



Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve Local Sanctuary Committee Annual Report Fiscal Year 2020

Reporting Time Period: April 1, 2020 2019 – March 31, 2020

Report Submitted by: Debra Carey

Management Activities

Successful restoration of savanna, wetland, and prairie beginning December 4, 2012 (date of acquisition) through March 2020 has been swift and satisfying because of dedicated volunteers, and available funding. The volunteer Local Sanctuary Committee (LSC) assumes the daily role in restoration activities and management of the 302-acre site.

LSC is indebted to Jim Herkert, Jo Fessett and Kaleb Baker for providing administrative and technical assistance. LSC is grateful to the IAS Board for their continued support.

A small portion of the site is not designated as Illinois Nature Preserve; this area includes the parking lot, the two south entrances, the previous Illinois Central Railroad right-of-way (now used as a neighborhood connector trail) and the area where the buildings are located.

There are not enough words to thank and glorify the volunteers who cheerfully spend hours in all kinds of weather caring for this site. Not every volunteer is mentioned by name in this report but EVERY volunteer is appreciated! This site would not exist but for volunteers. The following is a few hours of a single day of volunteer activity at AMNP: mowed railroad trail, cut up three downed trees by Hatch Pond, put in posts to deter dirt bikes by gap in fence by parking lot; pulled Queen Anne's Lace in Spears Meadow and elsewhere; pulled seed heads of bouncing bet; pulled knapweed in Spears Pasture; filled golf cart batteries with distilled water; trimmed off dragging sliding door bottom in The Nest shop; cut off hanging apple tree at south end of Rhexia Field as it goes into the woods; cleaned up utility room; tightened loose faucet; filled fuel cans; stopped at Holland & Sons for tractor repair parts.

The Volunteer Center, well used by volunteers almost every day of the reporting period, was maintained and cleaned by Jim Hampson, donor of the Center and faithful volunteer, who also keeps the bird feeders

and bird baths cleaned and filled 365 days of the year. We are rewarded with a large number of birds including many red-headed woodpeckers. A journal is kept to record dates of first-of-the-year and end-of-year sightings and other wildlife experiences. Current avian inventory lists 197 species.

The Nest, the original volunteer building, serves as a work shop and storage building for all equipment. We are thankful to Jeff Schnaiter for completing preventative maintenance and repairs on equipment. He is a talented man with many skills.

John McCrosky and Deb Walens never fail to make the entrance area around the buildings, and the trails look welcoming. They mow and trim every week during the growing season. And Deb's photos often grace our newsletters. Her willingness to be the volunteer hour coordinator is much appreciated.

IAS Birdsong Chapter met in the Volunteer Center and held public programs. Carol and Jeff Schnaiter hosted a Family Day to introduce neighbors and visitors to the site.

Spring Bird Count, Christmas Bird Count and a Sandhill Crane Count were completed thanks to Gene, Diana and Alyssa Rod. The Rods donated a golf cart which is greatly appreciated, and they are our go-to techs for the copy machine.

Bluebird boxes and purple martin houses were maintained and checked throughout the nesting season. Jim Hampson and Carol Schnaiter maintain the bird house trails and record nesting efforts.

Two information kiosks welcome visitors and explain the fragile nature of the site. Specific rules (no dogs or vehicles, etc.) are posted, as are current trail closures due to wildlife nesting or wet conditions. Dave and Amy Brewer maintain the kiosks along with helping with many other projects such as signage, invasive weed pulling, photography and more.

Game cameras are used in various locations on site. These have provided much detail on the daily life of wildlife.

A daily journal is kept with detailed observations and notes on activities, projects, frustrations, events, visitors, problems, administration, contractors, repairs and personal comments. This journal provides a candid and frank look at every day at Amboy Marsh – good and bad.

Bill Rogers serves as restoration manager and he rarely misses a day on the site no matter the season. Creating and maintaining fire lines, mowing herbaceous species as part of the management plan; managing contractors; cutting and removing downed trees across trails; monitoring the re-emergence of native blooming and seeding plants; and hand-pulling thousands of herbaceous invasives are a few of his activities. His dedication is commendable.

Amboy Marsh offers unparalleled opportunities for natural area restoration due to its hydric and sandy soils. First priority has always been given to the identification and restoration of those areas which have best resisted succession and retained their natural, pre-settlement integrity, and to the implementation of management strategies designed to preserve indigenous characteristics with the least possible negative impact. It is rewarding to volunteers that high quality native vegetation often emerges after invasive species are removed. This has been the normal reaction – no seeding has been used in any restoration effort. Herbaceous species, with number nine and ten S&W ratings, that have returned to areas cleared of invasives are listed in a Conservative Species Inventory as an attachment. The total flora inventory lists 405 species. All inventories are available for review: Flora; Avian; Mammal; Herpetological; Moth; Lepidoptera; Fungus; Odonata.

This is not to say that a problem with invasive woody and herbaceous species does not exist; we daily fight with *Rubus allagheniensis* and *Rhamnus cathartica* and *frangula*, plus the ever-persistent *Lonicera maackii*.

No prescribed fire was implemented during this reporting period. The lack of fire is evident in the flush of *Populus deltoides* in the Derr Field; *Salix* sp. around Hampson South Wetland; and *Elaeagnus angustifolia* in the Agalinus Field. It is imperative that fire be on the ground and we are working towards a method to provide safe prescribed fire at AMNP.

Researchers are required to apply for an IAS permit and an Illinois Nature Preserves permit. Researchers must provide a written report on their activities including data collected.

William Handel – Flora, 10 site visits, cost \$3,000

Dr. Richard King – Blanding's Turtle/herps (adult Blanding's documented in Willow Wetland on several occasions)

Linda Curtis – Sedges, 2 site visits, cost \$1,000

Dr. Bo Dziadyk – Muskrat, 8 site visits, cost \$1,000

Tara Beveroth – Avian, 6 site visits, cost \$1,500

Professional research projects are critical to successful restoration and management of the site. Individual researchers greatly add to our data collection and have provided information on methods and areas that enhance restoration. All research reports are available for review.

Volunteer research is invaluable since it covers almost every day of the year. The previously-noted use of game cameras has been helpful in documenting wildlife species.

Deb Carey's 1986 dream of permanently preserving and managing this site is now her daily job.

Participating Volunteers

Bill Rogers
Deb Carey
Jim Hampson
Dave Brewer
Amy Brewer
John McCrosky
Deb Walens
Jeff Schnaiter
Carol Schnaiter
Bob Chinn
Tim Smith
Teresa Smith
Cassandra Rodgers
Diana Rod
Gene Rod
Alyssa Rod

Dave Granskrog
Dick Todd
Tom Williams
Steve Hager
Bo Dziadyk
Alice Topping
Ernie Topping
Randy Singleton
Jan Williams

Total Volunteer Hours

2,620

Donations

Golf Cart from Gene and Diana Rod. Valued at \$5,000.

Contract Work and/or Grant Items

Shane Coers Tree Care

Removal and disposal of invasive woody species including Rhamnus cathartica; R. frangula; Quercus velutina; Prunus serotina; Morus alba; Populus grandidentata; Lonicera maackii; and others as encountered.

Approximate acres: 7

Bryon Walters Illinois Natural Area Improvements

Removal and/or control of invasive woody and herbaceous species including Rubus allagheniensis; Phalaris arundinacea; Berberis vulgaris; Phragmites australis; re-sprouts of R. cathartica; R. frangula; Q. velutina; P. serotina; L. maackii; P. grandidentata; and others as encountered.

Approximate area of individual plants treated: 210 acres

ENCAP, Inc.

Removal and/or control of invasive woody species including R. cathartica; R. frangula; Q. velutina; P. serotina; M. alba; R. allagheniensis; L. maackii; and others as encountered.

Approximate acres: 9

Approximate Number of Visitors (Annually)

1,100

MONTH	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	TOTAL	
Education & Outreach														Education & Outreach
Administration														Administration
Citizen Science	18	22	6.5	15	11	3	11.5	8.5	6.5	3.5	4.5	8.5	118.5	Citizen Science
Events		22	7.5	6	13.5	3	2	0.5	13.5	1	8	10	87	Events
Newsletter	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	36	Newsletter
Social Media				1		4	0.5			3			8.5	Social Media
Operations & Support														Operations & Support
Administration	110	13	28	19.5	15.5	33.5	24.5	59.5	48	25	78.5	19.5	474	Administration
Bird Feeder Maintenance	45	72	70	80	64	41	39	41	45	60	60	55	672	Bird Feeder Maintenance
Bluebird Box Maintenance	4	5	4	5	4								22	Bluebird Box Maintenance
Trail & Boundary Maintenance	111	86	73	41	21	7	6	3	8	17	4	16	393	Trail & Boundary Maintenance
Vehicle Maintenance	14	12	10	7	6	5	2.5	3	2	3.5	11	7	83	Vehicle Maintenance
Bldg. Maintenance	31.5	24.5	18	33	5.5	12.5	12.5	8.5	69	3.5	5.5	4.5	228.5	Bldg. Maintenance
Stewardship Activities														Stewardship Activities
Prescribed Fire Planning/actual														Prescribed Fire Planning/actual
Restoration Planning/mapping														Restoration Planning/mapping
Invasives Removal		35	43	83	114.5	69.5	21	36	73	7	2	13	497	Invasives Removal
TOTALS	337	294.5	263	293.5	258	181.5	122.5	163	268	126	176.5	137	2620	

Photographs

Male black and white warbler, May 10, 2019



Blanding's turtle, May 18, 2019.



Western ribbon snake, May 1, 2019



Michigan lily, July 9, 2019



Golf cart donated by the Rod Family, March 2020.

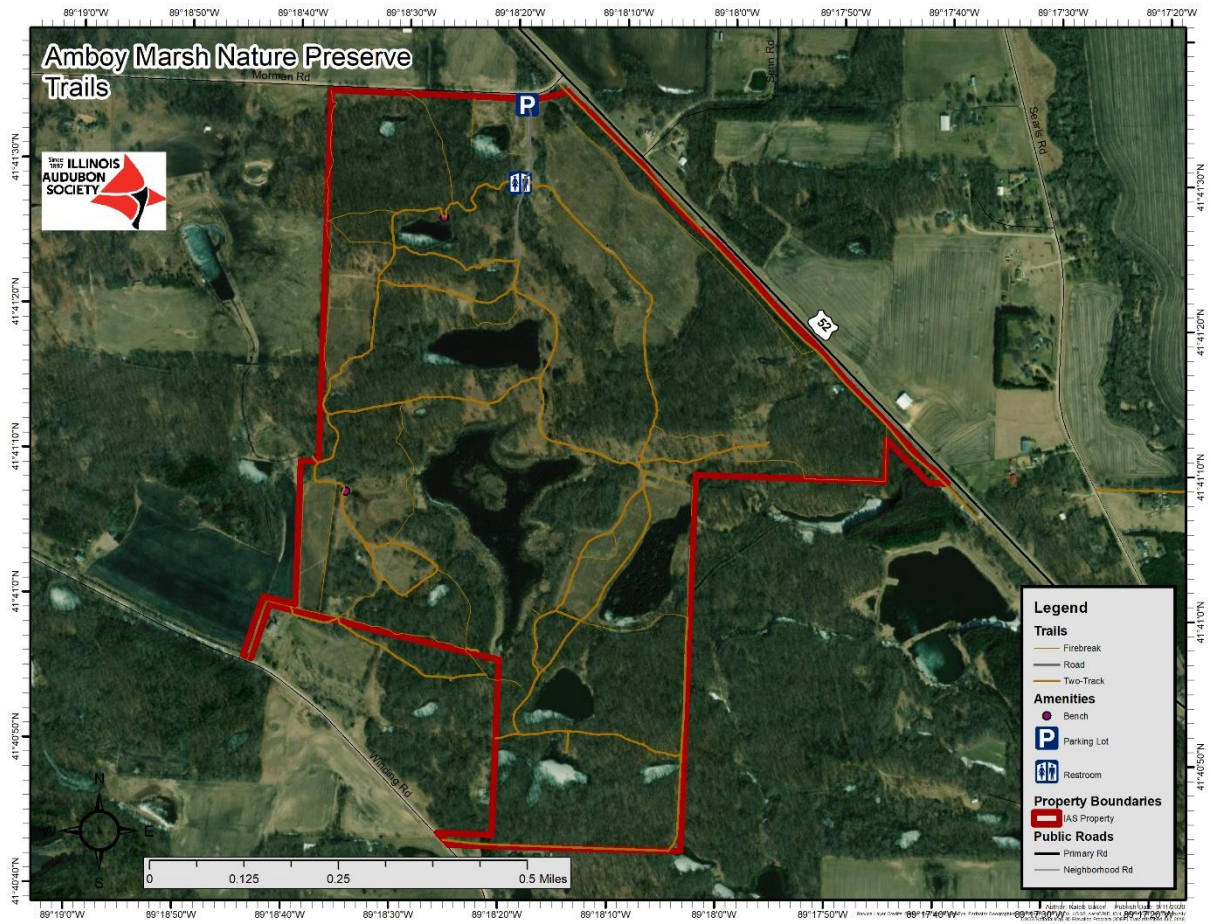


Conservative Species

Scientific Name (INPS)	Common Name (INPS)	Coefficient of Conservatism (INPS)	Family (Scientific)	
<i>Cacalia plantaginea</i>	Prairie Indian Plantain	10	Asteraceae	14
<i>Campanula uliginosa</i>	Marsh Bellflower	10	Campanulaceae	
<i>Carex laxiflora</i> (leptonervia)	Few-nerved Wood Sedge	10	Cyperaceae	15
<i>Carex sterilis</i>	Fen Star Sedge	10	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Eleocharis wolfii</i>	wolf's spikerush	10	Cyperaceae	17
<i>Hedyotis purpurea</i>	Broad-leaved Bluets	10	Rubiaceae	
<i>Lechea intermedia</i>	Savanna Pinweed	10	Cistaceae	14
<i>Rhexia virginica</i>	Meadow Beauty	10	Melastomataceae	15
<i>Rhynchospora capitellata</i>	beaked Rush	10	Cyperaceae	17
<i>Solidago uliginosa</i>	Bog Goldenrod	10	Asteraceae	
<i>Triadenum virginicum</i>	Marsh St, John's Wort	10	Hypericaceae	16
<i>Xyris torta</i>	Twisted Yellow-eyed Grass	10	Xyridaceae	15
<i>Aristida tuberculosa</i>	Beach Three Awn Grass	9	Poaceae	16
<i>Asclepias viridiflora</i>	Green Milkweed	9	Asclepiadaceae	14
<i>Aster linariifolius</i>	Flax-leaved Aster	9	Asteraceae	14

<i>Baptisia leucophaea</i>	Cream Wild Indigo	9	Fabaceae	16
<i>Carex buxbaumii</i>	Dark-scaled Sedge	9	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Cirsium muticum</i>	Fen Thistle	9	Asteraceae	14
<i>Dulichium arundinaceum</i>	Three-way Sedge	9	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry	9	Aquifoliaceae	17
<i>Maianthemum canadense</i> v. <i>interius</i>	Wild Lily-of the-valley	9	Liliaceae	14
<i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	interrupted fern	9	Osmundaceae	14
<i>Pedicularis lanceolata</i>	Fen Betony	9	Scrophulariaceae	14
<i>Polygala cruciata</i> v. <i>aquilunia</i>	Cross Milkwort	9	Polygalaceae	15
<i>Polygonella articulata</i>	Jointweed	9	Polygonaceae	
<i>Scleria triglomerata</i>	Tall nut grass	9	Cyperaceae	17
<i>Zizania aquatica</i>	Wild Rice	9	Poaceae	
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Lead Plant	8	Fabaceae	14
<i>Anemone cylindrica</i>	Candle Anemone	8	Ranunculaceae	17
<i>Aronia prunifolia</i>	Purple Chokeberry	8	Rosaceae	14
<i>Aster umbellatus</i>	Flat-top Aster	8	Asteraceae	17
<i>Campanula aparinoides</i>	Marsh Bellflower	8	Campanulaceae	17
<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Harebell	8	Campanulaceae	
<i>Carex longii</i>	Round-shouldered Oval Sedge	8	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Carex swanii</i>	Downy Green Sedge	8	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Carex tonsa</i>	Smooth-fruited Oak Sedge	8	Cyperaceae	14
<i>Dryopteris cristata</i>	Crested Wood Fern	8	Aspleniaceae	14
<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>	Black Huckleberry	8	Ericaceae	14
<i>Lithospermum incisum</i>	Fringed Puccoon	8	Boraginaceae	
<i>Lysimachia quadriflora</i>	Narrow-leaved Loosestrife	8	Primulaceae	
<i>Monotropa hypopithys</i>	Pinesap	8	Pyrolaceae	14
<i>Monotropa uniflora</i>	Indian Pipe	8	Pyrolaceae	14
<i>Osmunda regalis</i> v. <i>spectabilis</i>	Regal Fern	8	Osmundaceae	14
<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>	Wild Quinine	8	Asteraceae	14
<i>Rubus hispidus</i>	Swampy Dewberry	8	Rosaceae	15
<i>Salix eriocephala</i>	Heart-leaved Willow	8	Salicaceae	
<i>Senecio obovatus</i>	Round-leaved Ragwort	8	Asteraceae	
<i>Triadenum fraseri</i>	Fraser's St. John's Wort	8	Hypericaceae	16
<i>Viola nephrophylla</i>	Northern Blue Violet	8	Violaceae	14

Map



End.