

Nature News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy



Summer 2015

Mark your calendar!



Ann and Bud Oliver

We will dedicate the Oliver Family Preserve on Saturday, September 19th from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the Harrietta Village Hall. This will also be our annual membership meeting.

As you know, Bud and Ann Oliver have given us a 15 acre parcel of land on the outskirts of Harrietta to use as a preserve open to the public for hiking, fishing and other outdoor activities. This little gem has Slagel Creek running through it and gives access to the US Forest Service lands.

Plan to join us for the dedication, hikes around the property, refreshments and comradery.



Scotch Be Gone!

by Max Yancho

The Oliver property is a fantastic addition to CALC's preserves system. Like many of the properties protected by CALC, the new Oliver Family Preserve bestows the opportunity to conserve a unique, diverse ecosystem in an important part of the region; it also presents some of the traditional challenges associated with land management. One of those challenges is controlling the spread of Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), also known as Scots pine, a non-native species.

Scotch pine is a tree native to Europe and is considered to be the most widely distributed pine in the world. It can grow in a variety of environments, but it has been extensively planted in the Americas for both conservation and economic purposes. It was a popular Christmas tree in the mid-1900's, many of the remnants of these plantings can still be found growing in the area including the mature stand of Scotch pine found on the Oliver property planted by Mr. Oliver's father.



Scotch pine, like many non-native species, becomes a problem because it will replace native plants in the ecosystem. If the spreading is prolific enough it can cause the species to be classified as invasive. Scotch pine is not considered to be invasive by the State of Michigan, but in other parts of North America it has been. It is a



very good reproducer that can outcompete similar native species like red pine purely by outnumbering them on a site. As this trend of native plant replacement continues the natural relationships between different plants and between plants and animals is disturbed, ultimately creating a completely new and alien ecosystem where our native plants and plant communities no longer exist in their native harmony.

Scotch pine can be observed growing on the Olive Family Preserve in two areas, the older original plantation on the north side of the ravine, and in the field on the south side of the parcel. The Scotch pine in the field is almost certainly the offspring of the plantation. This is a classic example of the how a species is introduced to a site and then may become invasive (or express invasive tendencies).

Red pine and Scotch pine can both be found in the southern field growing along side each other. The ratio between these two species, however, is greatly skewed in favor of the Scotch pine. Assuming that nothing is done to correct this, it is very likely that this site will continue to be dominated by scotch pine into the future. This demonstrates one of the primary concerns when dealing with any species that has invasive tendencies: the development of monocultures (or near monocultures) and the loss of biodiversity.

Scotch pine can be separated from red pine by the much shorter twisted needles. There also tends to be a faint blue cast to the needles of Scotch pine, which is not found on red pine needles. Both red pine and Scotch pine needles are found in bundles of two. Mature Scotch pine have typically poorer form (twisted and gnarled) than that of red pine (typically very straight). Mature Scotch pines also have a distinctive bright orange papery bark on the upper branches and upper portions of the trunk.



Scotch pine needles



Red pine needles



It is in the best interest of CALC, all of the local landowners, and the environment to try and control the spread of non-native and invasive species to preserve native habitats and avoid the loss of biodiversity. CALC has been exploring several different options regarding the control of Scotch pine on the Oliver Family Preserve, and has been working with the local NRCS office and Wexford Conservation District regarding the management of the land. There may be some volunteer opportunities in the future to work at the Oliver Preserve and possibly help control the spread of invasive species. Until then, please stop by and take a look at this wonderful gift from the Oliver family, and take a second to observe the spreading of Scotch pine and the phenomenon that is invasive species.

(To view these pictures in color, visit our webpage —<http://calc-landtrust.org/publications/newsletter/>)



*To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass
is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug.*

~ Helen Keller ~



Adding Acres



Heart of the Lakes, the umbrella organization for land conservancies, reports that Michigan's land conservancies added 9,549 more acres in 2014. That brings the total to 597,516 acres of natural, scenic and working farms and forest land in the state. Nice!



Love Birds?

All About Feathers is a new website from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with art, videos, reference guides and free PowerPoints you can download for users of all ages. We love the beautiful bird screen-savers. Check it out at biology.allaboutbirds.org



Grins

Your newsletter editor loves a good quote and a good laugh—check out these recent finds about trees.

- A tree never hits an automobile except in self defense. ~ American proverb
- Suburbia is where the developer bulldozes out the trees, then names the streets after them. ~ Bill Vaugh
- Save a tree. Eat a beaver. ~ Unknown
- They kill good trees to put out bad newspapers. ~James G. Watt
- As the poet said, "Only God can make a tree" - probably because it's so hard to figure out how to get the bark on. ~ Woody Allen
- I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree
Perhaps, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

~ Ogden Nash



Meet Dan Valley, New Board Member

I was born and raised in the Cadillac area and have lived here other than a couple years in Idaho and Alaska.

I have a 40-acre parcel near the Pine River in Wexford

County. I have a strong desire to keep this parcel in a Conservation Easement as it was inherited from my grandfather who used to free range cattle there.

Ruth Ann French planted the seed to join the Conservancy and I decided to join CALC when I saw what good work they are doing.

I retired from the US Forest Service after 30 years of service here on the Huron Manistee N.F. I served as a Civil Engineering Technician doing timber sale road location, survey, design, and inspection. I also did site surveys, assisted land surveyors, data base management, equipment operator and wildland fire-fighting.

Since retiring I have had a Forest Management Plan done on my properties and have been implementing my plan by Oak release units, TSI, prescribed fire, disking, tilling and planting. I've hand planted red pine seedlings and machine planted wildflowers, cool season grasses and warm season grasses. A local bee keeper has his bees on my property also.

My hobbies include bicycling; kayaking; biodiesel production; bluebird, bat and bee box assembly and geocaching. I also work at my woodlot processing firewood.

I have a strong conservation ethic that I learned from my mother and grandfather on the family farm as a youth. I hope to continue my conservation practices with involvement in such agencies as CALC and the National Resource Conservation Service as long as I am able. I will keep working for my three adult sons and grandchildren someday.



In Memory: Dave Smith



It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Dave Smith, CALC board member, in May. Dave's prior experience with another conservancy was invaluable as he administered two important grants for CALC. He oversaw the Wildlife Corridor grant that brought awareness to the need for bear travel over private property. He also oversaw the Advancing Conservancy Excellence grant that brought CALC into a greater level of professionalism.

In Memory: Marlene Loughmiller

CALC was also saddened to learn of Marlene Loughmiller's passing. Marlene was married to Dick Loughmiller, former CALC Chairman. Marlene loved nature and was very forgiving of the time her husband spent with CALC. Marlene also was a real trooper as she and Dick and the Rocks would be the only ones volunteering to pick up trash for the Save a Highway program on CALC's behalf.

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VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Vicki Long, Website
- Pat Paveglia, Newsletter

*What we have done for
ourselves alone dies with us; what we
have done for others and the
world remains and is immortal.*

~ Albert Pike ~



Mission Statement

The Cadillac Area Land Conservancy protects ecologically significant, scenic, and farm lands for current and future generations and fosters an appreciation of the natural environment in Missaukee, Osceola, Wexford and northern Lake and Mason Counties.