



# Newsletter May/June 2010

[www.fermilabnaturalareas.org](http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org)  
[fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com](http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com)

Contact us at [fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto:fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com) or 630-840-4845

Fermilab Natural Areas (FNA), is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit tax-exempt corporation formed in 2006:

- \* to study and restore Fermilab's unique combination of ecological communities
- \* to inform and enrich local residents' knowledge of Fermilab (FNAL), and
- \* to contribute to the preservation of global biodiversity.

## *A Message from FNA President Rod Walton* [fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto:fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com)

Greetings! As summer is (finally) coming on, and the snow has gone, opportunities for volunteering to get close to the natural areas at Fermilab are coming on strong! Check out the full schedule in this month's newsletter. As an additional temptation, Ryan Campbell, Fermilab's consulting ecologist, is looking for one or more volunteers who are interested in learning about native prairie plants and collecting seeds. This seed will be used in an experiment to test how many pounds of seed per acre result in a diverse prairie restoration. These results will guide future restorations at Fermilab, as we take acres out of temporary agriculture. The volunteer(s) will be needed 1-2 days a week from May to September. Please call Ryan at 618-203-3882 for more information.

As always, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to [email \(above\)](#), or call me at 630-840-2565. If you feel like sharing a thought with us, just post a comment on the [FNA Blog](#).

### *FNA Calendar of Events*



**May 4** [Arbor Day tree planting at FNAL](#), continuing a [long tradition](#).  
[Southwest corner of Batavia Rd & Road B](#)

All trees, some tools, professional help, and lunch provided.  
(Please contact FNA if you can help serve lunch)

**May 6** *Rain date for Arbor Day*

**May 15** [Habitat restoration work day](#) Meet at 9 am in the Lederman Science Center parking lot, work 'til Noon.



**May 20** ["Third Thursday" Fermilab Lunchtime Clean-up](#), 11:45 am  
*Celebrating our 11th year of Third Thursday Clean-ups!*  
Meet outside Wilson Hall's east side; cleaning gear (including Robot Claw) provided, picnic lunch served afterwards.

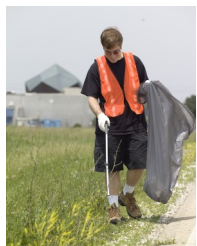
**May 20** FNA Board mtg, 1 North, Wilson Hall, 7 pm. All welcome.

**June 17** ["Third Thursday" Fermilab Lunchtime Clean-up](#), 11:45 am

**June 19** [Habitat restoration work day](#)

**July 15** ["Third Thursday" Fermilab Lunchtime Clean-up](#)

**July 17** [Habitat restoration work day](#)



Cleanup images by Fermilab

**Butterfly or Prairie/Woodland walks:** usually held at lunchtime, starting at the [Prairie Interpretive Trail](#), westbound Pine Street. Please check the [FNA Blog](#) and/or your email for the latest information about guided walks. These walks depend on cooperating weather, expert guides, and the desired flora & fauna.

## Overview of Past Events

### Earth Week Prairie Seed Planting on April 21, and Woodland Walk, April 27



A dozen people enjoyed a warm spring lunchtime by broadcasting three tubs, two buckets, and numerous small cans of prairie seed varieties in various areas of the Interpretive Trail Prairie. Seed mixes were prepared in advance for the dry, mesic, and wet regions of the prairie. Over 70 species were seeded. See blog for details.



Here's a few snapshots of what the participants on the woodland walk enjoyed: *woodland phlox*, *red trillium*, *shooting star*.



### Trash Clean-up; Bob Lootens, Fermilab

Thursday April 15 began our 11<sup>th</sup> year of the Third Thursday Volunteer Cleanups. Twenty-one volunteers picked up trash along inbound & outbound Pine Street, Wilson Hall footprint area including the pond shores, and West Wilson Street. In short time, enough trash to fill about a pickup truck bed was accumulated. The cleanup crew enjoyed a picnic lunch afterwards. In the past ten years, volunteer time has totaled approximately 1000 hours of cleaning up Fermilab.

## Around the Fermilab Site

### Birding and Butterfly News

Birds of note at the Lab include a bald eagle, tundra swans, sandhill cranes, and nesting ospreys. Check out the gorgeous crane close-ups taken by Fermilab employee Gene Oleynik and published in Fermilab Today. For the latest on bird sightings, see <http://www.fnal.gov/ecology/wildlife/diary.shtml>.

Every year at Fermilab, Tom Peterson provides training classes for the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network (IBMN). These classes are for butterfly monitors or people who might be interested. There is no fee or obligation for attending. The class includes photos of local butterflies, along with information about how we monitor. Sessions are: Beginner's on Weds May 19, 7 pm to 9 pm, and Intermediate on Sat, May 22, 10 am to noon, with more emphasis on difficult identifications. Classes meet at the Lederman Science Education building. Directions, and more information at the IBMN website, [http://www.bfly.org/training\\_workshops.html](http://www.bfly.org/training_workshops.html).

### Fermilab Prescribed Burn Report for Spring 2010; Mike Becker, FESS/Site Services, Fermilab



Fermilab's Roads and Grounds Group finished the spring prescribed burn season on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Over all, it was a very successful burn season. Fifteen burns were completed covering more than 400 acres of prairie and woodland. This is a big effort by a lot of people. The only thing that we were disappointed with, was that we could not get the Main Ring prairies and savanna burned. A combination of high water levels and incorrect wind direction, on otherwise good burn days, prevented us from getting the areas burned.

Fire has played a critical role in the shaping of Midwest prairies and savannas. Even though these prescribed burns are nerve wracking and complicated, they are essential to restoring our Midwest ecosystems. As our mentor Dr. Robert Betz used to say about controlled burns, "hours of hard, yet rewarding work, punctuated by moments of stark terror".



## A Brief History of Nepese Marsh; Dave Shemanske, Fermilab

A visitor to [the Fermilab Village](#) will notice the unique street names, names significant to the [Indian tribes](#) that were formerly in this region. We have added another native name to a Village location: “Nepese” (NE-puh-see), an Indian word meaning “wet area”. It was suggested by Dr. Robert Betz, prior to his passing, for the previously named Oxidation Pond, just northeast of Lab 8. In the early 1960’s, Oxidation Pond was the sewage treatment facility for the [town of Weston](#), and was used by Fermilab until its decommissioning in the late 1980’s. It was transformed, starting a little over ten years ago, into a natural marsh by the Roads & Grounds Department as an energy saving project. The original pond, with its sterile shores and “pea green soup” look, had continuous aerators running to add oxygen, and chemically added chlorine to treat the effluent. Now, the wetland plants break down any remaining sludge products left from years ago. Pumps, piping, aerators, chlorination pit, and other deteriorating structures were removed to save Fermilab approximately \$6000/year in chemical, mechanical and electrical operating costs. We have seeded extensively for several years with wetland species collected from volunteer harvests and by summer interns. We try to introduce new species yearly. [Award winning](#) Nepese Marsh now attracts birds (especially waterfowl), dragonflies, butterflies, frogs, and turtles. These creatures and the flowering wetland plants add additional beauty as you walk along the peaceful banks or enjoy the view from one of the benches provided as [an Eagle Scout project](#).



## The Plan for Fighting Invasives; Ryan Campbell, Consulting Restoration Ecologist, Fermilab

This summer at Fermilab, we are anxious to start a new summer weed management program. Two internship positions were created for the first time to help control invasive species in the natural areas of Fermilab. In the past, we have been able to [control some invasive plants](#) (Teasel, Purple Loosestrife, Giant Reed Grass) but have never had the resources for others (White and Yellow Sweet Clover, Spotted Knapweed, Crown Vetch, Reed Canary Grass). The internships were specifically funded to target the control of these nasty exotics which outcompete native plants and lower plant and ecosystem diversity. Thanks to the understanding of Fermilab and possibly with help from an FNA grant, this program can get started!

## For Sale by FNA

Just right for warmer weather, FNA has long and short sleeved T-shirts! Order yours by calling us at 630-840-4845. Short-sleeved shirts are \$15 and long-sleeved are \$18. Both sport the FNA logo on the front, and our website on the back.



Get ready for summer watering. [Rain barrels are available through FNA.](#) They are 55 gallon food-grade plastic in a variety of colors. On the top, a screw-off lid with screen keeps debris & insects out. At the bottom, a valve with hose attachment dispenses the captured rainwater by gravity. The ready-to-use barrels are \$85. Wooden stands can be purchased for \$20. Call FNA at 630-840-4845 to order barrels and stands, which will be delivered to Fermilab at Site 37 for your pick up.



## Fermilab Natural Areas Donation Honor Roll

FNA greatly appreciates the donations it has received, from our inception through April 2010.

Thank you to the following people and organizations:

**\$2000 or more**

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Piermaria & Barbara Oddone

**\$1000 to \$1500**

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Bob Lootens  
Rod Walton

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### Membership/Donations

<http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/membership.html>

Come help us enhance Fermilab's ecology.

FNA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. All donations to FNA are tax deductible.

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Please mail your check or money order to: Fermilab Natural Areas  
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Thank you!

