



Mary Jane Ulrich

## Major Activities Planned for Nature Preserves - 2009

Here's a brief update describing the nature preserve work the Conservancy's stewardship staff has prioritized for the upcoming field season.

In the last year, the Conservancy has acquired at least 10 new nature preserves for which we need to develop management plans and place name signs. Occasionally, a dedication ceremony with the donor's family is held during the sign placement. We've also acquired several additions that need to be incorporated into existing preserves.

We won't be making any new trails for 2009 (last year was especially trail heavy with trails at Seven Springs, Ray Johnston, Williams, Birge, and others). Instead, we're going to be tending to the maintenance details along the many miles of existing trails (this includes clearing and grading trails, signs, trail markings, etc.).

This year, extra attention will be paid to the Upper Peninsula preserves, as they sometimes get less attention because they are so far from the office. This will especially include Birge, Round Island Point, Palms, Hobbins/Meyer, Nordquist (on Boot Island), and Vermilion preserves.

Vermilion is always the focus of a lot of work, with the maintenance of the four buildings on the property and our collaboration with Lake Superior State University. LSSU is going to be conducting a resource inventory and management plan for the Conservancy funded by a Coastal Zone Management grant.

Every year, we survey and mark the boundaries of several previously un-surveyed areas. We'll be doing that at two UP preserves this year: Badgley and Gros Cap.

We have a grant to help us improve grassland habitat on

the Meadowgate Preserve for both scenic and wildlife values. In addition to Meadowgate, we manage portions of six other preserves to maintain grassy meadows (Chaboiganing, Fochtman, Goodhart, Elmer Johnston, Ransom, and Winston), requiring significant effort and expense.

We're hoping, this season, to do some thinning of overgrown pine plantations on the ten preserves where they are present. We're also undertaking a strategic assessment of options for ecological forest management on nature preserves. We've done some forest management in the past on a case-by-case basis, but its time to develop a comprehensive approach.

Every year we do some invasive plant control — or ecological restoration — on preserves. This is an expensive, time consuming undertaking, so we only target a few priority sites (and we rely greatly on volunteer help for this component). Preserves where activities are planned in 2009 include the Chaboiganing, Kalman, Meadowgate, McCune, Little Sand Bay, Oyster Bay, and Vermilion preserves.

The Andreae Preserve is one of our "flagship" preserves. Hundreds of people from community groups use the cabin there every year. For this reason, it has been, and will continue to be, the focus of much work. In '09 an erosion control project, staining of the siding, and possibly kitchen remodeling are planned.

Probably by the time you read this, hundreds of tree and shrub seedlings will have been obtained from County Conservation District Spring sales and planted in strategic spots at various preserves.



Photos courtesy Craig Cramer <http://remarc.com/craig/>

## Hunting on LTC Preserves

Thirty-five of our nature preserves are open for hunting, by written permission only. Most allow "unrestricted" hunting, which means that they are open for any legal season and any legal weapon the hunter might choose. Some preserves — mostly the smaller ones in Emmet and Charlevoix Counties — are "restricted" to bow only, bow and shotgun only, or waterfowl only. (Trapping is not allowed at any preserve.) A complete list of all our preserves with hunting can be found on our website, or we can send you a copy by mail.

What does it mean to you, as a preserve monitor or trail steward, if your preserve is open for hunting? The Conservancy does NOT expect, or even want, you to patrol your preserve to make sure that hunters are following the rules. Please do not remove hunting blinds, confront any hunters, demand to see their permission forms, etc. However, if you do see illegal or dangerous activity, or obvious poaching, you can call the DNR's Report All Poaching Hotline at 800-292-7800, and then please call us so we can follow up with the DNR. We also appreciate it if you let us know if hunters are breaking any of the rules (see below). If you find a permanent hunting blind, or any blinds or tree stands on your preserve between March 1 and August 31, please let us know so we can remove them.

### Little Traverse Conservancy Nature Preserve Hunting Rules

*The following activities are not allowed on Conservancy preserves:*

- Trapping.
- Baiting.
- Vehicles, including ATVs and snowmobiles.
- Trimming or removal of tree limbs or other vegetation.
- Creation of shooting lanes.
- Permanent blinds or tree stands.
- Use of artificial materials, such as plywood, tarps, or plastic, to create temporary blinds.
- Use of nails, screws, pegs or other devices that penetrate the bark of a tree.
- Camping.
- Dumping.
- Fires.

*Please:*

- Follow all federal, state, and local hunting laws.
- Use portable tree stands, portable ground blinds, and dead natural materials ground blinds only.
- Label your tree stand or blind with your name and address.
- Dismantle blinds and remove tree stands at the end of the season. Any blinds or tree stands left on preserves between March 1 and August 31 will be removed by Conservancy staff.
- Be aware that non-hunters also may be using the preserve for other kinds of recreation.
- Be respectful of the rights of neighboring landowners adjacent to the preserve.



"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

—John Muir

2009  
Stew  
Crew



Doug Fuller  
[doug@landtrust.org](mailto:doug@landtrust.org)



Cindy Mom  
[cindy@landtrust.org](mailto:cindy@landtrust.org)



Charles Dawley  
[charles@landtrust.org](mailto:charles@landtrust.org)



Reb Ratliff  
[reb@landtrust.org](mailto:reb@landtrust.org)



John Bailey

*We hope you can come!*

## Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

**When:** Tuesday, June 23, 2009  
5:30 pm til dark

**Where:** Greenwood Sanctuary,  
located five miles west of  
Wolverine on the edge of the  
Pigeon River Country State Forest

Once again, we will be hosting a volunteer appreciation get-together as a small token of our gratitude to preserve monitors, trail stewards, and other outstanding volunteers. This year's event will be an evening picnic at Greenwood Sanctuary.

For almost 45 years, this 1,400-acre private property has been a place where wildlife can seek refuge and flourish. Owned and managed by the Greenwood Foundation, it is accessible only by special arrangement. In 2008, it was protected by an LTC conservation easement. There are lakes, streams, and wetlands throughout this beautiful property, and after our picnic supper and some brief presentations by LTC staff, participants will be able to hike on a few of the numerous trails while visiting with other participants.

Your invitation with more details will be mailed in June, but please mark your calendars now.



## Volunteer Stewardship Work Days for 2009

B. Sellenright

**Please help us spread the word** to others who may want to work on a local preserve! For all volunteer work days, please wear sturdy shoes and bring gloves and drinking water. For some of the work days, we welcome the use of extra tools. Additional work days at the Goodhart, McCune, and Birge nature preserves are still being planned. Check the Conservancy website at [www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org) for more information later this spring and summer, or give us a call. To sign up, or for more information, please call our office at 231.347.0991.

**Saturday, May 16,  
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Round Island Point Nature Preserve  
Brimley, Chippewa County**

Site cleanup, trail work, fence construction, and more. This all day work bee will spruce up this great preserve just outside Sault Sainte Marie. Stick around for a geology field trip out to the point the following day (Sunday, May 17).

**Thursday, May 28,  
9:00 AM to Noon  
Meadowgate Nature Preserve  
Harbor Springs, Emmet County**

Pull invasive garlic mustard, and help clean up an old farm dump at this little gem of a preserve along M-119, just east of Harbor Springs. This is also a great opportunity to find out more about our extensive plans to restore the meadows at this preserve.

**Thursday, June 18,  
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Vermilion Point Nature Preserve  
Whitefish Township, Chippewa County**

Spotted Knapweed pull. Join volunteers from the Nature Conservancy as we work on arresting the insidious spread of this noxious purple threat further into the otherwise pristine Vermilion Point Preserve. 'Nuff said.

**Wednesday, July 1,  
9:00 AM to noon  
Birge Nature Preserve  
Clark Township, Mackinac County**

Spotted Knapweed pull. Help rid the preserve of this weed, making way for the beautiful native wildflowers instead. Local volunteers have been working on knapweed control here for a few years and have seen a great impact with their efforts!



**Friday, July 17  
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Vermilion Point Nature Preserve  
Whitefish Township, Chippewa County**

For many years, people who lived in this remote location dumped their household trash and other debris around the Life Saving Station buildings or in convenient spots behind the dunes. Help us clean up this preserve, and explore the beautiful Lake Superior beach afterwards as your reward.

**Friday, August 7,  
Morning. Please contact us for details.  
Jinny Palms Wildlife Preserve  
Whitefish Township, Chippewa County**

Spotted Knapweed pull. Join volunteers from the annual Blossom Camp, friends and relatives of the Palms Family. They've been working on controlling this weed for the last five years or so and have seen a great impact with their efforts!

**Wednesday, August 26,  
9:00 AM to Noon  
Chaboiganing Nature Preserve  
Brutus, Cheboygan County**

Autumn Olive shrub control. Follow up on the work days in 2005 and 2007. This year we will focus on the edges where woods and field meet, as well as along the road frontages.

## Nature Preserve Statistics as of April, 2009

County	#	Acres
Charlevoix	41	1,604
Cheboygan	28	1,428
Chippewa	20	2,486
Emmet	86	2,966
Mackinac	21	2,563
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>11,047</b>

Photo courtesy Craig Cramer <http://remarc.com/craig/>



## Volunteer Steward Newsletter

a newsletter for Preserve Monitors, Trail Stewards, and Project Volunteers of the Little Traverse Conservancy

## Volunteers for the Decades: the Evolution of the Monitoring Program

FOR MOST OF THE LITTLE TRAVERSE CONSERVANCY'S EARLY YEARS, the care and management of nature preserves was accomplished solely by volunteers. In 1981, when LTC owned 15 nature preserves, the new Preserve Stewardship Committee was formed. Chaired by Al and Jane Damschroeder, one of the committee's main tasks was to develop management plans for each preserve. Each master plan contained the geological history and landforms of the preserve, sensitive or rare features, and an inventory of the flora and fauna. The Damschroeders have remained active with the Conservancy since that time. "We have done it because it is simply the right thing to do," Al said.

Unquestionably one of the most active stewardship volunteers was Marge May, who soon took over as chair of the Stewardship Committee. Marge grew up in Big Rapids fishing and exploring the Muskegon River with her father. Skills acquired during four years with the U.S. Army as a supply sergeant and later as a teacher made Marge highly qualified to organize the many tasks. But it was probably the little Lake Michigan cabin that she purchased early in her life that made the most impact on her love of the land. Marge moved north permanently in 1970 when she took a job with Alanson Public Schools and began volunteering for the Conservancy in the early 1980s. Since 1983, she has been monitoring the A.C. Fischer Preserve in Emmet County and she created the first nature preserve guide for the organization. After her retirement in 1985, Marge was a regular presence in the Conservancy office, organizing and recruiting groups of people to get things done at various properties.

In fact, Marge is among a group of seven individuals who have been Preserve Monitors for more than 25 years. Mike and Bonnie Brunett have been monitoring the Sleepy Hollow Nature Preserve in Charlevoix County since 1983. "For anyone who enjoys being outdoors, the commitment to being a preserve monitor is almost 100% enjoyable," Bonnie said. Along with their neighbors, the couples enjoy their "next door" preserve and are proud to be part of protecting a natural area. Other longtime monitors include the Damschroeders at the Covert Preserve, Marilyn Smith at the Menonaqua Preserve, and Ken Winter at the Loeb Preserve.

"I love the Menonaqua Preserve because it is like a giant reservoir of fungi for me to enjoy," said Marilyn Smith who is a noted mycologist in the region. "Walking in it isn't really a hardship, and I have never picked up trash, but that someone driving by didn't thank me."

It was not until 1991 that the Conservancy created its first staff position, and it was part-time. Patty O'Donnell held the role for a short time, soon replaced by Pam Hogoboom. The next year, the part-time position was held by Chuck Robbins who worked 1/2 time in education and 1/2 time in stewardship. Finally, in 1994, Melissa Hansen, who had been an education intern, took the first full-time stewardship staff position and remained in that role until the fall of 2006 when Doug Fuller took over and Melissa moved back into the education department. Today, the stewardship department consists of three full-time staff, two seasonal staff, and more than 125 volunteers. In addition, the Conservancy now owns and manages nearly 200 properties. Volunteers continue to be a key component of the stewardship program... we simply couldn't do this job without you!



3264 Powell Rd., Harbor Springs, MI 49740 · 231.347.0991 · [www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org)

**Above:**  
stewardship  
volunteers  
**left to right:**

Marge May,  
Al Damschroder,  
Earl Larson,  
John Hodge, Jane  
Damschroder (1981);  
Stan and Marilyn Smith  
(1983); John Baker  
(1988) **Below:**  
Mike and Bonnie Brunett  
(front row) shown with  
neighbors Kelly Smith,  
Jan Fenske, Pat and Rich-  
ard Allen (2000).

