



Helen and Betty Bremer Wildlife Sanctuary Local Sanctuary Committee Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

Reporting Time Period: April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Report Submitted by: Chapter Rep Don Krefft

Management Activities

The local sanctuary committee of the Hickory Hills Chapter at Bremer Sanctuary has a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers. On a typical Tuesday or Thursday morning there will be 6 to 12 volunteers busy making Bremer Sanctuary a nice place to visit. With over 5 miles of hiking trails, mowing and trail maintenance takes a lot of time. Monitoring of 50 blue bird nest boxes is performed regularly. Volunteers perform repair and maintenance on all machinery, unless under warranty. We try to be good stewards of the land and also Illinois Audubon finances. Restoration is an important aspect of efforts at Bremer. Much time and effort is spent removing invasive species and also collecting and disbursing seeds from native grasses and forbs. Prescribed fire is also an integral part of the maintenance and restoration of the prairies and woodlands at Bremer. Volunteers maintain detailed records of nest box inspections, and bird, tree and shrub inventories. The Illinois Spring Bird Count is performed each year in early May. In September we hosted the 4th annual bird banding by the Lincoln Land Association of Bird Banders. Activities associated with the bird banding, annual meeting, and various other annual events were curtailed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Participating Volunteers

We were fortunate to have several individuals become regular volunteers in the last year.

Bob Schwandner- New guy. A retired carpenter. Bremer has benefited from his skills during the barn restoration project.

Rick Funderburk - New guy. Rick says he has limited skills but is happy to do grunt work. Good to have Rick on board.

Jerome Epplin - New guy. Semi-retired physician. Helps with restoration and a fountain of knowledge regarding medical advice for aging volunteer group.

Henry Eilers - has been involved at Bremer since the 1980s. A walking encyclopedia on many aspects of nature.

Ron Gazda - the ultimate handyman, can build and fix nearly anything.

Jim Hefley - retired IDNR aquatic biologist, a valuable resource.

Don Krefft - Chapter Rep. and Treasurer. Enjoys helping on restoration. Also serves as Latrine Orderly.

Sonya Luckett - maintains and updates bulletin Boards monthly.

Ed Martin - trail maintenance and keep fuel cans filled..

Dane Murphy - Retired from power company. Knowledgeable of wiring and has building skills.

Jerry Prater- former chapter rep and now serves as Chapter Secretary. Helps with trail maintenance and community outreach.

Nancy Redman -devotes many hours to many aspects of operations. Editor of quarterly newsletter. Head of education program. Coordinates programs with 4H, school groups and community outreach. Coordinates Facebook Page. Monitors nest box trail.

Bruce Redman -spends many hours at Bremer maintaining trails and controlling invasives. Assists Chapter Rep in researching many matters.

Dick Rompasky and Carl Savage - long time volunteers. Their involvement in the last year has been curtailed due to COVID concerns.

Ken Schaal - retired biology teacher with an extensive knowledge of nature and sanctuary management. Heads restoration activities. Was lead author of recently completed Sanctuary Management Plan.

Jim Yount - Tireless worker who can fix or build nearly anything.

Total Volunteer Hours

1,105

Donations

In January of 2020 (prior to this reporting period) IAS received a donation of \$21,901 from the Estate of Carol Buffetti, a long time supporter of Bremer. Carol was the cousin of long-time volunteer Dick Rompasky. Funds from the bequest were used to purchase a good condition used golf car which was delivered to the sanctuary in May 2020. Funds from the bequest were also applied toward the cost of a low water crossing over Cress Creek which was constructed in August and September 2020. The crossing will facilitate all weather access to the 43 acres of IAS ground across the creek.

A barn remodeling project began in June 2020. The meeting/kitchen area was upgraded and expanded, with new flooring, repurposed cabinets, and new counter tops. The education area has been upgraded with many new exhibits. The barn's wiring was improved with a new/larger circuit breaker. All barn windows

have been replaced with aluminum wrap on the exterior, eliminating the need for painting in the future. The entire barn remodel was done by the regular Bremer volunteers. The cost to the IAS for materials was within the \$5,000 budgeted amount.

Contract Work and/or Grant Items

Contractor Bill Hunyadi has done extensive restoration work removing honeysuckle and performing timberland improvement. Carter Lentz was also hired to remove honeysuckle and other undesirable brush on the north and northeast boundary of the sanctuary. Volunteers have begun to reseed these areas with woodland forbes and grasses. These contractors were paid from IAS funds. Ongoing involvement by these contractors was incorporated into the FY 2022 budget.

Approximate Number of Visitors (Annually)

5,500

Promotions

Refer to www.bremersanctuary.org for quarterly newsletters other information highlighting all activities at Hickory Hills Chapter.

Like us on Facebook at "Bremer Sanctuary, Hickory Hills Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society".

Additional Information

Volunteer hours invested at Bremer Wildlife Sanctuary

Category	Volunteer Hours
Operations & Support	249
Administration (meetings, paperwork, coordinating, etc)	67
Citizen Science (e.g. Feeder Watch, nest box monitoring, game cameras)	63
Events (incl planning & prep, tours)	7
Newsletters	44
Social Media	68
Education & Outreach	523
Administration (meetings, paperwork, coordinating, etc)	63
Bird Feeder Upkeep	2
Maintenance - Building, Vehicle, Equipment (cleaning, lawn-mowing, landscaping, oil, etc)	378.5
Trail & Boundary Maintenance (mowing, downed trees, signs, fencing, etc)	79.5
Restoration	337
Invasive & Undesirable Species Control (herbicide, TSI, mowing, pulling, etc)	99
Vegetation Collection & Planting (seed, plugs, maintenance)	2
Prescribed Fire (planning, prep, actual)	219
Remove Debris (garbage, fence, rubble, scrap metal, etc)	17
Total	1109

End.