

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022 Issue



“Spring Wetlands at the Nature Center” by Andrew Kane

The Nature Center has been blanketed with snow and frigid temperatures since January of this year, but soon the weather will turn warmer and with that nature will begin to grow again! Soon we will turn from white to brown and then the familiar green of plants will begin popping up all over the forest floor. It is slow at first, but then before you know it we are surrounded by all kinds of colors as flowers bloom and buds appear on trees. Being up north all winter makes you appreciate spring that much more. Minna’s writing within this Newsletter touches on all that spring has to offer after a long winter.

As this is the first Newsletter of the year, I want to thank all of you for supporting the Friends of the Nature Center with your membership. We had a terrific year in membership growth, which will allow us to support the Nature Center with enhanced programming, facility improvements, and so much

more. Members, donors, sponsors, and volunteers are the backbone to our success! Thank you to everyone for making 2021 a great year!

The Board and Nature Center staff are looking toward a great year in 2022. Plans are already beginning for our Night for Nature, Benefit Auction, and Autumn Festival. And, oh so much more as programs are happening every weekend at the Nature Center and will be happening almost daily when summer comes! So please plan on visiting us this year and bring a friend or someone who may be visiting you. Come for a hike, one of our educational classes, or just to check out our displays within the Nature Center. We would love to see you soon!

Andy Kane
Board President

The Minna Anthony Common Series

Look to the Woods for Signs of Spring

by Mrs. James A. Common

*Reprinted with permission of the
Watertown Daily Times.*

March may be cold and windy but the skies of March are intense in their blueness and the air is extraordinarily light and clear. March whisks away the debris of winter with its bellows, and we find ourselves reflecting its moods. Every sunny day invites us to the outdoors. Let the countryside emerge one whit from under its frozen roof and they are right at hand.

The pools in the lowlands may be icebound today and tomorrow, but under the noonday sun they become damp around the edges and small pools of dark water appear here and there upon their surfaces. A bit of land is blown bare of snow and almost at once the migrating birds are there eating weed seeds.

Sap has commenced to run in the sugar maples and the poplar show signs of spring due to the fact that the bark of their twigs turns yellow-green long before a bud swells. In the swamp the bark of young aspens is a much brighter green, and the osiers a gayer red than they will be in summer.

The tops of the willow trees along the river banks are decidedly yellow, almost golden. The spray of beech trees has taken on a sheen like that of fresh varnish. The bark of hawthorn branchlets is pink, and the great limbs of the soft maples show now for the only time in the year a real

reason for the common name of the tree, white maple.

Any woods is now a symphony of color – plum branches are plum-color; pin cherries gleam red in the light; elms look yellow-green; buds of hickories are cream-color.

Already out of doors certain bees and flies have thawed out. What a marvelous thing this hibernating is. A bee, a wasp, a caterpillar, a tiny fly, a spider, frozen solidly and having taken no food for months, now can move about again, can fly and can eat. It is a wonder of nature greater than any invention of man.

A brown and orange woolly-bear caterpillar that has been coiled in a ball beneath a bit of bark, now feels an urge to uncoil itself and start out a-humping along on its travels. We meet it on the road, by a path, a-top a snowdrift or in the fields. Apparently the creature is very intent on getting somewhere, and quickly. Soon it will roll itself up again in a cocoon and sleep for a few weeks more. Why it waits until spring to weave its cocoon is just another thing we cannot understand.

Squirrels are very active in the woods. They chatter all about and chase each other from tree to tree. They have not passed the winter exactly as the insects did, for they did not freeze, but they have been fast asleep, sometimes for days at a time.

In flower gardens too are signs of spring, even before the tree buds really swell. Tiny tips of green are poking out where snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils will be in bloom almost before we know it. There is a hint of color in the center of the primrose clump, while out in the woods and fields the frost is heaving things upward as it starts to leave the ground. In woods and gardens are some woolly knobs just showing where soon hepaticas will be in bloom.

And so outdoors tells us, each thing in its own way, that spring is nearly here. Some day very soon a loud “Cheer-up, cheer-up” from a robin on the roof tree will announce it has come again. ■

From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We've had a hearty winter with several good snowfalls and weather perfectly suited to cold-weather recreation. Nature Center visitors have been enjoying snowshoeing and cross-county skiing on our trails. Eel Bay has been a popular ice fishing destination – with many sub-zero days attracting diehard outdoorspeople. We conducted our second annual *Ice Fishing Clinic* led by local fishing guide Aziel Snyder and NY State Parks Stewardship Specialist Peter Zimmer. Thank you, Aziel and Pete, for your expertise! See photos of the clinic in our Donor Spotlight on page 4.

In January we welcomed two new SCA Members: Aliyah Panahi from California and Katriana Maslin from Indiana! They've hit the ground running, and have eagerly immersed themselves in learning about the Nature Center. Read more about Aliyah and Katriana on the next page.

Wellesley Island State Park opens for the season on Friday, May 6th, and the Nature

Center will be open seven days a week through October! The annual *I Love My Park Day* is the following day on Saturday, May 7th – join us for spring cleaning and getting the Nature Center building and grounds ready for the busy season. Also, as you dive into your own spring cleaning and decluttering, keep our June 21st *Benefit Auction* in mind (see page 7 for details).

The snow is thawing and the North Country's "mud season" is approaching. As the weather gets warmer, we hope to see many of you back on the trails and on the river!

Gabriela Padewska
Nature Center Director



Silhouettes of migrating geese punctuate the March sky

For Your Consideration

'Spongy Moth' Adopted as New Common Name for *Lymantria dispar*

There is a new common name for *L. dispar*, formally known as gypsy moth – just in time for them to hatch this spring! As many of you may recall, Wellesley Island was overrun by with these invasive insects last summer. Read the press release from the [Entomological Society of America here](#).

Welcome New *Student Conservation Association (SCA)* Members!

We are thrilled to introduce our 2022 Student Conservation Association (SCA) members: Aliyah and Katriana! New York State Parks partners with the SCA to build the next generation of conservation leaders. Welcome aboard!

Aliyah Panahi

Hi everyone! My name is Aliyah, and I am this year’s SCA Gardening Intern for the Nature Center. Southern California is my home; however, I discovered my love for sustainable agriculture and the outdoors during many summers in rural Missouri on my grandparents’ honey farm. I am here to learn the ins and outs of environmental education, with a focus on sustainable land management. During my time on Wellesley Island, I hope to gain a wide range of experience and skills that will easily transfer over to an interpretive position with the National Park Service. One thing I am especially looking forward to this year is participating in Autumn Fest! In my down time I love to hike, garden, read, and go to the beach.



Californian Aliyah builds her first snowman!



Aliyah (left) and Katriana



Kat leading the “Nature’s Paintbrush” program

Katriana Maslin

Hello! My name is Katriana (Kat for short). I’m from Indiana, and I’m one of the new SCA interns! I’ll be working with the animals at the Nature Center this year. I’ve known I wanted to work in biology since I took an “Introduction to Aquatic Biology” course my senior year of high school, and I graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin with my BS last year! I’m very excited to be here, and I’m looking forward to learning and building my skills while I give back to the community! I enjoy exploring the outdoors, reading, and visiting new places. I love the snow, and I grow quite a few houseplants. When you visit the Nature Center this summer, come say hi! I’d love to meet you.



Donor Spotlight: Snyder Outdoors and Restoration



Parker (right) pulls up a 27-inch pike with Aziel's guidance

Thank you to local fishing guide, Aziel Snyder, for donating his time and talent to lead our *Ice Fishing Clinic* for a second year in a row! February 5th was a beautiful sunny day with temperatures in the teens. We had fourteen people come out to learn this winter sport. Aziel helped us successfully pull up a 27-inch northern pike!

Check out [Snyder Outdoors and Restoration](#) to book Aziel for a private fishing charter on the St. Lawrence River – with optional shore dinner!



Aziel (left) baits hook on tip-up



Participants gather for Ice Fishing Clinic on frozen Eel Bay



Spring Events

Program size may be limited.
Preregistration recommended.
Please call **(315) 482-2479** to register.
Face covering encouraged when indoors.

APRIL

NEST BUILDERS

Saturday, April 2 // 2:00pm

Would you like to help our native birds? Assist our feathered friends by making a nest builder! A nest builder is an ornament on a tree that you fill with soft, natural materials. This will help nesting birds find the right things to build their nests.

STORY WALK

Saturday & Sunday, April 9–10 // 9:00am–2:00pm

Explore the trails while traveling through a storybook! Take a self-paced hike through woods reading pages of a book that have been placed along the trail.

OSPREY WATCHING

Saturday, April 16 // 10:00am

Ospreys migrate up to the North Country to return to their nests. Join us on a guided hike along our shoreline to see if we can spot these beautiful birds.

EARTH DAY at Zoo New York

Saturday, April 23 // 10:00am–3:00pm

Come join the Earth Day celebration 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 at the event, including the Nature Center! For additional information, please call the Thompson Park Zoo at (315) 782-6180.

ARBOR DAY at TILT's Sissy Danforth Rivergate Trail

Saturday, April 30 // 10:00am–2:00pm

Celebrate Arbor Day and the Thousand Islands Land Trust' (TILT) 9th Annual "For the Trees" Celebration by planting trees at the S. Gerald Ingerson Preserve along the Sissy Danforth Rivergate Trail. Bring the whole family to get their hands dirty! There will be numerous family friendly activities, workshops, games, and exhibits from TILT and many different organizations, including the Nature Center! For more information, please visit tilandtrust.org or call (315) 686-5345.

MAY

I LOVE MY PARK DAY

Saturday, May 7 // 9:00am—Noon

Show your Nature Center some love! Volunteer to spruce up the Nature Center for spring and another busy summer season. This is the day when we get out our mop buckets, sponges, garden trowels, rakes, and clippers, and work to beautify our Nature Center. Preregistration is required. To preregister visit ptny.org/ilovemypark or call the Nature Center at (315) 482-2479.

LOON MIGRATION GAME

Saturday, May 14 // 10:00am

The common loon is one of many birds that migrates to the North Country. Migrating birds have a lot to deal with traveling long distances. Come play this interactive life-sized board game and learn about the hazards of migrating.

PICNIC HIKE TO THE NARROWS

Saturday, May 21 // 11:00am

Pack a lunch and join us for a hike to the Narrows! We will sit overlooking the St. Lawrence River and enjoy a picnic lunch. This is a 2.5 mile roundtrip hike over steep and varied terrain.

NATURE “DRAWING FROM MEMORY” GAME

Saturday, May 28 // 2:00pm

Think you have a good memory? Come test your memory skills on our trails. We will take a short hike, find an interesting thing to look at, walk back to the Nature Center, and put your memory to the test. Sound easy? Come try it, it is not as easy as it sounds. Great for all ages.

JUNE

BARK ART

Saturday, June 4 // 2:00pm

Ruff, smooth, jagged are all different ways to describe tree bark. Take a walk in search of different textures to create a unique work of art.

SWALLOW-WORT PULL

Saturday, June 11 // 10:00am—12:00pm

Help us protect our native habitat by removing an invasive plant species called swallow-wort.

FROG WATCHING

Saturday, June 18 // 10:00am

Join us for a hike to our wetlands in search of bullfrogs, spring peepers, and green frogs! Please wear pants and waterproof hiking boots. We will be exploring off-trail for a chance to spot these awesome amphibians!

FREE FISHING DAY

Saturday, June 25 // 10:00am

Join us on the Nature Center’s dock on Eel Bay to celebrate Free Fishing Weekend! No fishing license required to attend this class. Learn the basics of freshwater fishing. Equipment will be provided; bringing your own bait is appreciated.

2ND ANNUAL

FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER BENEFIT AUCTION

TUESDAY, JUNE 21
6-9 PM



DONATION DROP-OFF

Two Locations

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

Dates & Times from 5/31-6/19

Every **Tuesday**, 5:00-7:00pm
Every **Saturday & Sunday**, 10:00am-1:00pm

Volunteers will be there to assist you at drop-off

*Deepening your cottage?
Clean out and donate
for a good cause!*

Donate

New or gently used:

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

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

FACEBOOK LIVE AUCTION Tuesday, June 21, 6-9 pm

Preview Days at Alex Bay Rec Center: Saturday 6/18, 10:00am-1:00pm

Sunday 6/19, 10:00am-4:00pm

How to Bid:

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

Pick up: Wednesday & Thursday, June 22 & 23, 1:00-7:00pm @Alex Bay Rec Center

AUCTION SERVICES DONATED BY DON PECK, AUCTIONEER

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

We're Hiring for the Summer!



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation



student
conservation
association



The Nature Center and Wellesley Island State Park are hiring for summer seasonal positions! Individuals interested in environmental education, visitor services, gardening, trail work, or maintenance can apply by filling out an [Employment Application](#) and emailing to WellesleyIslandStatePark@parks.ny.gov. Questions? Please, call Wellesley Island State Park at (315) 482-2722.

The SCA and New York State Parks seek enthusiastic conservationists to provide critical environmental education on public lands. The Nature Center is looking to fill an Environmental Educator position with a concentration in social media and communications. This 5-month position runs from May 15 – October 15. Housing is included. Visit theSCA.org, or call the Nature Center at (315) 482-2479 to learn more.

Do you want to intern with three local environmental organizations this summer? Become the next Kenneth Deedy Environmental Steward! Experience working with Save the River (STR), Thousand Island Land Trust (TILT), and the Minna Anthony Common Nature Center. Learn more at tilandtrust.org/careers/current-opportunities. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2022.

Save the Date

A Night for Nature
 Thursday, July 14, 2022
 6pm–9pm

*Complimentary
 beer • wine • hors d'oeuvres*

Live music

We look forward to seeing you!

Jason In Flight

THANK YOU to the following 50 members for joining or renewing their commitment recently

Jane Flood	Allentown, PA	John Johnson	Watertown, NY
Andrew & Holly Kane	Liverpool, NY	Susan Johnson	Watertown, NY
Dr. Alfred & Jean Gianfagna	Watertown, NY	Helen Brennan	Clayton, NY
Mary McNeill	Syracuse, NY	Ann Ward	Alexandria Bay, NY
Patrick & Kim Murphy	Jamesville, NY	Royal & Ann Garlock	Alexandria Bay, NY
Joe & Kerry Koen	Hamilton, NY	Dr. Anthony & Frances Ferrari	Fairport, NY
Richard & Carolyn Glass	Dunedin, FL	Jim & Pauline Little	Alexandria Bay, NY
Carolyn Marlowe	Glen Park, NY	Peter & Laurel Pike	Watertown, NY
Norman & Laurie Itjen	Elba, NY	Kenneth VanHatten	Theresa, NY
Lori Arnot	Clayton, NY	Mark Walczyk	Watertown, NY
John & Rosemary Swedrock	Wellesley Island, NY	Deanne Scanlon	Chaumont, NY
Caroline Batterson	Sackets Harbor, NY	Jenny Spencer	Watertown, NY
Pat & Meredith Sullivan	Clayton, NY	Al & Jane Arras	Manlius, NY
Ed & Claudia Smith	Oriskany, NY	Chase & Sarah Miller	New York, NY
Darden MacWade & Molly MacWade MacSherry	Jackson, MS	Deidre Buscaglia	Williamsville, NY
Linda Stagnitta	Alexandria Bay, NY	Dave Clements	Wellesley Island, NY
Dani Baker & David Belding	Wellesley Island, NY	Jodi Towne	Mannsville, NY
Robert Hedden	Wellesley Island, NY	Ronald & Betty Ann Jacobs	Alexandria Bay, NY
Macar's Interiors	Watertown, NY	Robert & Judy Parmiter	Newark, NY
Martha Smith	Watertown, NY	Richard & Leslie Tolman	Chesterland, OH
Bill Siebels	Gouverneur, NY	John Bober & Dr. Lesley Snelling	New Canaan, CT
Tina Siebels	Gouverneur, NY	Manford & Victoria Jerome	Wellesley Island, NY
Don & Kate Dixon	Coventry, CT	Mary Allis Latt	Wellesley Island, NY
Donna McIntosh & Allan Hewitt	Hagaman, NY	Joseph Latt	Wellesley Island, NY
Northern New York Community Foundation	Watertown, NY	John & Melinda Comstock	Alexandria Bay, NY



MISSION STATEMENT

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

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



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

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THE FRIENDS OF THE
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- Gabriela Padewska, *Director*
- Kimbrie Cullen, *Education Coordinator*
- Darlene Sourwine, *Outreach Coordinator*
- Mary Jean Jones, *Bookkeeper*

**WELLESLEY ISLAND
STATE PARK STAFF**

-
- Steven Cline, *Park Manager*
- Bill Carr, *Assistant Park Manager*

Mark Your Calendars!

FRIENDS OF THE NATURE CENTER ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, April 8, 4:00pm

Join us for our 2022 Annual Meeting! Open to all members – the entire membership of Friends of the Nature Center is invited to attend.

The Friends of the Nature Center appreciate the support of members. Both monetary and volunteer time are integral to the Nature Center’s continued success. Thank you!

I LOVE MY PARK DAY

Saturday, May 7, 9:00am—noon

Show your Nature Center some love! I Love My Park Day is the largest single-day volunteer event in New York! Volunteer to spruce up the Nature Center for spring and another busy summer season. This is the day when we get out our mop buckets, sponges, garden trowels, rakes, and clippers, and work to beautify our Nature Center. Preregistration is required. To preregister, call the Nature Center at (315) 482-2479 or visit ptny.org/ilovemypark



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation



Minna Anthony Common Nature Center

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

HOURS OF OPERATION

October–May (off-season):

Nature Center open Wednesday–Sunday
9:00am—3:00pm
Closed Mondays and Tuesdays
Trails open sunrise to sunset daily



Scan to download
the electronic version
of the newsletter



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