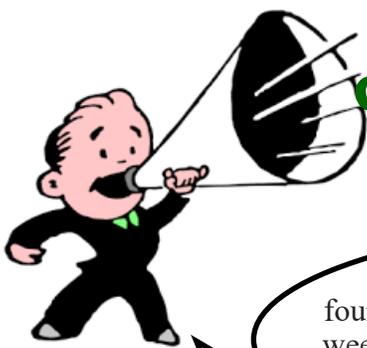


Nature News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy



Summer 2021

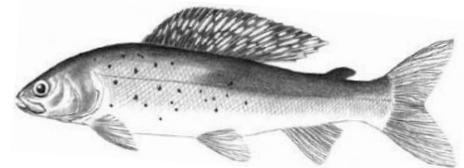


Good News

Sit back and relax and focus on the good things happening in outdoor recreation, land preservation and other upbeat news.

Research led by the University of Exeter found people who spend at least 120 minutes in nature each week are significantly more likely to report good health and higher psychological wellbeing than those who don't visit nature during an average week.

Walk at one of our preserves!



They're Comin' Back! Last fall 4,000 young Arctic Grayling from Alaska came to the Marquette State Fish Hatchery. This was a big step in bringing this native fish back to the Great Lakes.

This fish disappeared from the lakes in the 1930s due to over-fishing, habitat loss and competition from non-native species. The Michigan Arctic Grayling Initiative, led by the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Michigan DNR with 50 other partners, started this restocking project in 2016.

The fish will be kept in the Marquette hatchery where the water temperatures mimic their natural environment, until the fish begin producing eggs (usually 4-6 years). The eggs will be collected, fertilized and placed in stream incubators. When they hatch, the fry will enter the stream as if they had been spawned naturally.

For more about the grayling, its history and quarantine (We can relate to that!) at <https://www.migrayling.org>



Governor Whitmer announced \$250 million will be invested in Michigan's state parks for infrastructure needs. This monumental investment, part of the American Rescue Plan, comes as we are experiencing record-breaking attendance at our public spaces.

The pandemic has shown us how parks, trails, and public lands shape public health. The benefits of the outdoors have been known for years but the money to maintain and improve the infrastructure and increase staffing has not been there. This will help!

The Outdoor Industry Association's 2021 Trends Report says that 53% of Americans age 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record. Remarkably, 7.1 million more Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in the prior year. To download the report, go to <https://outdoorindustry.org>



❖ Protecting Land in Wexford, Missaukee, Osceola and northern Lake and Mason Counties ❖



FEVER



Bridge Magazine reports that Lake Michigan is “running a fever,” and that means more storms and possibly less fish. A National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration study found that Lake Michigan’s depths have warmed 0.11 degrees each decade for the past 30 years. These changes are tiny, but if they shorten the winters and lengthen the summers it could have a big impact on everything from fish populations and algae blooms to winter storms and erosion.

Michigan’s Great Lakes were slow to ice over this winter, and other research predicts parts of the Great Lakes will be ice-free by midcentury if climate change continues at this rate. Less ice means more lake effect snow, more evaporation and more shore damage from winter storms.

Warmer is also bad news for fish who like it cold and may interfere with their ability to reproduce.

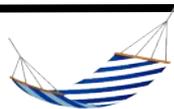
Warmer water may cause more toxic algae blooms and deprive deep-water fish of oxygen.

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For more information on warming lake waters and many other environmental issues, check out *Bridge Magazine*, a Michigan nonpartisan, non-profit news source. “Michigan Environment Watch” is one of their topics.

www.bridgemi.com

Deep Summer is when laziness finds respectability. ~ Sam Keen



Job Offer

Four times a year 300+ newsletters need to be folded and put in envelopes—maybe not as much fun as an outdoor work bee, but we could use your help. The pay? Our undying gratitude. Call the CALC office to volunteer (231) 775-3631.

Monitoring Underway

Did you realize that we monitor each of our 24 easements every year?

Who does the monitoring? This year 10 of our board members and some volunteers are tackling the job. A couple of our new boards members have gone along with experienced monitors to learn the ropes. The owner of the easement is notified of the monitor’s visit and is always welcome to come along and show us the land they are preserving. Often the owner is working to improve the conservation resources on the property and proud to show the results.

What does the monitor do? Our mandate is to insure the commitment and desires of the original easement holder are being honored. The monitor walks the property and looks to see if the conservation resources are still protected. Has anything changed in the last year? Is there a forest management plan being followed? Have there been any changes caused by Mother Nature such as blow-downs, insect infestations or changing water tables? Have there been any inadvertent encroachments by neighbors? A report is made and any changes or areas of concern noted. A process will be started if anything is seriously out-of-line.

Do monitors enjoy the job? Any excuse to get outdoors on a nice day is enjoyable and if the owner is along to share in the walk it’s even better. Depending on the size of the easement, the job will take two or more hours.

If you live in any of the counties CALC represents and have 20 or more acres that you might like to place an easement on, contact our executive director, Chris Gentry, by calling (231) 775-3631 or emailing calc@calc-landtrust.org. Check the landowner’s guide under “Land Protection” on our webpage to see if your land meets the criteria.



To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.

~ Audrey Hepburn



Bee Barf

Al Batt, nature writer and humorist, reported that when he walked with a family, identifying wildflowers and insects, the boy asked if honey was made from bee barf. Al said that sounded better to him than bee vomit.

Al explained: “It takes the lifetimes of eight bees to make one teaspoonful of honey.* Bees visit flowers and collect nectar by sucking it out with their long tongues. They store it in their honey stomach (crop). At the hive, they pass the nectar mouth-to-mouth from one bee to another and then store it in honeycomb cells, which suggest tiny jars made of wax. They fan it with their wings to encourage evaporation.”

*Editor’s note: This number varies with different sources, but it does take a lot of bees to make honey.

Did You Know?????

- ◆ Michigan offers more than 8 million acres of publicly accessible lands and 12,000 miles of state-designated trails.
- ◆ A mere 3% of protected areas in the country are on private lands, even though 60% of all land in the country is privately owned. We’re losing habitat for threatened and endangered species twice as fast on unprotected private lands as we are on public lands.
- ◆ Michigan's land conservancies to date have protected over half a million acres — 672,967 to be exact — of natural, scenic and working farms and forest lands throughout the state!

~ Heart of the Lakes



Turkey vultures are known to the Cherokee as "peace eagles" because they never kill.

Bad Apples

Sorry to bring a little bad news, but there are some bad apples gaming the Charitable Conservation Easement Program.



This program allows landowners who put an easement on their property a “charitable donation” if the easement benefits the public by protecting conservation resources. The donation is in the form of a federal income tax deduction and a possible lowering of the assessed value of the land. (It also eliminates the uncapping of the taxable value when the land is transferred.) The donation is based on the fair market value of a donated easement.

The bad news is that some unscrupulous profiteers are abusing this program by overvaluing the easements and using other devious tax dodges. In 2018 the “good” easement donors claimed about \$1 billion in deductions in sharp contrast to the \$9.2 billion claimed by 296 bad apples.

To fix the problem, the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act was introduced in the Senate last year. It didn’t pass then, but many land trusts and conservancies hope it will pass in 2021 so the good guys don’t lose that tax benefit.

To learn more about this critically needed legislation, log into the Land Trust Alliance at www.landtrustalliance.org

Summertime . . .



- One benefit of summer was that each day we had more light to read by.

~ Jeannette Walls



Director's Corner - Chris Gentry

It was with heavy heart that I watched as the Kett Center sold - painful and emotional for the center's board and staff. But, after 14 months of inactivity, the center is alive again with the many sounds and sights of camp life. It's wonderful to see. There's nothing quite like bringing kids together with young adult leaders/mentors in the outdoors. Youth summer camp is an uniquely American summer experience. Children have a chance to gain new skills and learn new things in a new-to-them, concentrated environment. They develop appreciation for nature, expand social skills, make new friends, and discover new perspectives. They have lots of fun, too. So I've been comforted by the fact that, while no longer a 4-H center, the facility will live on providing life changing experiences to youth from all over the country.

The sting of loss has also been easier since I've rolled right into the work of CALC. Stewarding special places; preserving them for future generations while working and relating with others to make it happen is an exciting transition. Looking forward to what lies ahead.



Late-breaking News

Governor Gretchen Whitmer proposes to allocate \$150 million of the state's American Rescue Plan funding to local parks and trails.

As we learned during the pandemic, the outdoors isn't optional but essential for our wellbeing and local economies. Michigan's outdoor recreation industry supports billions in the state's Gross Domestic Product and sustains 126,000 jobs and over \$4.7 billion in wages in the state. On average, every \$1 invested in land conservation leads to \$4 in economic benefit. ~ Heart of the Lakes

Serendipity In Action

One good deed led to another when a resident of Stoneledge Lake, Vicki Long, offered to pay for an osprey/eagle nesting platform that could be seen from our Waldeck Island Nature Preserve. Ruthann French, former board chair and longtime CALC supporter, put out feelers and found an unused nesting platform stored in a DNR barn. The DNR kindly donated it to CALC!

The platform will be installed this winter when volunteers can walk out on the ice to anchor it. Watch for notice of a winter work bee.



Oops!

One of those big winds hitting our area snapped the newly-installed bat house pole at Waldeck Island.

S-L-O-W . . .

It takes time, lots of time, to enact an easement, but we do have some in the works. One is a 60 acre addition to Victoria Brehm's easement. We love the fact that she is growing heirloom apples on her land.



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<p>To contact the CALC Office call (231) -775-3631 Email: calc@calc-landtrust.org Mail: 124 1/2 N. Mitchell St., Ste. 115, Cadillac 49601 Visit our webpage at www.calc-landtrust.org</p>	

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.