

HERON TRACKS

The Official Newsletter of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy
Volume 31 Number 1 Winter 2024



Bundy Hill Preserve

Executive Director's Corner

There's a word that's been popping up in a number of books and articles that I've recently read: *solastalgia*. Solastalgia is a relatively new word. It was coined in 2003 by Australian philosopher Glenn Albrecht to describe the emotional and oftentimes physical anguish felt by people watching their 'home' environment change in ways over which they have no control. Albrecht personally experienced this feeling as he observed his home region of Australia transformed by open-pit coalmines. Albrecht felt devastated by the change and suffered what he described as "a form of homesickness one gets when one is still at 'home'".

Since 2003, researchers have documented solastalgia in communities across the globe. Sometimes the feeling of helplessness is the result of natural events. It occurs in farming communities hit by prolonged drought, mountain towns ravaged by wildfires, and in places where floods have irrevocably altered the landscape. Unfortunately, solastalgia often results from the consequences of human activities as diverse as war, mountaintop removal mining in Appalachia, and logging. Even activities intended to have a positive environmental impact, such as dam removal or wind farm construction, can result in a feeling of loss for those who must live with the changes.

What does solastalgia have to do with the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy? We know intuitively, and research has backed up the idea, that nature has a profound emotional, mental, and physical effect on our well-being. While we cannot protect every piece of land, the properties protected by the CWC and other land conservancies have a profound impact in preserving both the natural resources and the character of the places we call home. That's why we take the time to thank every individual and organization that contributes to our mission through donations of property, money, or time. Together, we are truly improving the quality of life for all.

Stay Well and Happy Trails



CWC Chair Notes

Hello CWC members! Let me introduce myself. My name is Keith Tollenaere – I recently was elected President of the CWC Board and served as board secretary for several years prior to that, as well as being on the Lands Committee. I grew up in southeast Iowa but came to Mt. Pleasant about 23 years ago to pursue a master's degree in fisheries biology at CMU. Upon graduating, I was fortunate enough to find a job in environmental consulting and have been working in that field ever since. My career has allowed me to work in a variety of wonderful places on projects relating to stream and wetland mitigation, fish community assessments, macroinvertebrate studies, threatened & endangered species surveys, avian surveys, and a host of other interesting projects. When not working, I enjoy spending time with my wife and four children, and generally being outdoors as much as possible.



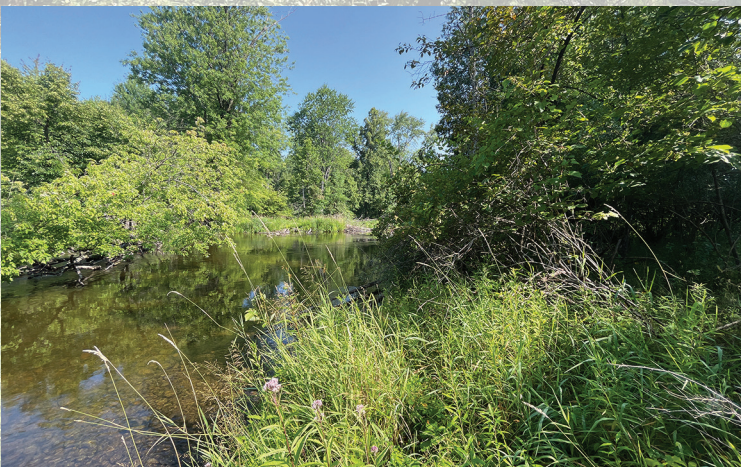
I have found in the CWC an organization full of people who share my love for the outdoors and who are committed to maintaining those opportunities for others through education and conservation of our local treasures. As an outdoors enthusiast who has lived in town for many years, I have often thought how fortunate we are to have so many preserves to hike, birdwatch, fish, and generally enjoy, in addition to the local city and county parks. As president of the CWC Board, I hope to help the organization continue to thrive into the future, welcoming others to share in the same things I have enjoyed. If we have not yet had the chance to meet, I hope to see you on a trail, or perhaps at one of our work nights or banquets in this upcoming year.

Introducing the new Hubscher Preserve

Donated to the CWC in December 2023, the G. Charles and Janice L. Hubscher Preserve is located along the Chippewa River in Deerfield Township, Isabella County. This 18 acre property is composed of a variety of different habitat types including old fields, wetlands, and floodplain forest.

The preserve is divided by the Chippewa River with approximately 1,400 feet of frontage on the east bank and 1,000 feet on the west bank. The property provides suitable habitat for a wide variety of resident and migratory birds, aquatic and terrestrial mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and insects. Numerous disused beaver dens can be found dug into the east bank and a bald eagle was sighted along the river during a recent trip to the property. The preserve is likely habitat for the wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*), a state threatened species, and the Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*), a state species of special concern, both of which have been observed on other CWC preserves.

The majority of Hubscher Preserve is located on the east bank of the Chippewa River along M-20 (Remus Road) between Littlefield Road and Gilmore Road. Parking for and access to the property is currently roadside along the south side of M-20. There is no road access for the portion of the preserve located on the west bank of the river.



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Save the Date

The 2024 CWC Fall Fundraiser is scheduled for
Thursday, October 3rd at Little Flower Barn.
Mark your calendars to join us for an evening
of dinner, drinks, live music, and raffles to raise
funds to support our mission!



Give Local Isabella is a 24-hour community-wide fundraising event hosted by the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation. Held once a year on the first Tuesday in May, Give Local Isabella engages hundreds of community members in supporting the long-term financial sustainability of their favorite local charitable organizations. Nonprofit organizations raise dollars in a dynamic, digital format while also expanding community interest in their missions. Plus, throughout the day, participating nonprofits have chances to compete for matching funds and prizes. Join us on May 7, 2024 for the fun!

Interested in volunteering with the Vernal Pool Patrol or just learning more about the ecology of these ephemeral wetlands?

The CWC is cohosting a training with Chippewa Nature Center and Little Forks Conservancy in April. You can email any questions to autumn@cw-mi.org



Vernal Pool Patrol Volunteer Training

Sat, April 13 • 12-5 pm
at Chippewa Nature Center

& Sun, April 14 • 1-3 pm*
at Little Forks Conservancy's Riverview Natural Area
*optional



Join the Vernal Pool Patrol Team to learn how to monitor and protect Michigan's vernal pools. These valuable ecosystems provide refuge for sensitive wildlife, like salamanders and fairy shrimp. Please dress for the weather. Waterproof shoes are ideal. Snacks will be provided. **FREE • Ages 15+, under 18 w/adult**



Register
Today!

www.chippewanaturecenter.org



Looking to get more involved with the CWC?

Make an impact by volunteering! We host frequent volunteer opportunities throughout the year. From stewardship activities to committees to graphic design to fundraising, we have a variety of ways to get involved. Call our office at 989-772-5777 or visit <https://cw-mi.org/volunteer-sign-up/>

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