Clayton, NY
 Don & Sheila Smith Wellesley Island, NY
 Stan & Barb Eldridge Watertown, NY
 Matthew & MaryAnn Karp Newark Valley, NY
 Darden & Molly MacWade Jackson, MS
 Leslie Johnson & Alex Carman Pound Ridge, NY
 Audie & Laura Cerow Clayton, NY
 Charlotte Wellins Wellesley Island, NY
 Helen Brennan Clayton, NY
 Erica Roberts Fineview, NY
 Cindy Sherill Ontario, NY
 Audrey Tripp Hartsville, SC
 Aaron & Alys Huizenga Clayton, NY

MEMBERSHIP MIXER

MARCH 27, 2020

5:00 - 6:30 pm

Common Currents

*Come enjoy conversation, snacks,
and refreshing beverages!*

We're excited to have Katelyn Barhite as our speaker for the inaugural membership mixer! Katelyn is lab manager at the Thousand Island Biological Station, and will give a short talk about northern pike and restoration projects currently underway in Eel Bay.

RSVP BY MARCH 20 AT (315) 482-2479



LOOKING AHEAD

Next *Common Currents*

JUNE 12, 2020

5:00 - 6:30 pm

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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APR

4

Hike for Hunger

Sat • 1pm-3pm

Hike to end hunger! Please bring a non-perishable food item to participated in this hike!

9

Tank Talk with Robin

Sat • 1pm-2pm

Learn about the animals that live here at the Nature Center!

18

Being a Butterfly

Sat • 1pm-2pm

Make a butterfly wind chime while learning about butterflies of NY!

22

Earth Day

Wed • 10am-3pm

Learn fascinating facts about our planet to celebrate Earth Day!

25

Tree Talk!

Sat • 1pm-2pm

Examine different tree species on this hike to celebrate Arbor Day!

MAY

2

I Love My Park Day!

Sat • 9am-3pm

Plant trees, restore trails and wildlife habitat, and work on site improvement projects!

9

Migratory Bird Day

Sat • 1pm-2pm

It's for the birds! Join us for activities to appreciate our feathered friends.

16

EAB traps with SLEO PRISM

Sat • 10:30am-12pm

What is the Emerald Ash Borer? Help us put up our traps for this invasive species!

17

Backyard Explorers

Spring Babies

Sat • 1pm-2pm

Our Junior Naturalists are back! This time we'll learn about spring babies.

23

Spider's Sportfishing Clinic

Sat • 11am-3:30pm

11am-1pm
Basic Fishing Skills
1:30-3:30pm
Fly Fishing Basics

30

Geology + Photography Hike

Sat • 10am-3pm

Join nature photographer and geologist Chris Murray for this creative outing.

JUN

6

National Trails Day

Sat • 1pm-3pm

Hike down the classic river trails - Eel Bay, the Narrows, and South Bay.

10

Movie Night

Wed • 6pm-8pm

Invasive Species Awareness Week! Come watch a documentary with us!

13

Aliens from Outer States!

Sat • 1pm-2pm

Become acquainted with invasive species of New York on this short hike!

20

Spider's Sportfishing Clinic

Sat • 11am-3:30pm

11am-1pm
Basic Fishing Skills
1:30-3:30pm
Fly Fishing Basics

27

Mindful Meandering

Sat • 9am-11:30am

This group meditation will show parallels between the outdoors and our lives!

Find us at these partner events!

4.25

TILT's Arbor Day Celebration in Clayton, NY

5.9

Ready, Set, Fun! WPBS Bookfair in Watertown, NY

6.12

TILT's Zenda Farms Picnic in Clayton, NY

5TH ANNUAL NIGHT FOR NATURE

live music

•

*complimentary
beer & wine*

•

*hors d'oeuvres
catered by
The Clipper*

•

*good friends,
good times, great
cause!*

Each year, over 200 old and new friends come together to mingle on the lawn overlooking Eel Bay and raise a glass towards the oak-framed summer sunset.

After celebrating our 50th anniversary, and with a new decade ahead – the 2020 event theme is “A Perfect Vision for Our Future.” Your support benefits our mission to continue Minna’s legacy of education, conservation, and preservation.



EVENT SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES

Oak Level • \$2,500

Sponsors will have top billing with logo on all advertising and the Welcome Banner, receive top listing on invitations and table tents. Includes 4 complimentary tickets (\$300 value).

Hickory Level • \$1,500

Sponsors will be listed on all advertising with logo, on the Welcome Banner, invitations, and table tents. Includes 2 complimentary tickets (\$150 value).

Maple Level • \$750

Sponsors will be listed on all advertising, the Welcome Banner, invitations, and table tents. Includes 2 complimentary tickets (\$150 value).

Birch Level • \$300

These guests will receive 2 complimentary tickets (\$150 value) and will be listed on the table tents.

Thank you very much for your support!

For event information please contact:
Erin Lettiere, *Night for Nature Committee Chair*
(315) 778-3270 | Erin.Lettiere@gmail.com

WE'RE HIRING!

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is hiring for the summer! MAC Nature Center is looking to fill two positions: an educator and a trail maintenance person. Please, spread the word! There are also many positions within Wellesley Island State Park, and other parks within the Thousand Islands region. To apply fill out an [Employment Application \(pdf\)](#) and email to MACNatureCenter@parks.ny.gov or submit to your nearest [NYS Parks Regional Office](#).

We are also excited to partner with the **Thousand Island Land Trust (TILT)** and **Save The River** to offer the *Kenneth Deedy Environmental Stewardship*. This is an amazing internship for a local high school or college student interested in environmental work! See flyer below.



NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY

**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**





Save The River®
Upper St. Lawrence RIVERKEEPER®



Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward

This summer our Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward will work at 3 local environmental nonprofits, gaining hands-on experience in stewardship and environmental education. This is an hourly, seasonal paid position.

WEEKS 1-3	WEEKS 4-6	WEEKS 7-9
 <p>Assist <i>Save The River</i> with advocacy, education and on-the-water programming.</p>	 <p>Support various educational programs at the <i>Minna Anthony Common Nature Center</i>.</p>	 <p>Work with <i>TILT</i> on stewardship projects and trail maintenance on its Signature Preserves, and assist at TILTreks.</p>

VISIT WWW.TILANDTRUST.ORG AND SEND IN A RESUME, ONE-PAGE COVER LETTER, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR 2 REFERENCES TO AYOUNG@TILANDTRUST.ORG. APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 31.

No phone calls or faxes, please.



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.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS THE FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER, INC.

•

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Stefanie Kring, *Vice President*
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•

Gabriela Padewska, *Nature Center Director*
Kimbrie Cullen, *Education Coordinator*
Lauren Eggleston, *SCA Supervisor*
Darlene Sourwine, *Volunteer Coordinator*
Mary Jean Jones, *Bookkeeper*

WELLESLEY ISLAND STAFF

•

Steve Cline, *Park Manager*
Bill Carr, *Assistant Park Manager*

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Annual Open Meeting*Friday • April 17th, 4pm*

The Friends of the Nature Center rely on the support of members. Both monetary and volunteer time are integral to the Nature Center's continued success. The entire membership of Friends of the Nature Center, and the general public interested in learning more about the critical role of the Friends of the Nature Center, Inc., are invited to attend our annual open meeting.

I Love My Park Day*Saturday • May 2nd, 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.

**Minna Anthony Common Nature Center**

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

Hours of Operation

Nature Center 8am-4pm
Trails open sunrise to sunset