

Bluffviews

a quarterly newsletter by Clifftop

April, 2019

Vol. 9, No. 2

All Hail the Monarch!

by Joann Fricke

The photo below was sent to me via text message on April 16 asking me if I could see what was attached to the milkweed. I immediately thought it was some kind of pest and ran outside to see if I had any. I was relieved when I didn't, but became jealous when I was told that someone was pulling my leg and that they were monarch butterfly eggs.



Monarch butterfly eggs on common milkweed. Photo courtesy Jim Pflasterer

I thought this was early to find monarch eggs, but after reading a bit, found that I was mistaken. In March and April the eggs are laid on milkweed plants. They hatch into baby caterpillars, also called the larvae. It takes about four days for the eggs to hatch. Then the baby caterpillar doesn't do much more than eat the milkweed in order to grow. After about two weeks, the caterpillar will be fully-grown and find a place to attach itself so that it can start the process of metamorphosis. It will attach itself to a stem or a leaf using silk and transform into a chrysalis. Although, from the outside, the 10 days of the chrysalis phase seems to be a time when nothing is happening, it is really a time of rapid change. Within the chrysalis the old body parts of the caterpillar are undergoing a remarkable transformation, to become the beautiful parts that make up the butterfly that will emerge. The monarch butterfly will emerge from the pupa and fly away, feeding on flowers and just enjoying the short life it has left, which is only about two to six weeks. This first generation monarch butterfly will then die after laying eggs for generation number two.



Left, monarch butterfly caterpillars, or larvae, chomping away on butterfly milkweed. Right, a monarch butterfly chrysalis. You can see the wings as the adult butterfly will soon emerge from the pupa. Photos courtesy Paul Feldker.

The second generation of monarch butterflies is born in May and June, and then the third generation will be born in July and August. These monarch butterflies will go through exactly the same four stage life cycle as the first generation did, dying two to six weeks after it becomes a beautiful monarch butterfly.

Monarchs in Illinois often produce three broods in summer. The last one is the migratory form of this insect. It is structurally different than the monarchs produced in the earlier spring and summer broods. During September and October these monarchs from the last brood of summer start their migration from Illinois to the overwintering grounds of specific, high-altitude forests in Mexico. In spring, these monarchs start the return trip to Illinois. They mate and deposit eggs, traveling north as milkweed plants develop along the route. Monarchs usually start reaching Illinois in April. The generations produced in spring and early summer are not migratory.

Monarch butterfly facts:

- In 1975, the monarch was chosen as Illinois’ state insect
- A group of monarchs is called a congregation.
- Research has shown that adult Monarchs prefer orange flowers from which to gather nectar.
- Monarchs can fly at speeds up to 20 MPH.
- They travel from 40 to 100 miles per day when migrating, gliding on favorable winds to help speed them along.
- Monarchs ingest poisons from milkweeds that they eat during their larval stage. The poisons stay in this insect's body through the larval, pupal and adult stages. Cardiac glycosides induce vomiting in predators, and cardenolides are bitter tasting.



Adult monarch nectaring on butterfly milkweed. Photo courtesy Paul Feldker.



If you haven't yet renewed your Clifftop membership, please do so at your earliest convenience. A membership form can be found at this link: <http://www.clifftopalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/membership-form.pdf> Simply complete the form and send it and your check to the address on the form. Thank you!

Although no formal application has been submitted to build the proposed industrial wind factory in the bluff corridor, Clifftop remains opposed. We feel that the location of the industrial sized turbines has the potential to do serious damage to the bluff lands and karst terrain. Monroe County's bluff corridor is home to a vast ecosystem that includes nationally listed endangered species that live both above and below ground. In order to ensure the lasting protection of this ecosystem, the Clifftop Board of Directors is opposed to the current wind factory proposal. While not affiliated with Clifftop, we urge you to visit the website of the Monroe County Fair Wind Coalition for further information and to voice your opinion at this link: <https://monroecountyilfairwindcoalition.org/>



Service Comes Naturally

By Susan L. Harbaugh

Greetings, fellow outdoor enthusiasts. In light of my financial background, I was asked to join the Clifftop Board of Directors during the summer of 2017. Previously, I had served on the Clifftop Finance Committee since August 2016. My professional work experience included duties as the General Accounting Manager at SnyderGeneral/Inter-City Products Corporations in Red Bud (heating and cooling manufacturers) as well as serving as the Chief Financial Officer for Human Support Services in Waterloo (behavioral health center) until my retirement at the end of 2018.

When I think back to what brought me to this point to serve on the board, there were many contributing factors. I was raised on a hog and grain farm just outside Red Bud, IL. From a little kid, I was the one that wanted to wander into the woods in search of whatever I could find. I loved little adventures in the ditch that ran through our property or taking a walk or bike ride on the "field road" to the back of our property. Once I grew into adulthood, with the world of full-time work/college night classes and the sale of the family farm, those adventures ceased. So perhaps an outing to a Clifftop property, or just about any other trail, leads not only to a destination, but a fond memory of childhood.



Susan visits a prairie dog at Theodore Roosevelt National Park in 2015.

Service has come somewhat naturally. I received the Service Award during my senior year at Red Bud High School and in 2017, I received the Loyal Service Award which recognizes an outstanding alumni of McKendree University. My calendar is generally full of meeting and events, which has given me a truly meaningful retirement in just the first few months thus far. So would you say I'm busy? The answer is yes. In addition to the Clifftop board, I'm an Illinois Notary Public, Alderwoman for Ward IV for the City of Red Bud and Chair of the Finance Committee, member of the St. Clement Community Foundation Board plus committees, member of Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society and have held various offices, Weekend Gardener Committee, Monroe County Herb Club, and Red Bud Chamber of Commerce. I have also completed a number of key trainings: Community Emergency Response Team, National Weather Service Storm Spotter, Master Naturalist, and Mental Health First Aid.

Nature and the outdoors have become a vacation passion as my husband, Will, and I enjoy traveling to the national parks. Of the 61 in the system, we have visited 53. Are we going to visit them all? No. We don't want to visit for the sake of a checkmark on a list. We will nudge that 53 up a tad, and I'm looking forward to

repeat visits at many of the parks. There is no favorite, only a few that are little less favorite. And in the past, we enjoyed hiking in what I refer to as "southern southern Illinois", but now, with so many choices nearby, we don't wander deep into Southern Illinois nearly as much. Total hip replacement at the end of 2018 slowed me down a bit, but we will get back out there soon!

Whether it's a national or state park or our local Clifftop properties, conservation is an important key to leave properties in good shape for the current and next generations. We get one shot on this third rock from the sun, so we must respect it and tend to it properly. Our technology laden and fast paced lives need some wind down space. Thank you for your continued support of Clifftop, whether it be time, talents or treasures. It takes all of us working together to improve and maintain our little piece of the planet by Conserving Lands In Farm, Forest, Talus, Or Prairie.



Susan and husband, Will, at Rocky Mountain National Park in 2009.

Clifftop

*Cordially invites you to attend the
grand opening of the
Paul Wightman Subterranean Nature Preserve
3325 G Road, Fufts, IL*

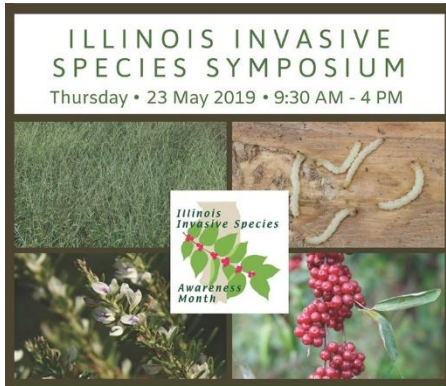
*Saturday, May 18, 2019
From 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.
Refreshments will be served*

*Program and speakers will begin at 11:00 at the
William Zimmer Family Foundation Pavilion and include:
Jared Nobbe, Clifftop president
Father Paul Wightman
Foundations
and other honored guests*

*Explore the Sophia & Elmer Oerter
Charitable Foundation Accessible Trail
and others on your own or join a
walking tour of the prairie beginning at 1:00 pm*

*RSVP by May 11 to Joann at
618-935-2542 or
cliffmbr@htc.net*

Other upcoming events...



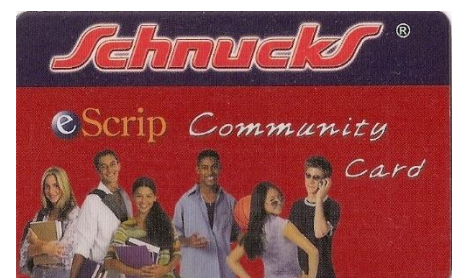
Illinois Invasive Species Symposium, Thursday, May 23, 9:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. U of I Extension Auditorium, 801 County Fair Drive, Champaign, IL. Topics will include feral swine, sericea lespedeza, emerald ash borer, the 'Be a Hero' campaign, control of invasive shrubs, Japanese stiltgrass, invasive species management programs, invasion over time in woodlands, invasive mosquitoes, and cheatgrass. Register online at this link: <https://go.illinois.edu/ILinvasives>

Prairie Ecology Field Trip, Saturday, June 22, 10:00 a.m. until noon. Join Clifftop board member, Jim Hill, as he leads a group hike through the prairies at **Paul Wightman Subterranean Nature Preserve** discussing the relationships between the plants and animals that live and grow there. Register to attend by calling 618-935-2542 or emailing cliffmbr@htc.net by June 20.



Prairie Wildflower Trail Run & Fun Run/Walk, Saturday, July 13. One mile fun run/walk entry fee is \$25 and begins at 8:30 a.m. 3.5 mile trail run entry fee is \$30 and begins at 9:00 a.m. Enjoy the summer beauty of the wildflowers at the **Paul Wightman Subterranean Nature Preserve** while competing in the trail run or participating in the fun run/walk. Swag for the fun run/walk is a tech shirt and finisher medal. Swag for the trail run is a tech shirt, awards for the top 3 finishers in each age/gender category and a finisher medal. All proceeds benefit Clifftop NFP. Register online at this link: <https://www.athlinks.com/event/prairie-wildflower-trail-run-309177>, call 618-935-2542 or email Joann at cliffmbr@htc.net for a paper form.

An easy way to contribute to Clifftop is through eScrip. Pick up a card at the service desk at any Schnucks. Create an account at this link: <https://secure.escrip.com/signup/index.jsp>. Choose Clifftop as the nonprofit to benefit from your purchases. Shop at Schnucks! Easy! (When shopping at Schnucks, be sure to give your card to the cashier before paying.)





Congratulations to Clifftop member, Lauren Wratford, upon receiving the Girl Scout Gold Award for her work on the public engagement area of PWSNP. Lauren designed and built the kiosk to hold welcome, map and rules signs. She also designed the five interpretive signs and a brochure. Lauren accomplished all this while completing her senior year in high school. Many thanks to you, Lauren. Your work will be on display for visitors to enjoy for years to come.



Prescribed Burn 4-2-19
Photos courtesy Joann Fricke

Susan R. tries to save some daffodils near where a home once stood.

Wayne has the important job of keeping the water tanks full to use so fire doesn't get into areas where it is not wanted.



Harry lights along the accessible trail.



Above: Burn boss, Mike F., right, consults with assistant burn boss, Mike M.
Photos courtesy Curt Simshauser
Below: Mike M. lights a prairie (no, he is not on fire)

Moments before ignition:



Just days post burn:



Greening up, 3 weeks post burn:



Photos courtesy Curt Simshauser

