



Environmental Concern Presents:

NOW! News on Wetlands



A Quarterly Newsletter for Wetland Educators

Autumn 2006

Featured Habitat: Forsythe Middle School, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Forsythe Middle School in Ann Arbor, Michigan is home to a new wetland habitat. In addition to the school's existing meadow, FMS now offers a home to water loving plants and animals. With guidance from Environmental Concern and their teachers, Forsythe students were involved in designing, planning and building the wetland.

During a POW! Workshop, students and teachers chose a site for the wetland and took measurements of the drainage area for that site. Using the data, they created a preliminary wetland design which Environmental Concern helped finalize. Students then developed a

planting plan based on the water tolerance of each plant species. The wetland has one deep area, and contains a large island. A variety of plants to suit each section of the wetland were donated to the project by parents and community members including various berry bushes, dog-



Students worked to plant a variety of wetland species in their new wetland

wood, coneflower, asters, goldenrod and black-eyed susan.

An excavator was brought in to dig the wetland. Students worked on additional aspects of the project including the installation of posts for a required fence, and helping to dig a small drainage channel directing parking lot runoff into the wetland, which will act as a filter to improve the community's water quality.

The students hope that someday the great blue heron that flew overhead during the planting will one day stop to grab a snack at their new wetland! *For more information about the Forsythe Middle School wetland and other Schoolyard Habitat Success Stories visit www.wetland.org/edu_sywh.htm*

New Partner: Crowley's Ridge Nature Center in Jonesboro, AR

Undeterred by the heat and humidity of an Arkansas July, 23 teachers braved the weather to join Environmental Concern and Forest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center to learn about the Wonders of Wetlands! After a rainy start, the WOW! Workshop class was able to explore some of the exciting wetland areas at the Center, as well as learn how to bring wetlands curricu-

lum into their classrooms. Many participants joined in a follow-up Facilitator workshop and are now trained to teach WOW! Workshops themselves!

Forest L. Wood Crowley's Ridge Nature Center takes its name from the unique geological feature called Crowley's Ridge, atop which it's located. The ridge, rising 200 feet above the surrounding Mississippi delta,

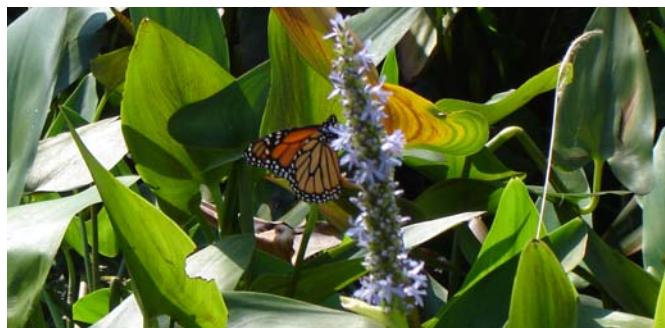
was formed over millions of years by many different geological processes, including faulting, glaciation, and wind and water erosion. Today, Crowley's Ridge provides a home to many unique plant and animal species that are not found elsewhere in the Mississippi Delta region.

For more information, visit www.crowleysridge.org

Monarchs on the Move!

Fall is not just the season of football, it's also the season of Monarchs! Every autumn, fans cheer on these butterflies as they travel thousands of miles south to escape cold northern winters. Along the way they gain energy from the nectar supplied by a variety of wetland flowers to survive the winter ahead in Mexico or the California coast.

Monarchs that hatch in late summer and fall do not prepare to lay eggs right away like those that hatch in the spring; instead, they prepare for migration and head south. In springtime, these monarchs return north and lay their eggs in mid March. Their early summer offspring will grow up to produce the eggs that become the next group of adults to fly south



the following autumn. During this annual cycle, monarchs rely on milkweed, a wetland plant that provides both habitat and food. As monarch larvae eat the milkweed, they develop a flavor that is unappetizing to most predators.

Many worry about the decline of monarchs due to the decreasing amount of milkweed habitat available. However, there are many

ways to help monarchs and other butterflies. You can create a wetland, butterfly, or rain garden and plant their favorite foods like boneset, goldenrod, ironweed and milkweed. Or, get involved in preserving natural areas on which monarchs rely. You can even become a "citizen scientist" and help tag and monitor monarchs on their incredible journey!

For more information, visit www.monarchwatch.org.

Upcoming Workshops:

October 28: WOW! in Smyrna, Delaware

November 2-3: WOW! and POW! in Lancaster, Pennsylvania

November 4: POW! In Rehoboth, Delaware

November 7: The Wonders of Winter in Edgewater, Maryland

December 1-2: WOW! for Early Childcare Providers and Spanish WOW! in Tincicum, Pennsylvania

Check www.wetland.org for complete course listings. To schedule a workshop in your area, call (410) 745-9620

February 2nd is World Wetlands Day!

On February 2nd, 1971, the International Convention on Wetlands was adopted in the city of Ramsar, Iran. Since 1997, this date has served as an opportunity for groups around the world to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands through lectures, activities, clean-up days, even wetland construction projects! To receive complimentary World Wetlands Day materials, log on to www.ramsar.org/wwd/wwd_index.htm



Wetland Gifts Available from Environmental Concern:

Natural Plant Candles (scents of Sweetbay Magnolia, Wild Rose, Oak Leaf, & Lotus) & Wetland Note Cards

Visit www.wetland.org

