

Spring 2019



# Newsletter

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[www.ParkLandsFoundation.org](http://www.ParkLandsFoundation.org)

## ParkLands Commit to Conservation social kicks off 2019

Happy New Year from the ParkLands Foundation! Our Outreach committee and board of directors has made it a priority to get to know more of our members and supporters. The winter months don't offer much of an opportunity to get together outdoors. A winter social seemed like a great alternative!

Keg Grove Brewing Company generously offered their upstairs lounge as well as a portion of their proceeds from the evening. Seventy people attended and learned about our upcoming events and workday calendar for 2019. It was also a great opportunity for our board members and staff to talk with our members and volunteers. Thank you to everyone that attended and we hope to make this a regular event.



# BECOME A VOLUNTEER

## Volunteers are always needed!

ParkLands can always use volunteer help, whether by an individual, a couple or a whole group! Workdays on our preserves are scheduled throughout the year and are posted on our website and social media pages.

Our volunteers provide accounting, appraisal, legal work, contribute to the newsletter, lead nature walks, help with stewardship and workdays.

Interested in volunteering at ParkLands Foundation?

If you have any questions about volunteering please contact...

**Erin Herbez at [parklandsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:parklandsoffice@gmail.com)**

ParkLands Foundation  
PO Box 12  
Normal, IL 61761-0012



Email: [parklandsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:parklandsoffice@gmail.com)  
Phone: 309.454.3169 ext. 16  
Web: [parklandsfoundation.org](http://parklandsfoundation.org)



If you are interested in volunteering please see our website <http://www.parklandsfoundation.org/volunteer/> to fill out a volunteer application form



## 2019 Workday Calendar

### **INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL Chinquapin Bluffs Preserve**

Meeting Place: Fairlakes Golf Course 2203 County Rd 600 N, Secor, IL 61771

April 27- 9:00 AM-12:00PM

May 18- 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

### **INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL Letcher Basin Preserve**

Meeting Place: South .8 miles on 1975 E. From intersection of 475 N. and 1975 E. Secor, IL

June 22- 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

### **INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL Ridgetop Illinois Nature Preserve**

Meeting Place: Fairlakes Golf Course 2203 County Rd 600 N Secor, IL 61771

July 13- 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

July 27- 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### **INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL Hayes Woods Nature Preserve**

Meeting Place: Fairlakes Golf Course 2203 County Rd 600 N, Secor, IL 61771

September 21- 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

### **NATIVE PRAIRIE SEED COLLECTION Cayuga Ridge**

Meeting place: McDonald's 1744 PJ Keller Hwy, Lexington, IL 61753

October 26- 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

November 9- 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### **PRAIRIE SEED CLEANING**

Meeting Place: Science Laboratory Building, 125 S. Fell Avenue, Normal, IL 61761 (ISU)

December 7th- 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

Contact Jason Shoemaker for information (309) 531-7065 with any questions



Here is a list of our events for 2019. For more information visit our website <http://www.parklandsfoundation.org/eventscalendar/> or if you would like to volunteer please contact Erin Herbez at [parklandsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:parklandsoffice@gmail.com) or 309-454-3169 x16

## PARKLANDS FOUNDATION EVENTS 2019

### JANUARY

Sunday,  
January 27

3 pm – 6 pm

Social Event at  
Keg Grove

### MARCH

Saturday,  
March 2

9 – 4pm

Home Lawn and  
Garden Day

### FEBRUARY

Saturday,  
February 16

9 – 1:30 pm

Board Retreat for  
Board Members Only

Sunday,  
February 24

9 am

Winter Hike at North  
Chinquapin Preserve

### MAY

Mother's Day  
Sunday,  
May 12

1 – 3:00 pm

Wildflower Walk  
Merwin Nature  
Preserve

### JUNE

Saturday,  
June 1

10 – 3:00 pm

National Trails Day  
Sugar Grove Nature Center

Sunday,  
June 9

12 – 2:00 pm

Mudpuppy Event at Letcher  
Basin

Saturday,  
June 29

7 – 12 pm

Ride with Lincoln 3rd Annual  
ParkLands' Foundation Bike Ride

### OCTOBER

Sunday,  
October 6

11:00

Warbler Ridge  
Conservation Area

for Board Members  
and Volunteers Only

Saturday,  
October 12

6:30 pm - Night

Hike at Merwin start  
at North Gate

### SEPTEMBER

Sunday,  
September 8

11 – 2:00 pm

Annual Members  
Meeting at Hayes Tract





## ParkLands is hiring summer interns!

### General Information:

Two full-time internship positions are available for summer 2019  
Applications are due April 01, 2019.

The internship begins in May and continues until August 2019;  
positions are 37.5 hours per week.

The starting hourly wage is \$10.00 per hour with no overtime pay  
Interns will work both independently and with others including  
volunteers, stewards, and professionals.

An herbicide operator's license is required; this will be obtained at the  
start of the internship. For testing information contact Illinois  
Department of Agriculture, License and Test Information  
(1-800-641-3934). Take the General Standards test.



### Internship Goals:

- Experience hands-on natural lands management by removing invasive vegetation from ParkLands Foundation sites;
- Learn to identify native and invasive plant species;
- Meet professional land managers and biologists and learn management, restoration, and monitoring techniques from them;
- Coordinate with the land stewards to perform annual management activities;
- Assist with Foundation activities, site visits, and work days;
- Learn the importance of managing our natural area remnants;
- Collect native plant seeds;
- Assist with data collection as needed.



Please see our website  
[www.parklandsfoundation.org/summer-2019-internships-available/](http://www.parklandsfoundation.org/summer-2019-internships-available/) for instructions on how to apply.





## Sweeney Preserve

By Finn Amble

Recently, I took a few hikes in the Sweeney Preserve. The first tree I saw was a sycamore.

I stopped to take a look at the youngster. I remember when it was planted. I even remember when it would have been under seven feet of water. I remember things about that tree like my parents' friends remember about me when I was a tike.

I have always liked sycamore trees. Why? Because of their tree trunks. Because they are unusual. I think that they are beautiful.

So, if beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder, how can a sycamore be made exciting to you? Well, let's see.

First of all, from Wikipedia, an "American sycamore tree can often be easily distinguished from other trees by its mottled bark which flakes off in great irregular masses, leaving the surface mottled, and greenish-white, gray and brown. The bark of all trees has to yield to a growing trunk by stretching, splitting, or infilling; the sycamore shows the process more openly than many other trees. The explanation is found in the rigid texture of the bark tissue which lacks the elasticity of the bark of some other trees, so it is incapable of stretching to accommodate the growth of the wood underneath, so the tree sloughs it off."

Maybe that is not so exciting. I mean, it is to me. Especially the mottled surface part. But let's see if I can do better.

Consider this. "A sycamore can grow to massive proportions, typically reaching up to 30 to 40 m (98 to 131 ft) high and 1.5 to 2 m (4.9 to 6.6 ft) in diameter when grown in deep soils. The largest of the species have been measured to 51 m (167 ft), and nearly 4 m (13 ft) in diameter."

Pretty big. More than half a football field tall. Getting warmer?

"Larger specimens were recorded in historical times. In 1744, a Shenandoah Valley settler named Joseph Hampton and two sons lived for most of the year in a hollow sycamore in what is now Clarke County, Virginia."

Really? A year in a sycamore? And Cubs fans thought it felt like a long time for a championship!

"In 1770, at Point Pleasant, Virginia George Washington recorded in his journal a sycamore measuring 13.67 m (44 ft 10 in) in circumference at 91 cm (3 ft) from the ground."

I guess I am not alone! So let me get this straight. A father and two of his boys lived in one! And the "father of our country" liked them too! Good enough for me so far!

But yes! There's more! I wondered to myself. What the heck was up with the naming of the "sycamore." I mean, how many "more" of the "sys" does someone need and what is a "syc" anyway? That's when I really became intrigued.

This next part blew my mind about the origin of that name of the sycamore tree...

"A Biblical word, originally used for a wide-spreading shade tree with fig-like fruit (*Ficus sycomorus*) common in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, etc., whose leaves somewhat resemble those of the mulberry; applied in English from 1580s to a large species of European maple (also plane-tree), perhaps because both it and the Biblical tree were notable for their shadiness (the Holy Family took refuge under a sycamore on the flight to Egypt)."

"Spelling apparently influenced by sycamine "black mulberry tree," which is from Greek sykaminos, which also is mentioned in the Bible (Luke xvii.6). For the sake of clarity, some writers have used the more Hellenic sycomore in reference to the Biblical tree."

So, se repite (I think that means "let's repeat" in Spanish but I'm not positive).

You have a tree with unique and beautiful bark. Next some settler in Virginia sticks his two sons in said tree for a one year time-out. Further, the father of our nation measured a massive one six years before he has to hustle away from Martha and deal with the Brits for 8 ½ years. And finally our Father was nestled under one on a brief respite from fleeing for his life to Egypt on his way for a job description as our Savior. Boring? I think not.

As a coup de grace, to realize that the sycamore is also known as "The Robin Hood Tree" and that even Shakespeare wrote about it and I think you have a tree to be admired.

Meanwhile, get out to Sweeney and check for yourselves. I get much joy from supporting Parklands. I've never been on a board where the leaders get less praise than they should.

I know I praise them. Speaking of which, our talented and terminally upbeat Parklands caretaker, Jason Shoemaker, recommends the bench under the big oak overlooking the big bottomland for a nice view and a good place to write. As usual, he is correct...

All the best and happy hiking!

Your friend in boots.

Finn Amble



Finn and Christian Amble skiing at Sweeney preserve

In memory of Guy Fritz  
written by Christopher Guethoff and Ann Fritz

This month, we ask that you join us in remembering and honoring a loving husband and father, as well as a beloved member of the ParkLands Foundation, Mr. Guy Fritz.

As an avid lover of the outdoors, Guy had learned the value of nature from an early age as he hunted and fished with his father. This love grew throughout his life as he read the writings of John Muir and Henry Thoreau, until eventually he heard about our organization through his dear friend, Bill Cockrell. Immediately, Guy knew that the foundation was a thing to be valued and decided to volunteer. As fondly remembered by his wife, Ann, Guy was soon responsible for trail maintenance and became devoted to doing the best job that he could. She remembers her husband painting a “No Dogs Allowed” sign multiple times because he had not been happy with the lettering. More than anything though, Guy loved to share the beauty found in, and his love of the outdoors. Each year, Guy would lead his family on their annual spring wildflower trip. Roaming the preserves, they would spy beautiful blue bells and trillium blossoms. Hiking with their father, Guy’s daughters have fond memories of finding something new each year that they had never seen before. A testament to his love of ParkLands, Guy always carried a few Foundation brochures in his car, ready to hand them out whenever he met someone interested in the outdoors. Even after passing away, Guy’s appreciation and love for the organization carries on. A testament to his giving nature, Guy asked that mourners donate to the Foundation to aid in their preservation efforts. We hope to carry on his lasting legacy and make him proud of our work. He will be truly missed by all of us.





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