

Newsletter Jan/Feb 2010



<http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/>
<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/>

Contact us at fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com or 630-840-3303

Fermilab Natural Areas (FNA) was formed in 2006

* to study and restore Fermilab's unique combination of ecological communities

* to inform and enrich local residents' knowledge of Fermilab, and

* to contribute to the preservation of global biodiversity.

FNA is part of Fermi Research Alliance, LLC, a not-for-profit charitable organization. FNA operates with various sources.

A message from FNA President Rod Walton, rwalton@fnal.gov

Greetings from Fermilab Natural Areas! This is the inaugural issue of a newsletter, which we hope will be coming your way bimonthly, with information on our organization and about natural areas on the Fermilab site, reports on past happenings, and notification of upcoming events.

Special thanks are due to [Paula Lambertz](#), who has agreed to coordinate this newsletter effort. We have heard from many FNA members who want to know more about what we're up to & how they can become more involved in our mission. Paula's efforts, with the support of all FNA members, should make that happen.

Our third general membership meeting will be held February 18. When we organized FNA two years ago, we were fortunate to have a "ready-made" partner in Fermi Research Alliance, LLC, the not-for-profit that is under contract to operate Fermilab. That allows all donations to FNA to be tax-exempt under the FRA umbrella. Later in the year, we decided to incorporate as a not-for-profit corporation in Illinois, and started the process of obtaining our independent tax exempt status from the IRS. We think that we are close to completing that process, which will allow us considerably more flexibility in applying for grants and corporate donations.

In the meantime, please enjoy this first issue of the newsletter, and please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions. Also, if you feel like sharing a thought with us, post a comment on the [FNA Blog!](#)

FNA Calendar of Events

Jan 21 Open House at the seed processing facility - hosted by Roads & Grounds at [28 B Sauk Blvd., Fermilab Village](#), 1:00 to 3:30 p.m.

An opportunity to see the variety of methods used to clean, scarify, inoculate & store seeds that were harvested last fall. Staff members will explain how specific seed mixes are custom blended & planted in the spring. If you plan to attend please contact R & G at 630-840-3303.

Feb 18 FNA Annual Meeting, at Fermilab - *everyone is welcome to attend!*

Thursday Feb. 18, 2010, 7:00 p.m. in Wilson Hall 1-West Conference Room. The meeting will feature progress & financial reports, future plans, including budget. Susan Dahl, President of the other not-for-profit group at Fermilab, [Fermilab Friends for Science Education](#), will discuss her organization. Elections will be held for FNA officers for the coming year, and four (of nine) two-year Board seats.



Fermilab image

FNA Calendar of Events, continued

- March or April** Saturday habitat restoration work days resume, date TBD
- April 15** "Third Thursday" Fermilab lunchtime clean-up. Meet at Wilson Hall east side; cleaning gear provided, picnic lunch served afterwards
- April** Arbor Day tree planting at FNAL, date TBD

Overview of Past Events



Seed Harvest of Fall 2009; Bob Lootens, Fermilab

The fall Volunteer Prairie Seed Harvests were very successful again this season despite the cancellation of the October 31st harvest. On October 3rd, approximately 125 volunteers enjoyed the good weather and harvested large amounts of native forb seed. October 17th, FNA sponsored a special harvest for approximately 50 students from Wheaton/Warrenville High School. This was our second year for hosting this special event. Roads & Grounds summer intern Julie Allen was in charge of coordinating the special harvest. She divided the students into individual groups along with an experienced leader to escort them to designated areas. One of these groups focused specifically on turtle-head, marsh betony, and mullein foxglove, which are species that the Baltimore checkerspot butterflies need both as host plants and as a nectar source. (See the butterfly update below for more about the Baltimores.) This seed will be planted near the Baltimore checkerspot release areas in the spring of 2010.

For more info and photos of the harvests, see these FNA Blog pages:

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2009/10/harvest-photos.html>

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2009/09/species-of-prairie-harvest.html>

Around the Fermilab Site

Winter Birding News from Peter Kasper, Fermilab:

On December 19th, three teams of birders scoured the Fermilab site from 4:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., counting all the birds they could find. It was the annual Fermilab Christmas Bird Count. Remarkably, the first bird of the day was also by far the best bird of the day. A Barred Owl responded to a recording of an Eastern Screech Owl call; presumably looking for a meal. Not only was this a first for the Christmas Count at Fermilab, it was also the first time ever that this species has been recorded on site. This is the fourth new bird added to the site list for 2009, and brings the site's tally up to 281 species! Other highlights included a Redhead seen on the Main Injector pond, which was a first, and a Canvasback seen on the Main Ring pond. At the end of the day, we had chalked up 52 species and 4938 individuals, with record high counts for Eastern Bluebird (15) and Red-breasted Nuthatch (14). Check out [Birds of Fermilab](http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/wildlife/birds.html) <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/wildlife/birds.html> for more info.



Barred Owl - D. Eichelberger,
Bedford, TX
Birds&Blooms photo gallery



Butterfly Update from Tom Peterson, Fermilab:

With its wide variety of habitats and relatively undisturbed areas, Fermilab is host to a nice variety of northern Illinois butterflies and moths. See <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/wildlife/butterflies.html> for photos & information about the last 10 years of sightings. Two special events stand out for 2009: a spotting of one new species for Fermilab, and the introduction of another.

One new species of butterfly was spotted at Fermilab in 2009, bringing our total to 56 species. While our butterfly monitor, Tom Peterson, was off at an engineering conference and ignoring the butterflies here, Bob Lootens not only spotted, but nicely photographed, [a silvery checkerspot](#) on June 27. These are common just north of here in the West Chicago Prairie, but had not been spotted at Fermilab until this summer.



Baltimore checkerspot - T. Peterson, Nelson Lake Marsh, Batavia IL

Conservationists from the Chicago Academy of Science's Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Lincoln Park released tiny caterpillars of the Baltimore checkerspot butterfly, on August 31, into Fermilab's Pine Street area prairie. Fermilab is one of the few places in the Chicago area that have the native wetland plants needed to sustain the non-migratory species, which is native to the area and is found in a few Chicago-area wetland preserves. We hope to see the adult Baltimore checkerspots flying here next June. For more information, see the [Fermilab Today article](#).

A little Q and A for, and about, FNA (send your questions to fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com)

Q: *Why have an FNA group? Doesn't Fermilab have a responsibility to manage the land?*

A: Yes, but resources to accomplish more than maintenance are limited, especially as the federal budget for support functions gets tighter. FNA's goal is to continue the stewardship program established by Fermilab, and to find funding to improve on that & advance our mission, including outreach & research components.

Q: *Where does FNA get funding?*

A: Our intent is to rely on membership dues, corporate donations and grants for specific projects. Fermilab & FRA are prohibited from raising extra money in these ways, since they are government contractors.

Q: *How does FNA use my membership or donation money?*

A: FNA has several projects in the planning stage, such as restoration of the savanna in the Main Ring, restoration of the Director's Woods, and improvement of butterfly habitat. These projects all require funds to be successful. Last year, we also sponsored the Robert Betz Intern for the summer.



Fermilab image



image by P. Lambertz

**Happy
New
Year!**

