NATURAL LAND INSTITUTE

Conserving Land in Northern Illinois

Spring 2021

ACCREDITED LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Executive Director's Message

Kerry Leigh
Executive Director

Last December, the moment we finished our virtual Gala I exhaled and sat back just resting for a moment, as I realized what 2020 had been for NLI, and for all of you on an often treacherous and truly epic scale. The Gala was both the culmination of a year of grit and resilience, and the hope for 2021. NLI achieved real gains, more than I could have imagined! From the cancellation of our annual dinner in March to a successful virtual Gala and the cancellation of our Family Nature Day to its resurrection into a summer long virtual event and from cancelling volunteer work days to learning so many new virtual skills to connect and be with people.

2020 saw so many more people than usual escaping their homes to find solace in nature. The year has given us a preparedness for the unexpected, and our staff and board jumped with both feet into the swirling waters of uncertainty. We closed on a property that united into one preserve two smaller ones, found and monitored a Blanding's turtle on one of our preserves and hired new stewardship staff.

The impacts of 2020 will continue to ripple through 2021, yet even as the social fabric of this organization and our lives may be a little frayed around the edges and in need of some mending when we can gather safely again, we have been strengthened. We see how we must always embrace change, and we look forward to celebrating new voices, and creating new partnerships.

We are grateful for your ongoing support and honored you chose to celebrate the natural world with us, and use the healing power of nature.

Amanda Gorman, the 22 year old poet, affirmed that during the inauguration when she looked out on our world and said:

So while once we asked,
How could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
Now we assert
How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
We will not march back to what was
But move to what shall be…

Kerry Leigh

Paul Baits and Kerry Leigh made a toast to celebrate Nygren Wetland Preserve's 20th Anniversary during the virtual Gala fundraiser, A Great Beginning. Photo: Curt Johnsen

Cover Photo:
American Bullfrog by
Andrea Van Briesen Photography

Apple River runs through the northwest corner of Townsend Glade. Photo: Curt Johnsen

Land and Water Protection

Townsend Glade Land & Water Preserve

Stewardship at Townsend Glade Land and Water Reserve progressed in 2020 in a couple of big ways. Most significant was the preserve's dedication as a Land and Water Reserve in September by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. Land and Water Reserve status further protects 9 endangered species and several unique habitats on the 148-acre preserve.

The Northwest Illinois Stewardship Co-op (NISC) Strike Team coordinated by Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation continued clearing brush and trees that have for some time been encroaching on the ecosystem from which the preserve derives its name. A series of dolomite glades at Townsend and several other properties near Apple River Canyon State Park are home to many uncommon prairie wildflowers!

Natural Land Institute also engaged in a management agreement with NISC to implement a tree planting on existing farm fields that will fulfill grant obligations from when our organization initially protected the property. The oaks and hickories in the planting will provide habitat for many animals, including the federally threatened Northern Long-eared Bat. The preserve is open to the public.

This field will be restored to prairie to support grassland birds. Photo: Kerry Leigh

And Three Made One: A New Acquisition Unites and Expands Two Preserves

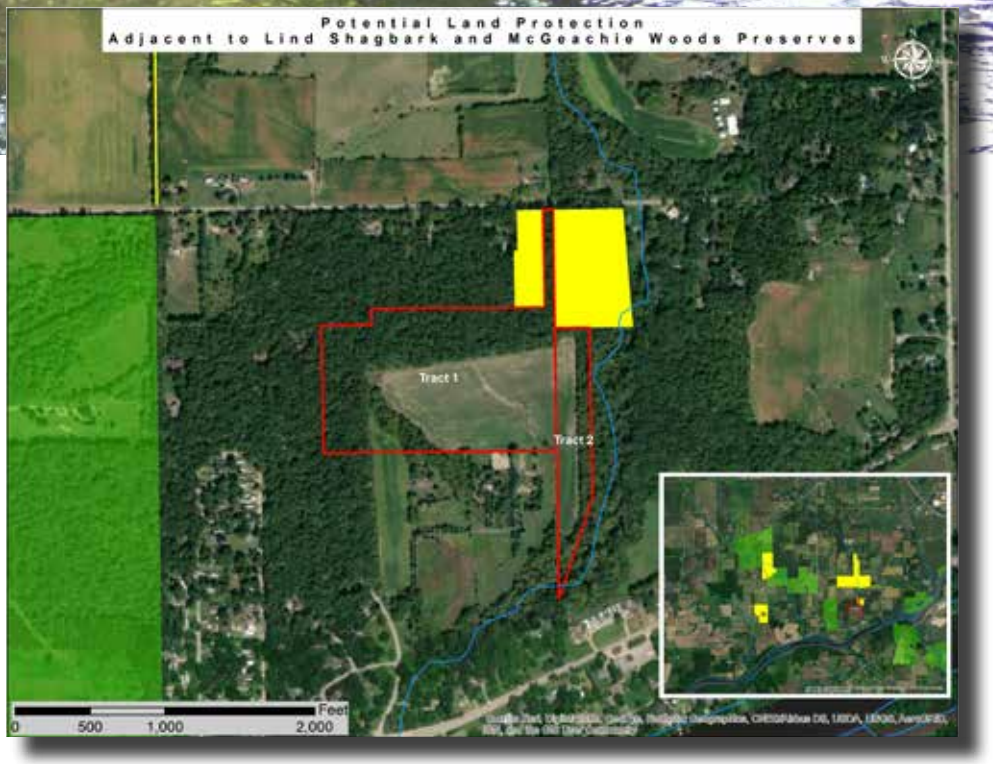
The fall of 2020 saw the McGeachie Woods Preserve (3 acres) and the Lind Shagbark Preserve (9 acres) united as one with the addition of two new parcels! The preserve now totals 54 acres and has been named the Lind McGeachie Woods Preserve! The two new parcels were purchased with a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation and with generous contributions from our donors.

This site supports a quality dry-mesic upland forest that has shagbark hickory, ironwood, white oak, red oak, black oak, and black-haw viburnum. It straddles a moderately to steeply-sloping ridge with a steep slope on the eastern edge of the ridge dropping off sharply toward the creek. The eastern edge of the preserve lies within the floodplain of Silver Creek

Silver Creek Photo: Dion Faith

dominated with silver maple, hackberry, green ash, burr oak, and American elm. The new parcels also include some old field which will be restored to prairie to encourage grassland birds.

Exploring what breeding birds and bats live there through surveys, as well as frog call monitoring and stream surveys will be encouraged! Let us know if you would like to participate in a Citizen Scientist monitoring event! Public access is anticipated to be available by late spring 2022 along Fitzgerald Road.



Devil's Backbone Preserve gets its name due to a dramatic sandstone ridge that runs from the northwest corner to the southeast corner.

Photo: Kerry Leigh

Addition to Beautiful Devil's Backbone Preserve

In December, 2020, through a gift from the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Oregon, Ill., and as part of a settlement agreement for an unfortunate and unintentional mistake in logging a portion of our preserve, our Devil's Backbone Preserve has been increased from 41 acres to nearly 60 acres! The original 41 acres were donated to NLI by Harriet Lowden Madlener in 1970.

This beautiful, hilly preserve has dry-mesic upland forest with sandstone outcroppings. The majority of the preserve consists of a dramatic sandstone

ridge running from the northwest corner of the property to the southeast corner. Hence the name Devil's Backbone! The steep slopes give way to stony outcrops and cliffs along the eastern edge of the preserve. Gale Creek runs through the northeast portion of the preserve. In June of 1982 the site was listed as an Illinois Natural Heritage Landmark and has several rare plants documented. In 2006 the preserve was added to the Natural Areas Inventory (Category III) because of its unique geological feature.

Devil's Backbone Preserve Photo: Jill Kennay

Land Stewardship

The COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to many activities in 2020, certainly the consequences of the virus have had a lasting impact in many serious ways. Natural Land Institute halted an incredibly productive spring burn season, and suspended regularly scheduled volunteer events. In past years our total volunteer hours have filled up the time that a full-time staff member would normally work, so the absence of volunteers in the restoration of our preserves was certainly felt. In-person activities were limited to staff only in many cases throughout the growing season.

Despite the pandemic, our organization participated in an AmeriCorps partnership between Severson Dells Nature Center, Forest Preserves of Winnebago County, Boone County Conservation District, and DeKalb County Forest Preserve District. Our AmeriCorps service member, Connor McClelland, helped us fulfill stewardship tasks between May and September.

Having increased our own capacity to take care of our land in the last few years with donated equipment, NLI was still able to make significant headway on several priority projects, including Nygren Wetland Preserve, Keefer Reserve, Burr Oak Valley, and Silver Creek Woods. Restoration efforts continued at Lost Flora Fen, Pecatonica Ridge Prairie, Beach Cemetery Prairie, Wilson Prairie, Kyte River Bottoms, and Lyndon Agnew Prairie. Natural Land Institute put into effect its widest ranging wildlife monitoring program, putting to use telemetry and point surveys across several preserves.

As gathering restrictions were relaxed, NLI transitioned back into regularly scheduled volunteer activities with social distancing. The transition has been smooth, but is still evolving. The safety of our staff and volunteers is crucial in the management of our beloved landscape in northern Illinois. Please let us know if you would like to join us by contacting Zach Grycan, Director of Stewardship, at zgrycan@naturalland.org.

Starting a prescribed burn at Burr Oak Valley Preserve

Photo: Judy Barnard

Ohio Spiderwort

Photo: Jill Kennay

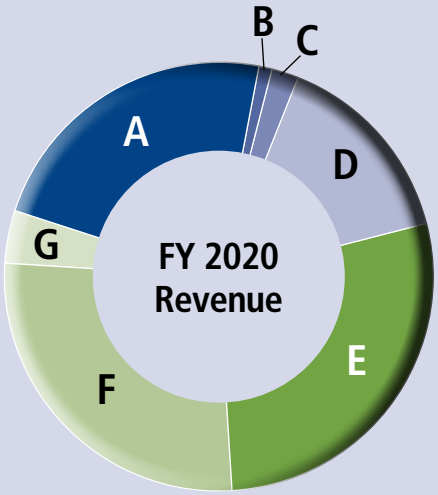
2020 Wildflower Walkabout Virtual Series

Because of gathering restrictions, NLI teamed up with Severson Dells Nature Center to create videos of 11 Virtual Wildflower Walkabout tours at preserves in Boone, Winnebago and Ogle Counties throughout the spring. Thank you to our walk leaders, who agreed to transition from in person walks to recording highlights from their favorite preserves.

Each week, a video was recorded at the scheduled site to show what was in bloom at our woodland and prairie preserves. Edited videos were posted on Facebook and our websites. The videos received more than 1,850 views, or an average of 169 views per tour. We also encouraged members to visit the preserves after learning about the spring wildflowers on display.

You can still enjoy the videos at — NaturalLand.org/videos.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Summary

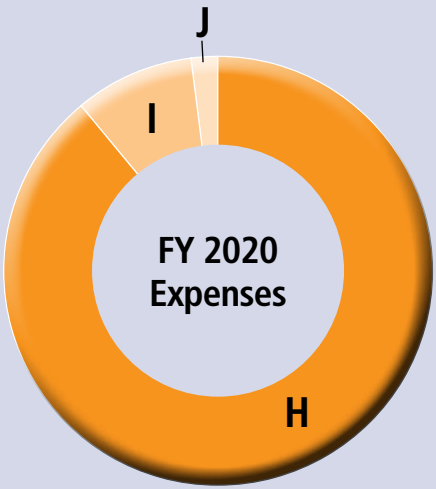


Assets

Cash	$ 527,158
Promises to give	6,000
Prepaid expenses	18,630
Land held for preservation	8,273,557
Conservation easements	1,160,868
Buildings and equipment	175,651
Receivables	125,000
Investments	5,888,162
Total Assets	**$16,175,026**

Less

Payables	$ 161,354
Unearned revenue	316,055
Net Assets	$15,697,617



Summary of audited financial statements. For financial statements audited by Wipfli, LLP, please visit www.naturalland.org

Revenue and Expenses

Revenue

A) Contributions	$ 381,379
B) Special Events	10,902
C) Investment income	89,000
D) Miscellaneous	238,365
Unrestricted	$ 719,646
E) Grants	$ 467,643
F) Investment income	460,529
G) Miscellaneous	100,000
Restricted & Designated	$ 1,028,172

Expenses

H) Program services	$ 683,345
I) Management and general	66,219
J) Membership and fundraising	17,985
Unrestricted	$ 767,549

Natural Land Institute

The mission of the Natural Land Institute is to create an enduring legacy of natural land in northern Illinois for people, plants and animals.

Our vision: *We envision a world in which people recognize that we are a part of nature and act with the knowledge that our future depends upon preserving the natural systems that support all life on Earth.*

The Natural Land Institute, an accredited land trust, is a private, 501(c)3, not-for-profit, land conservation organization based in Rockford, Illinois, which has protected more than 17,300 acres of natural land in Illinois since 1958.

The NLI is a not-for-profit supported by tax-deductible contributions. To donate, contact:

Natural Land Institute, 320 South Third Street, Rockford, Illinois 61104
Phone: **815/964-6666**
Email: **info@NaturalLand.org**; or
visit our website at **www.NaturalLand.org**

2020 Board of Trustees:

President ..... Paul Baits
Vice President ..... Linda Miller
Vice President — through June ..... Ellwyn Englof
Vice President — after June ..... Mark Luthin
Treasurer ..... Jay Evans
Secretary ..... Jon Duerr
Immediate Past President ..... Ray Ferguson

Judy Barnard, Rockford
John Cook, Rockford
Ed Eggers, Genoa
Adam Guarino, Machesney Park
Bill Hoff, Pecatonica
Mark Luthin, Belvidere
Jenn Nowicki, Freeport
Ashley Sarver, Rockford
Charlie Sturm, Rockford
Dan Swift, Rockford
Nancy Williamson, Village of Lakewood
Robert Young, Rockford

Retiring Trustees June 2020: Ellwyn Englof, Dan Williams

Staff:

Executive Director ..... Kerry Leigh
Assistant Director ..... Jill Kennay
Director of Stewardship ..... Zachary Grycan
Director of Marketing & Membership ..... Kim Johnsen
Restoration Ecologist ..... Tyler Pellegrini
Administrative Specialist ..... Jessica Formea
Facilities Maintenance ..... Kent Wolfe
Stewardship Technician ..... Laura Helmich

Weekly Volunteer:

Administration ..... Marianna Page

Thank You to Our 2020 NLI Members

Protectors of the Land ($5,000 and above)

Anonymous
Dorothy Baits
Paul and Teri Baits
Jon and Joy Duerr
John and Marilyn Fulton
John and Colleen Holmbeck
Paul and Judith Letourneau
Mark and Laurie Luthin
Gordon and Linda Neese
Don and Espie Nelson
Herb and Marianna Page
Dan and Susan Swift

Stewards of the Land ($2,500 - $4,999)

Gary and Judy Anderson
Larry and Donna Balch
Clare Bland
Ann Boisclair and Jeffrey Jens
Ed and Vicki Eggers
Jay and Jane Evans
William and Sally Hoff
Keith Syfert and Linda Miller
Ted Ross in memory of wife, Kathie Ayers
Greg and Karen Ruffner

Trustees of the Land ($1,000 - $2,499)

Jim and Marion Applegate
Ben Harding Family Foundation
Bernie and Cindy Buchholz
Ron and Carol Burmeister
Mary Caskey
Steve and Diane Clark
Mark and Brenda Cormier
Elizabeth Dickinson
Ellwyn and Gayle Englof
Ray and Char Ferguson
Gary and Cathy Hoover
Russ and Gin Johansson
Steve and June Keibler
Mark Keister and Sheryl Wolff
John Knaus
Mary Lou Lafler
Kent and Kathy Lawrence
Dan and Amy Loescher
Richard Luthin
Lydia Macauley
Nancy Maze
Randy and Jessie Mermel
Joe and Sindy Micho
Eric Neubauer
Jerry Paulson
Shane and Janet Peterson in memory of George and Barbara Fell
Bruce Ross-Shannon and Ruthe Falk
Bill and Julie Shippee
Dale Shriver and Judy Rogers
Stephen Symes
Daniel and Cynthia Torrisi
Nancy Winter

Benefactor ($500 - $999)

Richard Benning
Karen Blomgren
Leroy and Diane Busker
John and Sandra Carleton
Steve and Lisa Carter
Timothy and Eliza Earle
Sylvia Emerson
Vincent Fidanza
Steve and Diane Gleasman
James Godshalk and Marjorie Lundy
David Hansen
Charles and Prudy Harker
Jane Kerr
Kerry Leigh and Jim Anderson
Dick Leighton
Don McFall
Hope Moore
William and Nancy Plate
Richard and Sandra Scott
Barbara and Jack Simon
Troy and Jill Skwor
Judy Snyder
Gary and Teresa Sommers
Robert Szafoni
Hazen and Carol Tuck
Nancy Williamson and Steve Byers
Teresa Wilmot

Guardian ($250 - $499)

Jon and Tammy Aldrich
Ellen Baker
James and Vickie Baker
Peter and Kris Baldo
Andrew and Jeanne Bergstrom
Boone County Conservation Dist.
Alan Branhagen
Gerard and Marie Bueche
Joe and Ann Chamberlain
Paul and Sue Christensen
Jack and Lora Cook
Phil and Kathy Dierstein
Tim and Debby Dimke
Douglas Ecker
Karl and Barbara Erickson
Paula Evans
Dianne Feldt
Frank and Barbara Flores
Loren and Jan Floto
Ed and Carol Foster
John and Carol Gerrond
Rita Haelman
Gary and Darcy Hess
Scott and Mary Hitchcock
Paul and Linda Hoefert
Mark Jenssen
Curt and Kim Johnsen
Brenda Jones
Thomas Jordan
Howard and Lauren Knodle
Larry Konstant
Susan Lacerra
Co Leber and Robert Mirgain
Ruth and Tom Little
Peter and Pam Lonsway
Ryan Lovejoy
Julie Maffei
Ronald and Kathleen Mattison
Gary and Joanne McIntyre
Scott and Kelly Monson
Jerrold Moors
John Mori
Richard and Luci Nora
Sam and Patty Oliveri
Allen and Ruth Penticoff
Bruce and Susan Peterson
Ronald Peterson
John Rogner
Timothy and Carrie Rollins
Ashley Sarver
Julianne Schmidt
Roger and Pamela Schmidt
David and Sue Schroepfer
Laura Sjoquist and John Kaufmann
David and Connie Sliktas
Ron and Jennifer Spielman
Jeffrey Stack and Kathryn Mielke
Wayne Svoboda
Cindy Skrukrud and Thomas von Geldern
Bill and Marijean Whitcher
Andrew Williams and Rebecca Christoffel
Jim and Janet Wilson
Emily and Adam Wykes

Protector ($100 - $249)

Anonymous
Charles Anderson
Dorothy Anderson
Jack and Joyce Armstrong
LeRoy and Kathy Bach
Eric and Becky Baeverstad
Jay Baker
Tim and Catherine Balassie
Francie Barnes
Brian and Liz Barnes
Rick and Bonnie Barton
William and Leah Baskin
Mark and Gill Batterman
John Beck
Joy Beckman
Robert and Beverly Beebe
Roger Benedict and Paula Christensen
Rod and Wendy Bennett
John and Marilyn Bettice
Mary Blackmore
Steve and Mardie Blomgren
Joe Bove
Katharine Bull
Dan and Stacy Burton

Female Eastern Pondhawk Photo: Alan Mohring

Michael Cantlon
Dave and Kim Cheng
Gary and Debra Chessare
Marjorie and Roland Christen
Michael and Melissa Ciaccio
Dorothy Cieskus
Robert Clark and Cassi Paslick
Mary Conley
Keith Copeland
Greg and Lorna Cote
Alfred and Susan Cowan
Sherri Crawford
John Culley
Joe and Diane Dailing
Peter Damby
Ray and Darlene Davis
Roger Derix
Michael and Sondra DesCamps
Deb Dietz
Randy and Sylvia Downing
Daniel and Kirby Doyle
Joe and Susan Drennan
Charles and Marge Elliot
Margaret Erickson
Marcelle Fahr
Gerald Firak
Kay Fisher
Barry and Diane Fitz
Phil and Carolyn Fulkerson
Christopher Fye
Glen and Jean Gabel
Richard and Karen Gadke
Rich and Joyce Gibbons
Roberta Giblin
Larry and Colleen Gill
Andrew Gulya
Brian Hale
Ken and Barb Hall
Steven and Keiko Hall
Brett and Margret Hanson
Ed and Sue Harney
LaVerne Harris
Fran and Heather Harty
Nancy Hatten
Janet Hendrickson
Don and Marilyn Heneghan
Jarrod Hennis
Janet Herbert-Verhaar and John Verhaar

Ray and Nina Herzer
Helen Hill
Luther and Janet Hill
Charles Hillebrand
Dave and Ellen Hinde
Richard and Jane Hoffman
Kevin Holdmann and Lenae Weichel
Charles and Linda Hollman
Allan Hormann
Dan and Rita Houlihan
David and Cynthia House
Jean Howell
Bill and Alice Howenstine
John and Karen Ippen
Robert Ivey
Peggy Jencius
Joe and Barb Jirak
David and Anita Johnson
George Johnson
Nita Johnson
Rosalie Johnson
Dan and Diane Kane
Terry and Marcee Keilback
Dan and Sandi Kelly
Jill Kennay
Barb Kober
Lloyd and Diane Koch
Doug and Deb Kruger
Elaine Lans
Ray and Deborah Lecuyer
Susan Lehnhardt
Chuck and Michele Lind
William Luhman
Kay MacNeil
Keith and Kathleen Magnus
Madhu Malladi
Tom and Nancy Mangan
Matt Markley
Julieanne and Erik Mason
Bruce and Mary Anne Mathwich
Connie Matusiak
Karen Matz and John Skowronski
Tom McCullough
Tom and Amy McFarland
Kathleen McGinnis-Craft
Phil and Connie McIntosh
Carrie Meyer
Anne Meyer
Virginia Meyer
Philip and Janet Meyers
Dawson Minsch
Steve and Janet Moore
Brad and Danna Munson
Beverly Neff
Chris and Marya Nelson
Charles Nixon
Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
Alan and Jennifer Nowicki
Randy Nyboer
Randy and Nancy Ocken
Jerry and Diana Ogren
Joseph O'Sullivan
David Paddock
Larry Page
Ron and Susan Panzer
Beth Parentice and Patrick Goeckner
Jan Pausteck
Chelsea Peterson
John Peterson
Jim and Lucy Pirages
Sam and Linda Pirrello
Joseph and Barbara Pittman
Marty and Peggy Prickett
Rebecca Quirk
Brian Reilly
Ken and Sue Reinhardt
Rick Rudey
Kyle Saunders
John and Catherine Schafman
Randy and Nancy Schietzelt
Richard Schlobohm
Stephen Schmaeng
Frank and Rhonda Schmitt
Verna Schubert
Susan Schulze in memory of George and Barbara Fell
Marilyn Schweitzer
Seedling Garden Club
Nancy Shade
Keith and Pamela Shaver
Mark Shedd
Jack and Terry Shouba
Kathleen Simms
Lloyd Smith
Mark Spitzer
Shawn Stacey-Choinard
Zeke and Elba Stirlen
Rick and Susan Strader
Charles Sturm
Brad Suster
Steven and Marcia Terrill
Janis Thelen
Brian and Julie Thomas
Pablo Toral
Jack Tower
Steven and Joy Vee
Howard Waitzkin
Dave and Terry Walker
Don and Kathleen Walker
Randall Walker
Thomas and Karen Walsh
John and Susan Walt
William Walz
Ann Wasser
Walter and Virginia Watson
Neita Webster
James Weichel
Joylene Westphal
Fred and Mary Ann Wham
Whiteside Co. Soil and Water Cons. Dist.
David Wiemer
Dan and Amy Wolf
Ted Wolff
Christopher Wrate
Judith Wyatt
Lute Wyttenbach
Randolph Zimmerman

Supporting ($50 - $99)

Vivian Anderson
Brad Andresen
Bill and Mary Anne Ax
Alfeo Bari
Judy Barnard
Brian Benjamin
Raoul Bergersen
Phil and Kay Blair
Robert Boyd, III
Mary Brady
Alan and Janet Bridgeland
Bill and Joyce Brown
Steve and Cindy Bunk
Chris Burkhart
Todd and Tara Cagnoni
Bruce and Mary Canterbury
Joe Capone
Sharon Chakoian
Amy Couillard
Dave and Pamela Donahue
Doug and Laura Dufford
Jim Duhigg
Judy Emmett
Mary Rose Fillip
Larry and Mary Lou Fitzpatrick
Graham and Fiona Fordyce
DeLon and Carol Fox
Gary Garman
Stephanie Gaspers

Wood Anemone
Photo: Jill Kennay

Jacqueline Gommel
Betty Greene
Mark and Holly Grocholl
Greg and Sherry Harlan
Ray and Audrey Hart
Susan Heinke
Christopher Hill
David Hougan
Nancy Hughes
Scott and Karen Hulick in memory of Gene Boyd
Carla Jaffe
Dan and Betsy Johnson
Garnett Johnson
Grant Jorgensen
Kori Jorgensen
Judith Joy
Kathi Jurkowski
Michael and Dori Kearney
Jim and Pam Keeling
Tim and Carolyn Keller
Mary Kisamore
Curtis and Laurie Kleckler
Bill and Susan Kleiman
Thornton Kline, Jr.
Charlene and Alan Knudten
Michael Kramer
Wendell and Judy Kurr
John Larson
Pat Lawlor
Diane Lichtenstein and Steven Diamond
Paul and Holly Lindquist
Roger and Nancy Lundstrom
Rochelle Lurie
Ann Martin
Dave and Linda Martin
Pam May
Char and George Mayland
Lora McClelland and Michael Simmons
John and Cindy McKee
Neil McLaughlin
Rich and Susan McMullen
Jim Miglin
John and Barb Miller
Oliver and Anita Mitchell
Don and Mary Kay Morrison
Pam Mott
Dennis Nemeth
Mary Norman
Daniel Oberg in honor of Tom Oberg
Ejner and Margo Pagh
Barb Peterson
Kimatha Phillips
Charles and Diane Piper
Linda Posner
Prairie Preservation Soc. of Ogle Co.
Keith Quick
Kenneth Ramsay
Marjory and Gerald Rand
Carolyn Rasmussen
Fred and Carol Redmore
Christopher and Kim Reisetter
William and Martha Roberts
Linda Robertson and Katy Allen
Scott Romine
Tom and Carole Root
Arnold and Kathy Rosen
Virginia Rous
Dave and Darlene Saam
Joan Sage
Sandy Sarno
Mel Schwartz and Laura Keith-Schwartz
Gary and Jennifer Schwerin
John and Ann Shallcross
Bob Shaw
John and Dawn Skupien
Jeanne Smith
Linda Spickler
Barbara Steinke
Paul and Carol Strand
Richard and Michelle Swanson
Ross Sweeny
Ken Thomson and Mari Weikel
Frank and Nina Thorp
James Tibensky
William Towne
Lynne Townsend
Randy and Julie Trank
Joshua Tripp

Linda Vojtech
Garrett Waecker
Greg Wahl
Donald and Justine Walhout
Richard and Kathleen Welch
Chuck and Pat Wemstrom
Kenneth Wengert
Peggy Werner
Dalton Workman
Derek Workman
Gary York
Ross Youngberg

Neal and Julie Buelow
Ellen Caskey
Charles Corley
Margaret Curttright
Marcia DeClerk
Dave Derwent
John Dorsey
Bonnie Duman and Stewart Schechter
Nicole Eckstein
Michael and Rhonda Eddy
Lynn Eichman
Bill Evans
Kara Gallup

Wood Duck Pair

Photo: Randy Zimmerman

Partner ($35 - $49)

Susan Adams and Gregg Schneider
B.J. Alexis
Richard Baldwin
Caryl Barnes
Carol Beatty
Matthew and Tiara Bertrand
Shelby Best
Chris Bielawski
Brian Bielema
Liene Bindl
Suzanne Black
Larry Blair
Matt Blair
Karen Boeger
Drake Branca
Sue Breidigam
Doug Brock
Scott Buckley

Ronald Goepfert
Patricia Gomez
Susan Grans
Jeffery Hawkins
Josh Hendryx
Jackie Hickey
John Hockman
Ken and Kathleen Hodowanic
Nancy Hoey
Janet Hoisington
Larry and Lois Holeton
James Howlett
Dean Huisingh
Del Johnson
Theodore and Melissa Johnson
Martin and Vonnie Kehoe
Ruth Kelley
Jane Klep
Dave Krouth
Mark Lautenschlager

Terry Leonard
Janaan Lewis
Kathleen Liebman
Robert Lindvall
Ron and Elsie Magnussen
Linda Martin
Mark Meier
Suzette Merchant
Mike Milburn
Sheri Moor
Bev Moore
Gill Moreland
Tina Moseley
Brad Mosher
Toni Murray
Ron Nelson
Zoe Norwood
Tom Oberg
Patrick and Doreen O'Brien
Marge Orchard
Rhonda Parsons
Nancy Perry
Charles Peterson
Craig Peterson
Dave Peterson
Douglas and Kathryn Pherigo
Gloria Powell
John Prenot
Josh Prenot
Dwayne Proctor
Jacqueline Rheaume
Cassandra Rodgers
Peter and Judy Rossi
Kayse Rushford
Jamal Shafii
Lurane Slaght
Bill Snively
John and Barbara Spiritosantos
Carrie Stralow
Jeff and Christine Swanberg
Larry Swanson
Ed and Judy Uchno
Dave Watts
Owen Wavrinek
Robert Wendt
Beth Whitaker
John White
Larry and Tess Wilke

Sara Winter
Karen Witter
Jerrold Zar

Other

Ders Anderson
Ryanne Bronnimann
Rebecca Brown
Polly Carter
Linda Cloud
Sue Cooling
Peter Czyzewski
Linda Gibson
Carlos and Eliana Gomez
Rick and Dorothy Graton
Joshua Hachmeister and Emily Kessler
Alice Heath
Patrick Hickey
Edward and Patricia Hoff
Wanda Hoover
Cathy Johnson
Melanie Kandler
Dan and Susan Kasten
Kayla Lindquist
Naomi Madden
Sheila McCabe
Ed Michael
Diane Phillips
Theresa Roberts-Jessop
Susan Rogowski
Elizabeth Rozsa
Pamala Schultz
Joe Swierkosz
John and Kim Vollmer
Rosemary Wubker

Corporate Council

Beefaroo
Campbell Science
Midwest Packaging and Container, Inc.
Mindy Joy Photography
Olson Ecological Solutions
Sjostrom and Sons Foundation
Specialty Screw Corp.
Wild Birds Unlimited

Thank You to NLI Project Partners

Anonymous
Alfred & Ella Peterson Anderson Family Foundation
Black-Periman Foundation
Karen Blomgren
Brubaker Charitable Trust
Community Foundation of Northern Illinois
Delta Institute
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Forest Preserves of Winnebago County
Grand Victoria Foundation supported Townsend Glade and Silver Creek Woods restoration
Guy Reno Family Foundation
Hamill Family Foundation
Ill. Clean Energy Community Foundation supported restoration of Townsend Glade
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Jane Addamsland Park Foundation
Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation
John Knaus
Paul and Judith Letourneau
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center
Merrill Johnson Trust
Gordon and Linda Neese
Don and Espie Nelson
River Bend Wildland Trust
Roscoe Sportsman's Club
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
Unitarian Universalist Church
Vanderpoel Conservation Foundation
Wild Birds Unlimited

2020 Donors to the Gordon G. Eggers Fund, an Endowment for the Nygren Wetland Preserve

Ed and Vicki Eggers*
Thomas Jordan
Bob and Elizabeth Lind
Richard Luthin
Herb and Marianna Page
Jessie Pemble in memory of Jim Pemble
Vanderpoel Conservation Foundation

Given to the Eggers Fund in memory of Rick Rudey

Vance and Sootie Havens
Jerry Paulson
Suzanna Peters
Russell Rudey
Stephen Sergeiko

* indicates cumulative gifts or pledges to the Gordon G. Eggers Fund of $10,000 or more

Thank you for donations to purchase 42.3 acres on Fitzgerald Road

Ill. Clean Energy Com. Foundation
Alfred and Ella Peterson Anderson Family Foundation
Bob and Bev Beebe
John Knaus
Paul and Judy Letourneau
Luis Mulé
Dale Shriver and Judy Rogers
Mark Vanderpoel and Linda Coady
Andrew Williams and Rebecca Christoffel

Thank you for supporting Restoration Work at the Nygren Wetland Preserve

Andy Bacon
Blackhawk Trails Club
Paul and Judith Letourneau
Gordon and Linda Neese
Prairie Street Brewing Company
Bruce Ross-Shannon and Ruthe Falk
Vanderpoel Conservation Foundation

Thank you to our Sponsors for "A Great Beginning" Virtual Fundraiser

Dave and Nancy Voss
a5 Branding & Digital
Applied Ecological Services, Inc.
Paul and Teri Baits
Boone County Conservation District
Campbell Science
Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LTD
David Clutter
John R. Cook Associates
Davey Resource Group
Jon and Joy Duerr
Ed and Vicki Eggers
Jay and Jane Evans
Gibbons Electric, Inc.
Kerry
McGreevy Manning P.C.
Midwest Packaging and Container, Inc.
Nicor Gas
Olson Ecological Solutions
Red Buffalo Nursery
Severson Dells Nature Center in honor of Don Miller
Studio GWA
Keith Syfert and Linda Miller
Tallgrass Restoration
Viking Chemical
Wild Ones in honor of Anne Meyer
Teresa Wilmot

Thank You to Members Who Donated for the Water Control Structures at the Nygren Wetland

Gary Acaley
Jedd Anderson
James and Marilyn Anderson
Robert and Kathleen Andrini
Jean Apgar
Jim and Marion Applegate
Bob and Carolyn Arevalo
Bill and Mary Anne Ax
Eric and Becky Baeverstad
Paul and Teri Baits
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Baker
Judy Barnard
Ron and Mary Lou Baumann
Bruce Beneditz
Brian Benjamin
Mary Blackmore
Karen Blomgren
Daniel Boutelle
John Brearley
Elizabeth Brewer
Jon and Elizabeth Burkholder
Ralph Burnett
Susan Busker
Leroy and Diane Busker
Campbell Science
Mary Caskey
Michelle Cassaro
Steve and Kathy Chapman
Dave and Kim Cheng
Dorothy Cieskus
Michael Cieslak
Robert Clark and Cassi Paslick
Greg and Lorna Cote
John Culley
Dan and Mary Curran
Ilene Dailey
Joe and Diane Dailing
Peter Damby
Roger Derix
Machelle Dopkins
Daniel and Kirby Doyle
Jon and Joy Duerr
Douglas Ecker
Gordon and Rose Eggers
Sylvia Emerson
Ellwyn and Gayle Englof
Paula Evans
Bill Evans
Larry and Mary Lou Fitzpatrick
Gregory and Laurel Franchini
Phil and Carolyn Fulkerson
John and Carol Gerrond
Rick and Dorothy Graton
Paul and Alberta Grossen
Lori Gummow
Brett and Margret Hanson
LaVerne Harris
Helen Hill
Luther and Janet Hill
Paul and Linda Hoefert
Nancy Hoey
William and Sally Hoff
Gary and Cathy Hoover
Chris Howard-Swan
James Howlett
Kurt Hubbard
Daniel and Claudia Hueber
Nancy Hughes
Mike and Val Hunter
Peggy Jencius
Curt and Kim Johnsen
Janet Johnson
Randy Johnson
Doug Johnson
Dan and Diane Kane
Mark Keister and Sheryl Wolff
Jean Killingsworth
Gary and Jeanne Kovanda
Deb Kramer
Doug and Deb Kruger
Mary Lou Lafler
Kent and Kathy Lawrence
Susan Lehnhardt
Kerry Leigh and Jim Anderson
Janaan Lewis
Ruth and Tom Little
Dan and Amy Loescher
Dan and Julie Long
Jessie Madl
Chris Madsen
Bob Mann
James Manos
Donald and Freda Manzullo
Nancy Maze
Sheila McCabe
Lora McClelland and Michael Simmons
Don McFall
Phil and Connie McIntosh
Neil McLaughlin
Mark Meier
Suzette Merchant
Virginia Meyer
Joe and Sindy Micho
Paul Mueller
Maureen and William Murley
John and Karin Nitiss
Alan and Jennifer Nowicki
Lynn Nybo
Tom Oberg
Jerry and Diana Ogren
Joseph O'Sullivan
Rhonda Parsons
John Peterson
Jack Pizzo
Kenneth Ramsay
Ken and Sue Reinhardt
Roger and Mary Reithmeier
Ruth Robinson
John Rogner
Kevin and Kim Rohling
Karol Rosman
Loren and Linda Schafer
Kevin Schardt
Stephen Schmaeng
Roger and Pamela Schmidt
Sheila Schoenfeld
Emily Scott
Keith and Pamela Shaver
Mary Skerkoske
Mary Ann Smith
Paul and Carol Soderholm
Jackie Spelman
John Sprovieri
Jeffrey Stack and Kathryn Mielke
Barbara Steinke
Richard and Michelle Swanson
Loretta Sweet
Dan and Susan Swift
Andrew Tarar
Jack Tower
Lynne Townsend
Linda Vojtech
Stacy and Dana Wallace
Andrea Wallace
Lynda Wallis
Steve and Amy Waranauskas
Walter and Virginia Watson
John and Betty Weber
Rep. Maurice West
Joylene Westphal
Bill and Marijean Whitcher
Daniel and Barbara Williams
Dan and Amy Wolf
Judith Wyatt
Lute Wyttenbach
Phil and Susan Zimmerman

Thank You to Members Who Supported NLI Pollinator Projects

Judy Barnard
Stephen and Mary Jane Burrell
Nicole Eckstein
Vicki Funke
Larry and Colleen Gill
Allan Hormann
Maureen and William Murley

June grass

Dana Williams and Joel Rennich in honor of Dan and Barbara Williams

Thank You to Members Who Donated to our Spring Appeal

Jim and Marion Applegate
Francie Barnes
Richard Benning
Lorene Benzel
Sue Breidigam
Greg and Lorna Cote
John Culley
Meryl Domina
Douglas Ecker
Mike and Deb Eickman
Glen and Jean Gabel
Randy and Debra Genna
Anne Godin
Cynthia Grantz
Mark and Holly Grocholl
Paul and Alberta Grossen
Charles and Prudy Harker
Allan and Frannie Heggblom in memory of Gordon Eggers
Luther and Janet Hill
Dave and Ellen Hinde
Paul and Linda Hoefert
Gary and Cathy Hoover
David Hougan
Kim and Curt Johnsen
Steve and June Keibler
Edward and Charlotte Kletecka
Deb Kramer
Doug and Deb Kruger
Kent and Kathy Lawrence
Ron and Elsie Magnussen
Don Mateer and Dawn Hallsten
Nancy Maze
David and Christine McCarty
Virginia Meyer
Jim Miglin
Paul Mueller
John and Marjorie Nash
Randy Nyboer
Tom Oberg
Randy and Nancy Schietzelt
David and Connie Sliktas
Charles Sturm
Linda Vojtech
Joylene Westphal
Doug and Diane Wilson
Lute Wyttenbach

Family Nature Adventure Grantors and Sponsors

Dr. Louis and Violet Rubin Fund of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois
Brubaker Charitable Trust
N. Regional Groundwater Protection Planning Com.
Nicor Gas
Northwest Bank
Wipfli

Employer Matching Gift Programs

Benevity Community Impact Fund
EarthShare of Illinois
General Mills
Network for Good
PayPal Giving Fund
ThermoFisher Scientific

Thank You to Our In-Kind Donors

Lee Bach provided a chainsaw for trail maintenance at the Nygren Wetland
Mary Jo Brown donated Gorilla racks
Dion Faith provided equipment for restoration work at Silver Creek Woods
Sheryl Almquist Hall donated wood, saw horses and a fan
Ted and Phyllis Holm donated lumber
David Holman produces GIS-based maps for NLI preserves
Chad Hoover provided equipment for restoration work at Silver Creek Woods
Martin Kehoe provided equipment for restoration work at Burr Oak Valley Preserve
Joe Micho provided equipment for restoration at Burr Oak Valley Preserve
Gordon and Linda Neese provided equipment to install gates at Keefer Reserve
Joe Petrow provided equipment for restoration work at Silver Creek Woods and the Foss Farm
John and Josh Prenot provided equipment for clearing trees at the Foss Farm
Trip and Leslie Thienemann donated a table saw
Tyler's Landscaping Service, Inc. plowed NLI's office driveway and parking area all winter
Dan and Barbara Williams donated chains, lifting hooks and a hoist

In-Kind Event Sponsors

Wander at the Wetland: Full Moon Snowshoe & Hike

NorthPointe Health & Wellness Campus
Rocktown Adventures

"A Great Beginning" Virtual Fundraiser

Nothing Bundt Cakes
Pizzo and Associates, LTD
Pizzo Native Plant Nursery

Family and Friends of Alvin "Al" Stone provided a bench in his memory at the Nygren Wetland Preserve

June Althoff
Jim and Toni Datitlo
Duane and Carol Dixon
Shirley Dixon
James Dixon
Mark Dixon
Susan and Jon DuPont
Joan Hanson
Nancy Hoey
Jeanette Krupree
Carol Loomis
Ray and Sue McLarty
Rockton Green Thumbers
Carol Seaton
Michael and Lexie Smith
Sandy Stamm
Dorothy Stone
Jeffrey Stone
Christopher Stone
Greg and Tammy Stone
Jason and Eryn Stone
Germaine Timlin
John and Nita Yunker

Gifts in Memory of Avis Benning for the Nygren Wetland Preserve

Richard Benning
Bruce and Joni Benning
Rodney and Cynthia Hayenga
Debra Lindley
John and Jane Mentzer
Judy Mitchell
Linda Oshita

Barred Owl Photo: Judy Barnard

Terry and Kim Reed
Terry and Christie Schweitz

Gifts Made in Memory of Verna Clark

Anonymous
Steve and Diane Clark
Donna Daley
Chuck and Linda Helsten
Savant Capital, LLC
Cal and Teri Sundine
Diane Wyss
Daniel Young

Memorial Gifts in Honor of

Family of James Zethmayr planted a tree in his memory at the Nygren Wetland
Family of Cherie and Lance Simpson planted trees in their memories in the Honor Grove
Marcia Blassage donated in memory of Gisela Langousis
Rita Haelman, the Book Stall, and Dale and Rhonda Brown gave in memory of Gerald Rilling
Alfred and Susan Cowan donated in memory of David McClelland
Virginia Crank in honor of Rob Clark
Margaret Deaton in honor of Andrew Garst
Jennifer Diehl in honor of Bill Fruin, Jr.
Ray and Char Ferguson and Ron and Lisa Weckerly gave in memory of Dawn Miller
Karen and John Janssen, Marion and James Momaly, Edward Pagel, Mark Spitzer, and Annette Tilbury donated in memory of Sylvia Jean Doyle Pagel
Lee and Lynda Johnson and Julie Samuels gave in memory of Barbara Bannen
John and Marjorie Nash donated in memory of Samuel Needham
Linda Swanson donated in memory of Tom Jencius
Tom and Jean Zimmerman gave in honor of Dr. William and Mrs. Leah Baskin

Oak savanna at Nygren Wetland Preserve

Photo: Robert Clark

Nygren Wetland Preserve's 20th Anniversary

NLI celebrated the 20th Anniversary of Nygren Wetland Preserve in 2020. We created a video that told the story of how the land was acquired, the restoration planning process, and the role of volunteers (watch it at naturalland.org/videos). Rockford Art Deli created a special design for Tshirts. We hosted three Facebook Live videos at Nygren Wetland featuring the Anne Meyer Wildflower Garden, Bluebird monitoring, and fall migration at the wetland. On December 8 we held "**A Great Beginning**", a virtual fundraiser that combined personal interactions by Zoom for the Cocktail Hour Conversations and a one hour

program that *President* **Paul Baits** and *Executive Director* **Kerry Leigh** hosted. **Andy Bacon**, former NLI *Director of Stewardship*, was a special guest speaker. The 20th Anniversary video was premiered and we highighted two water control structures in dire need of repair. The evening closed with the presentation of the **2020 George and Barbara Fell Award** to **Don Miller** (retired Director of Severson Dells Nature Center). To cap it off we toasted the 20th Anniversary with sparkling cider, and a bundlet cake donated by **Nothing Bundt Cakes**. These were in the fabulous Celebration Kit delivered to registered attendees prior to the event along with wildflower seeds donated by **Pizzo & Associates** and **Pizzo Native Plant Nursery**, and a souvenir wine glass sponsored by **Studio GWA** (watch the program at NLI.GiveSmart.com). We raised $31,805 from the proceeds of this event and the year-end appeal to replace water control structures. Thank you to all of the sponsors and donors to the special projects!

Bald Eagle near Nygren Wetland Preserve

Photo: Michael Descamps

Adapting Our Community Engagement

2020 taught us how to be flexible and think differently about how to engage people in nature and the work of NLI. We're grateful to NLI Trustees and volunteers who helped us re-imagine and plan events that had to be canceled and/or transitioned to virtual experiences.

Family Nature Day became **Family Nature Adventures**: part virtual (watch a video) and part outside to do the activities with families exploring in their own backyard or park/preserve.

We started new virtual programs like **Facebook Live** events and **Virtual Book Discussions** and presented a virtual fundraiser as an alternative to the Annual Meeting that had to be canceled.

We were able to hold two in-person events in 2020! **Wander at the Wetland: Full Moon Snowshoe & Hike** was held in February at **Nygren Wetland Preserve** and the **OAKtober Hike** was held in October at **Burr Oak Valley Preserve**.

We want to connect with you on Social Media

Facebook: Natural Land Institute, Nygren Wetland Preserve, Howard D. Colman Dells Nature Preserve, Burr Oak Valley Preserve, Silver Creek Woods Preserve, Milan Bottoms, William & Gayle Keefer Nature Reserve

Twitter: NLI 1958

Instagram: NLI 1958

Tumblr: Natural Land Institute

YouTube: Natural Land Institute

Linkedin: Natural Land Institute

NaturalLand.org

You Can Save Natural Land

Become a member of the Natural Land Institute today and join with others committed to saving the natural areas in our region.

Your tax-deductible donation will provide vital support and entitle you to benefits that include mailed newsletters, email news updates, invitations to events, permission to visit private preserves and more.

Fill out the membership form below and mail it to the NLI office with your gift to Natural Land Institute, 320 S. Third St., Rockford, IL 61104.
For more information call 815/964-6666 or email: info@naturalland.org.

Clip and mail in with your membership gift

Annual Membership Levels

☐ $20 Student ☐ $35 Partner ☐ $50 Supporting ☐ $100 Protector

☐ $250 Guardian ☐ $500 Benefactor ☐ $1,000 Trustee of the Land

☐ Other $_____ ☐ My check is enclosed

Charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Card No._____ Exp:_____ Sec. Code_____

Name_____

Address_____

City/ST/Zip_____

Phone_____ Cell_____

Email Address_____

Natural Land Institute meets all 20 BBB Standards for Charity Accountability and was recently awarded the recognition as a **BBB Accredited Charity**. Visit the BBB website for more information at: http://blue2.bbb.org/chicago/charity-reviews/internal/charity-90006838/.

Thank You for Supporting NLI in These Ways

EarthShare Illinois

Thank you to those who participate in the workplace giving program, EarthShare Illinois, which supports NLI.

Schnucks' eScrip/Rewards Card

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Schnucks eScrip card program where they give back to the community a percentage of what you spend in the store if you choose Natural Land Institute as your charity. If you choose to use the Rewards program with the same card NLI will not receive proceeds from your purchase. Thank you to everyone who gives to NLI through the eScrip program.

Smile.Amazon.com

Thank you to Amazon.com and to you who shop with this online store and designated NLI to receive a percentage of your purchases.

Did you know we have an app for the Dianne Nora Nature Trail at Nygren Wetland Preserve? Go to your app store to get it or use your QR reader to find it on your app store. It only costs 99 cents and can provide hours of virtual learning and enhance your physical visit to any trail in the app.

NATURAL LAND INSTITUTE
Conserving Land in Northern Illinois

320 S. Third Street, Rockford, Illinois 61104
Phone: 815/964-6666
E-mail: info@naturalland.org
www.NaturalLand.org

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 3619
Rockford, IL

Help Protect Nature

Renew your NLI membership or join today with monthly online giving at www.naturalland.org

Natural Land Institute will present ***Family Nature Adventures***, as a virtual event again this year, June 23 – August 11, 2021. It is free to participate, open to all, and targeted to individuals and families with children ages two to 14. The virtual format has no geographic boundaries and anyone can do it from anywhere. The virtual format reaches beyond the traditional geographic boundaries and engages people who aren't able to visit a park or preserve in person. This will be the first year that it will be bi-lingual in English and Spanish!

The concept of the event is to watch a video and do a corresponding activity in any backyard or nearby park/preserve, in an effort to encourage understanding of and experiences in nature. Families can do this at their own pace during the seven weeks of the event.

Fall in love with nature, discover your outdoor surroundings, spend time with your kids and grandkids and learn how you can help protect and have fun in nature.

Videos and activities will be accessible online at www.naturalland.org. The learning videos will include a variety of nature and arts themed topics: wetlands, fish, water, mammals, birds, archaeology, butterflies, creepy crawlers, prairies, forests, native bees and wasps, seeds, soils, writing, and art.

A group of videos and activities will be released weekly on Wednesdays, June 23 – July 11. Participants will have until August 11 to do at least six activities and submit a final participation form to earn a **Junior Naturalist Badge**. As an added incentive there will be drawings for three prize packages after August 11 for all who submitted a final participation form. You can share the link freely!

© 2021 Natural Land Institute. All rights reserved • 1.5M/5-21 • Printed on recycled paper • Printing: Rockford Litho Center • Design: Gene Hertenstein