

THE MINNA ANTHONY COMMON NATURE CENTER

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021 Issue • June 2021



A river nook along South Bay Trail. Photographed by Andrew Kane.

My first article in the Newsletter as Board President certainly has to be a thank you to the board members that relinquished their duties as of the Annual Meeting on April 9th. Three individuals fulfilled their terms this April and sadly will be leaving the board for a minimum of a year as dictated by our By-Laws. Board President Matthew Elliott, Board Treasurer Susan Mowers and Board Member Barb Eldridge all left the board of the Friends, making room for new and renewed members to join. All three of the members that are leaving dedicated significant time and effort into the Friends of The Nature Center by supporting our mission of environmental education, by encouraging outdoor recreation, and by inspiring our visitors to develop an increased respect for the natural world.

Barb was a member of the board for six years holding various positions including Vice President with the most recent being the Chair of the Education Committee. Barb will certainly be missed as her work not only led to successful educational programs but she was also responsible for acquiring much needed grants. Susan worked tirelessly these past three years assisting the Nature Center in successfully putting together a donor information system, managing website pages, and handling the Treasurer duties this past year. I hope she keeps her phone lines open as we will have questions for sure!

Matthew Elliott was not only Board President these past three years, but he was a board member for a total of six years being a Chairperson of the Capital Campaign the first three

years. The Capital Campaign brought in over a million dollars to purchase the beautiful displays and interactive equipment that fills the Nature Center currently. He went above and beyond the duties of a board member. Not surprising that I tell you then that Matt's father and grandfather both served as Board President of the Friends of the Nature Center. They would be proud of what you have done, Matt!

I certainly would be amiss if I did not welcome the new members to the Board. Joining the Friends as new board members this year are Robin Colello-Poplaski and Richard Gefell. We welcome these lifelong River residents to the Friends and look forward to working with them on our many projects that support our mission. Rejoining the board after serving previously are myself and Joseph Leskoske. Thank you Robin, Rick and Joe! More information on each member is written in the following pages.

Lastly, I want to thank our Director, Gabriela Padewska, and all our New York State Park employees and local volunteers that work so closely with us in supporting this beautiful environment that we are lucky enough to be able to enjoy. THANK YOU!

Andy Kane
Board President

The Minna Anthony Common Series

Flight of Birds Shows Species**Flight Study Should be Started by First
Watching Familiar Birds – Crow and
Hummingbird Widely Differ**

by Minna Anthony Common

*The following is an excerpt from a column
written by Minna Anthony Common, June
1931. Reprinted with permission of the
Watertown Daily Times.*

One of the things that cannot be learned from books is how to recognize birds by their flight. It is a most interesting pastime for the summer months, and not nearly so difficult as it seems at first. The way one goldfinch flies will be the same way every goldfinch flies whether a resident of Maine or Texas – and this fact holds true of every species of bird. Moreover, nearly all of them have distinctive characteristics about their flight.

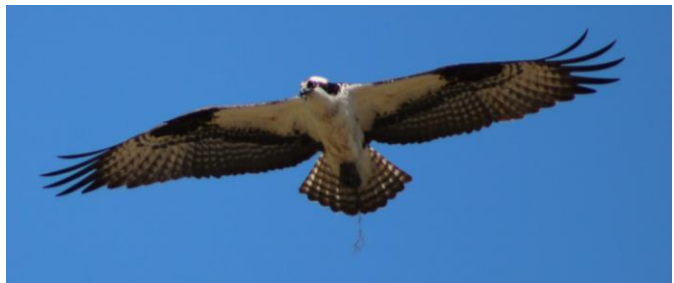
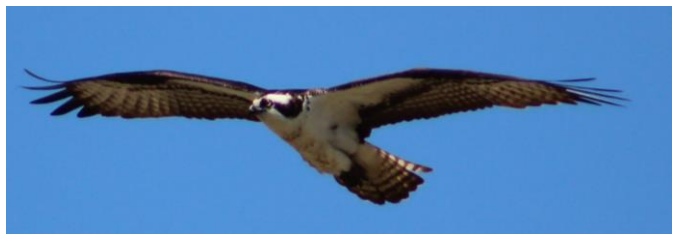
We might begin with the crow. In what steady, even waves he goes across the sky, never missing a wing beat! It may be that before we grow really familiar with this flight we see a large bird flying evenly along and judge it a crow, then suddenly there is a break in the regular flap-flap and the bird makes a few smooth glides, or wheels about in great spirals. Such actions belie the crow nature and we know it for a gull. In certain lights a bird's color, whether black or white, cannot be determined and the only way to be sure of the bird is to know the flight.

The hummingbird's flight as he hovers before a flower is so radically his own that it is easy to learn. The up-and-down glide of the goldfinch; the fluttering of the bobolink above the nest; the volplaning of the purple martin; the bob-tailed flippety-flip of the starling; the graceful skimming of the barn swallow; the dancing of the

snowbirds; these actions in every case name the author.

The flight study may be begun by first watching a very familiar bird and making mental note of the way it moves through the air. Later pick out the bird while in flight, then watch until it alights to see if the judgment was correct.

As a pastime, flight study has many advantages. It demands no specially appointed hours, and can be indulged in while playing golf, walking for exercise, doing household errands, hoeing in the gardening, or even hanging up the wash. Being able to name the birds as they pass in review across the sky adds one more bit of pleasure to the enjoyment of being out of doors. ■



Studying the flight of resident Osprey

From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The warmer weather is here! The ice has fully thawed and boats replace ice-fishing shanties on Eel Bay. Birds are beginning to nest and wildlife is plentiful. This summer, we look forward to opening our *Pollinator House* (formerly called the Butterfly House) to more insect visitors! We hope to attract a larger variety of wild pollinators to our native plant gardens with an open canopy.

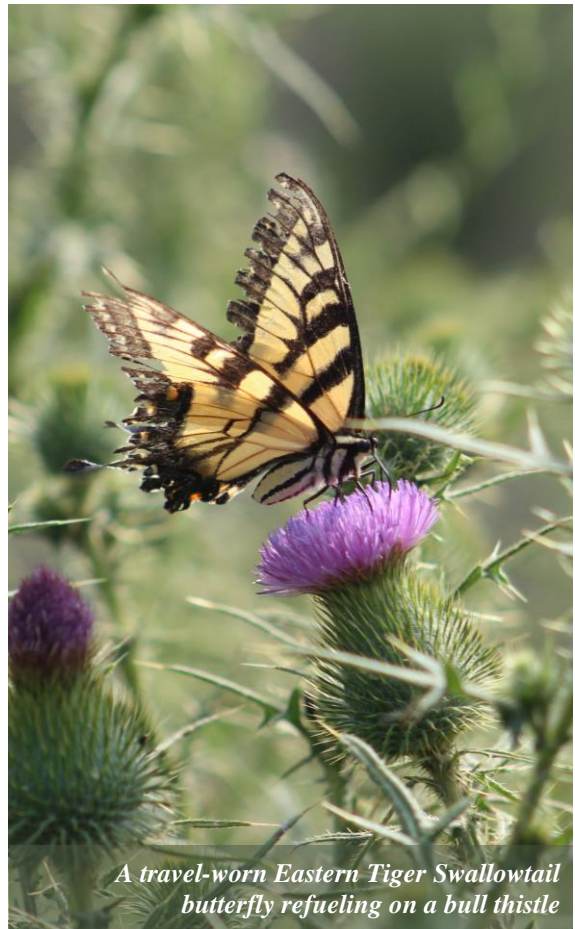
Recently, we welcomed new and returning board members to the Nature Center team. The staff and I are very excited to work with incoming board president Andy Kane, returning board member Joe Leskoske, and new board members Robin Colello-Poplaski and Rick Gefell. Read more on page 9. Andy, Joe, Robin, and Rick – a warm welcome aboard to you!

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who attended the 10th Anniversary of *I Love My Park Day* the weekend of May 1st and 2nd! We had almost fifty volunteers helping during this two-day event – the Nature Center building, grounds, and gardens all look amazing and ready for summer! We are very grateful for all your hard work! See photos of this great event on page 4.

We are still in the process of filling summer seasonal positions, so please take a look on our website and help spread the word. We've added job postings for a *Gardener* and *Visitor Services Assistant*. The Park also has positions open in the areas of maintenance and cleaning.

Lastly, we hope to see you at one of our many programs or special events this summer! July and August are our busiest times, and we will be offering daily programming. Please, take a look on pages 7-8 for a glimpse. Also, *A Night for Nature* is back this year! See page 3 for details. Our full calendar of events can be found on our website and Facebook page. Have a wonderful summer!

Gabriela Padewska
Nature Center Director



A travel-worn Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly refueling on a bull thistle

For Your Consideration

Get ready for a cicada-filled summer!

Learn more about the Brood X group of cicadas in The New York Times article entitled [*Billions \(Yes, Billions\) of Cicadas Soon to Emerge From Underground*](#). This insect phenomena occurs only once every 17 years! Expect cicadas to start emerging at early as May, or as soon as temperatures reach 64°F.

6TH Annual *A Night for Nature*

A NIGHT FOR NATURE
“Together We Can”
Thursday, July 8, 6–9pm

Beer, wine, hors d'oeuvres by the TI Club
Music by the Buoy Rockers
Silent Auction

*Tickets: \$75 per person / \$65 for Trailblazer or Hero members
or Birch sponsorship of \$300*

By becoming a Birch sponsor you generously support this event and our mission.
This includes two tickets, the listing of your name as a sponsor on the table tents,
and either a gift membership or a select item from the Nature Center store.
Please RSVP with payment by June 30th.

We look forward to seeing you!

THANK YOU

Watertown Daily Times	Macar's Interiors
Watertown Savings Bank	Feather in Flight
NNY Community Foundation	Boathouse Marine
Weldon and Weldon Financial Coaching	White's Lumber
WD Bach Excavating and Consulting	Uncle Sam Boat Tours
Lake Ontario Realty	Widrick Auto Sales
Griffith Energy	AT Mathews & Dier
ABC50	

Thank you to all volunteers who attended I Love My Park Day!



Summer Events



Scan to see the full
calendar of events on
our website

Program size is limited. Preregistration required.
Please call **(315) 482-2479** between the hours of
8:00am—4:00pm, Wednesday through Sunday to
register. *Face covering required.*

SPIDER'S FISHING CLINICS

First Saturday of the Month: July 1, August 7, and September 4

Rod & Reel 11:00am—1:00pm // Fly Fishing 1:30—3:30pm

Hook some new fishing skills with expert fisherman Spider Rybaak! Eel Bay on the St. Lawrence River is a prime location to learn the basics of rod-and-reel sportfishing and fly fishing.

Participants over 16 are required to have a freshwater fishing license for this event. BYOT: Bring Your Own Tackle, limited supply available. Program is free thanks to the Barbara & Daniel Butts Enrichment Fund

JULY

THE GREAT SCAVENGER HUNT

Saturday, July 10 // 9:00—11:30am

Use your seeking skills while taking a walk on our hiking trails. Pick up a scavenger hunt at the Nature Center to begin your adventure. Wear good hiking shoes and dress for the weather.

PAINTING WATERCOLORS LOOSE AND FRESH

Thursday, July 15 – Saturday, July 17 // 9:00am—4:00pm daily

The Nature Center is partnering with the Thousand Islands Art Center to host a three-day class with award-winning American Watercolorist Ken Hobson! Nature Center members receive the discounted member rate. To learn more and to register please visit: tiartscenter.org/classes.

NATURE STORYTELLER

Fridays, July 23 and August 6 // 10:30-11:30am

Listen to fun and exciting folktales from around the world, retold by professional storyteller Lynn Morgan. Stories are for all ages. Lynn encourages participants to be a part of her wonderful stories.

YOGA

Thursdays, July 29 and August 26 // 10:00-11:00am

Join Barb Eldridge for yoga on the Nature Center lawn overlooking the St. Lawrence River. This peaceful class is for all abilities. If weather is inclement, class will be held indoors. BYO yoga mat.

HAAS THE HERON: THE BEGINNING OF AN ADVENTURE

Friday, July 30 // 10:30am

Join *Save The River* for a reading of a heartwarming story about a father great blue heron who anxiously awaits the arrival of his chick. Learn about the fascinating world of this amazing bird and its habitat. After the reading there will be fun heron-themed activities.

BAT WORKSHOP

Saturday, July 31 // 9:00am—11:00am

Mike Nuckols, Ag Program Lead at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, will discuss the benefits of attracting and protecting bats. Mike will discuss the benefits that bats provide in the ecosystem, and demonstrate how easy it is to build a bat-house using scrap wood.

AUGUST

NATURE BINGO

Saturday, August 14 // 9:00am—11:30am

Pick up a nature bingo card at the Nature Center's front desk. How many nature things can you find? Search by yourself or compete with your family members.

CHILDREN'S FISHING DERBY

Saturday, August 21 // 9:00am—Noon

Prizes for: Longest, Heaviest, & Most Fish Caught. For children 15 and under. Participants over 16 are required to have a freshwater fishing license. Registration fee is \$2. BYOT: Bring Your Own Tackle. Rod & Reel recommended. Bait will be provided.

INVENTIONS INSPIRED BY NATURE

Saturday, August 28 // 1:30pm—2:30pm

Ever wonder how someone got the idea for Velcro? Spikey plants called burrs that stick to clothing and fur inspired the invention! Come join us on an easy hike through the woods to discover how looking to nature can spark inspiration to help solve human-based problems!

SEPTEMBER

BLAZING A TRAIL: THE STORY OF MINNA ANTHONY COMMON

Saturday, September 11 // 10:30am—Noon

Today is Minna Anthony Common's birthday! Help us celebrate by welcoming Becky Ferrigno, author of the children's book, *Blazing a Trail: The Story of Minna Anthony Common*. Becky will do a book reading, sharing the amazing story of this local environmental hero as well as our namesake! Books will be available for purchase and can be signed by the author after the reading.

INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, September 18

Two locations: Nature Center // 10:00—Noon

Potters Beach (Grindstone Island) with TILT // 10:00—2:00pm

This year the Thousand Island Land Trust (TILT), Save the River (STR), and the Nature Center are teaming up to clean up our St. Lawrence River shorelines! Volunteer to clean up the Park's boat launches and shorelines along the Nature Center's trails. Or to register for the Potters Beach location, please call TILT at (315) 686-5345 or visit tilandtrust.org/explore/treks-camp.

DISCOVER WETLANDS TANKS TOUR

Saturday, September 25 // 1:30—3:30pm

Discover what lives in wetlands by joining Jasmine, our animal caretaker, on a tour of our reptile and amphibian tanks. Learn the importance of wetlands and what it takes to properly care for our animal ambassadors.

THANK YOU to the following 79 members for joining or renewing their commitment recently

James & Erin Lettiere	Clayton, NY	Marguerite Cleary	Princeton, NJ
Kevin & Jane Heffron	Wellesley Island, NY	Kristine Ismail	Rochester, NY
Jane Gillett	T.I. Park, NY	T.I. Assoc. Incp	Wellesley Island, NY
Mary Jo Jackson	Watertown, NY	Bernard & Barbara Forth	Fayetteville, NY
Kathy Hummel	Clayton, NY	Court Rutherford	Alexandria Bay, NY
Ali Fernaays-Forsyth	Rochester, NY	Robert & Kathleen Hanna	Washington DC
Russell & Marion Lee	Dexter, NY	Christopher & Anita Brown	Beltsville, MD
Shelley Lofberg	Wellesley Island, NY	Chuck & Libby Spaulding	Cortland, NY
Mary Hannah Arnot	Wellesley Island, NY	Robert & Rita Gefell	Watertown, NY
Audie & Laura Cerow	Clayton, NY	Brad & Mary Pat Adams	Wellesley Island, NY
Tyler Goldberg	Louisville, KY	Jim & Kathy Fenn	Wellesley Island, NY
Pat & Dory Sheldon	Wellesley Island, NY	Erica Hoffman	Tampa, FL
Brand & Kelli Gould	Denver, CO	Robert Nassau	Wellesley Island, NY
Christina Kotula	Camillus, NY	Michael & Jan Joyce	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Mary Ellen Gilmore	Ponte Verde, FL	Maggie Reid	Fayetteville, NY
Elaine Goerger	Alexandria Bay, NY	Aaron & Alys Huizenga	Clayton, NY
Robert & Loretta Reeves	Palmyra, NY	Bernard Slate	Clayton, NY
Stefanie Kring	Redwood, NY	Bonnie Gray & Agnes Chrietzberg	Richmond, KY
Don & Barbara Rumpf	Wellesley Island, NY	Audrey Tripp	Hartsville, SC
Scott & Cindy Mahoney	Freeport, ME	Leon & Dawn Rusho	Clayton, NY
Paul Fowler	Jamesville, NY	Tina Graham	Chaumont, NY
Mark & Donna Quallen	Clayton, NY	Don & Sheila Smith	Wellesley Island, NY
Ken & Karen Green	Manlius, NY	Andy & Susanne Duclon	Wellesley Island, NY
Janet Staples	Clayton, NY	Sally Stevens	Ellisburg, NY
Kate Johnson	Watertown, NY	Phyllis Schwartz	Camillus, NY
Donald Coon	Watertown, NY	Joe & Rachel Gianfagna	Watertown, NY
Tom & Leah Neely	Redwood, NY	Conor & Stephanie Murphy	Camillus, NY
Dr. Richard & Sally Sauer	Cape Vincent, NY	Susan Bach	Clayton, NY
Riveredge Resort	Alexandria Bay, NY		
Barbara Hupp	Wellesley Island, NY		
JoLynn Fiorentino	Watertown, NY		
Cary & Jaqueline Derrigo	Watertown, NY		

Matt Chase	Alexandria Bay, NY
Jackie Reuben & Kate Casatelli	Syracuse, NY
Adam & Katie Hungerford	Clayton, NY
Tyler & Madison Baitz	Clayton, NY
Paul & Taylor Arras	Syracuse, NY
Dan & Sarah Radmanovic	Adams, NY
William & Chantel Taylor	Watertown, NY
Paul & Angela Picunas	Clayton, NY
William & Nancy Maharan	Redwood, NY
Michael & Amy Pastuf	Punta Gorda, FL

Katie Campbell	Watertown, NY
Lauren Hardwick	Watertown, NY
Rod & Jennifer Voss	Watertown, NY
Kat Bamann	Watertown, NY
George & Barb McAloon	LaFargeville, NY
Erin Wiley	Adams, NY
Andrew Larson	Adams, NY
Jordan Graban	Watertown, NY
Claire Wakefield	Clayton, NY

Common Currents

MEMBERSHIP MIXERS

Aug
13

Kayaking

Friday

AUGUST 13, 2021

6:00 - 8:00pm

Oct
23

Luminary Hike

Saturday

OCTOBER 23, 2021

6:00 - 8:00pm

Please RSVP (315) 482-2479



Welcome New and Returning Board Members!



Andrew “Andy” Kane served on the board previously for 5 years and is rejoining as Board President. Andy has been coming up to the River in the summers since being a child as he is a 4th generation River Rat. After serving 27 years in banking, Andy dusted off his camera and began his career in photography. He is currently opening a gallery in Thousand Island Park and is in the process of publishing a book of River photography. His love for the Nature Center goes back to his early years as he spent countless hours enjoying the trails and beauty of the Park. “After seeing the happiness in the elementary children’s faces upon arriving for a Nature Center field trip, I now know how important our programming is to the community and the local environment.”



Robin Colello-Poplaski is a lifelong resident of the Thousand Islands and a 4th generation River Rat. She is a strong advocate for the environment and the natural ecosystems along the River. Robin is a School Psychologist and currently works in Watertown, NY. She has spent her career working with children and families and hopes to connect more families with the wonderful experiences the Nature Center has to offer. She is very excited to be carrying on the family tradition as a Board Member for the Nature Center as her mother, Joan Collins, was one of the founding Board Members.



Richard “Rick” Gefell is a lifelong summer resident of Thousand Island Park. He has many fond memories of hiking and camping on the trails of the Nature Center with his friends back in his early teenage years. “I actually recall attending the Grand Opening of the Nature Center with my parents and siblings as a 10 year old.” Rick recently retired from a 36-year career as a Project Manager and Business Development Director with the Purcell Construction Corporation and now feels that it is time to “give back,” and offer support to our River Community. “I can think of no better way to offer my time and my passion for the St. Lawrence River than to serve on the Board of Directors of Friends of the Nature Center.



Joseph “Joe” Leskoske taught Science in middle school for over 33 years, primarily at Lyncourt School in the Syracuse area. After retiring, he and his wife, Kathy, moved to Wellesley Island to be closer to untouched nature as they enjoy the outdoors so much. They have both been involved with the Nature Center since becoming volunteers in 2005 and have not stopped since. Joe served 6 years on the Board of the Friends and served as Chair of the Membership Committee while still volunteering almost daily. After a year of not sitting on the Board, Joe is proud to say “I’m back! I love the Nature Center and all that it stands for.”



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.

•

Andrew Kane, *President*
Stefanie Kring, *Vice President*
Jonathan White, *Treasurer*
Jeffrey Hanna, *Secretary*
Jane Arras
Robin Colello-Poplaski
Richard Gefell
Alysa Huizenga
Leslie Johnson
Joseph Leskoske
Erin Lettiere
Kerry Roberge
Meredith Sullivan
Jeffrey Weldon

NATURE CENTER STAFF

•

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!**A Night for Nature***Thursday, July 8, 6-9pm*

Join us for our sixth annual gala! Live music, good company, all for a good cause! Complimentary beer, wine, hors d'oeuvres are included. Your generous support benefits our mission to continue Minna's legacy of education, conservation, and preservation. We look forward to seeing you!

**Common Currents
Membership Mixers**

Meet other Nature Center members while enjoying a fun activity! Mixers occur every season.

Summer: Kayaking*Friday, August 13, 6-8pm***Fall: Luminary Hike***Saturday, October 23, 6-8pm***Blazing a Trail: The Story of
Minna Anthony Common***Saturday, September 11,
10:30am -Noon*

Today is Minna Anthony Common's birthday! Help us celebrate by welcoming Becky Ferrigno, author of the children's book, *Blazing a Trail: The Story of Minna Anthony Common*. Becky will do a book reading, sharing the amazing story of this local environmental hero as well as our namesake! Books will be available for purchase and can be signed by the author after the reading.

**Minna Anthony Common Nature Center**

Wellesley Island State Park

44927 Cross Island Road

Fineview, NY 13640

(315) 482-2479

Hours of Operation

Nature Center open Wednesday—Sunday

9:00am—3:00pm (closed noon—1pm)

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Trails open sunrise to sunset daily



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the electronic version
of the newsletter