

Lake Norman
Wildlife
Conservationists
Newsletter
Summer
2014

LNWC Mission Statement

The Mission of the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists is to protect and enhance the natural resources and wildlife habitats of the Greater Lake Norman area for all to enjoy.

Share Your Love of Wildlife!

Live on or near Lake Norman? We welcome your wildlife photos or comments. Contact editor Julie Higgin at jchiggin@yahoo.com

INSIDE:

See Page 3 for a great article on butterflies by Christine Lisiewski. Thanks, Christine!



Inland Sea Chronicle



Volume 8, Issue 2

www.lakenormanwildlife.org

Summertime! A hot time to join our campaign

By **Billy Wilson, President**

With the vital support of members at the grassroots level, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) leads the way to conserve wildlife and wild places in our state. The federation's success is due largely to its ability to identify state and local habitat needs at the grassroots level through its 13 local chapters.

In 2007, the federation created our chapter, the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists, which works to protect and enhance natural resources and

wildlife habitats of the Lake Norman area. Hundreds of volunteers and members from all the counties around the lake support its work.

LNWC's efforts have been instrumental in recent years in defending the lake against pollution and improper development. Through community support, LNWC has constructed nesting platforms for osprey and great blue heron; deployed deep-water reefs and fish attractors; planted native species to stabilize shoreline and provide wildlife cover and food; and certified hundreds of

(Continued on page 2)



Plans for our 6th annual **Oyster Fest** are well underway, and our goal is to make this year's event the best one yet. We are excited to announce that our Fest will be held at **LangTree of Lake Norman** on Sept. 20, beginning at 6pm. Big Daddy's will again be serving up delicious steamed shrimp and oysters, we will have some fantastic live and silent auction items, and there will be live music for all to enjoy.

As an added feature this year, we will hold a street festival from 3-6pm highlighting our marina sponsors, many nature-related vendors, food vendors, live music, and various kids' activities. We are expecting a large crowd, based upon the success of LangTree's grand opening. This street festival is open to all at no charge. Bring your family out for a fun-filled day!

Information on the fest will be sent to our mailing list when tickets become available. We hope to see you in September!



(Continued from page 1)

Community Wildlife Habitats.

The **NWCF Membership Incentive Campaign** is the ideal opportunity to join other like-minded individuals who strengthen conservation. Between now and Aug. 31, federation chapters who recruit the most new members will win prizes to be used for local conservation projects. Your membership could help the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists receive the top-prize of \$2,500!

Members receive: the Wildlife Federation's quarterly wildlife journal, a federation membership decal and bumper sticker, an e-newsletter and action alert, networking opportunities and representation at the state and local levels. Con-

sider joining NCWF and making a difference. Details at www.lnwc.org, or email billy.wilson@lakenormanwildlife.org.

**Working Together
for
Wildlife
Conservation
in the
Lake Norman
Region**



**Wild Lives
Wild Places**

DID YOU KNOW?

As a chapter of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, LNWC is a non-profit organization that depends on donations. Our Tax ID is 20-8576936. Please send donations to:
P.O. Box 4296
Mooresville, NC
28117

Island Habitat Program gets down to business!

By Tim Lindstedt, Program Chair

As the summer of 2014 commences here on Lake Norman, there is a new approach being developed to enthuse and invigorate LNWC's Island habitat Program. I am excited to join this team and contribute to this resourceful organization with a wonderful history of educating the community that so loves Lake Norman and its unique wildlife habitats.

Now is the time to get down to business!

Recently, an email was circulated to our island adoptors to introduce myself and my wildlife experiences. This email initiates a program that encourages participation in citizen science and the creation of many new "backyard biologists". As a future Master's degree biology student, I will implement a series of enjoyable projects designed for all members of our community. These projects will contrib-



ute to the health and well-being of the rich biodiversity that exists here in and around Lake Norman.

Our citizen science goals will be advanced with a combined group effort of an assortment of data collection that will be analyzed to determine and provide a healthy lake ecosystem. As a student of Mitchell Community College in Statesville, I have begun a unique partnership with biology students, hoping to connect many of them with our organization this summer and into the fall.

Finally, I hope to meet many involved community members and volunteers this summer and fall, as well as many to come. Remember to check our website and Facebook page for Island Habitat program updates throughout this season. For any questions please feel free to contact me at:

islands@lakenormanwildlife.org or
tim.islandhabitat@gmail.com

If You Plant It, They Will Come: The Art & Science Of Butterfly Gardening

By *Christine Lisiewski*

"Not quite birds, as they were not quite flowers, mysterious and fascinating as are all indeterminate creatures." -Elizabeth Goudge



The Cloudless Sulphur butterfly looks gorgeous against a sea of purple Salvia leucantha

Who would not be fascinated by these silent floating jewels? Butterflies are simple to attract, beautiful to observe, and they undergo a life cycle that will fascinate you. Butterfly gardening is a wonderful way for adults and children to explore, connect with, and appreciate the wonders of the natural world, all the while helping declining butterfly species and many other important pollinators who need our help.

Ok, step one: let's talk about **host plants**. All butterflies begin as a tiny egg laid by an adult female butterfly on a specific plant called a host plant. The "baby butterfly" that hatches out of the egg is really a caterpillar with a voracious appetite for this specific plant (or plants). Some butterfly species like the Tiger Swallowtail aren't too picky about their host plants and will lay eggs on many different types of plants (e.g. Wild Cherries, Tulip Poplar, Ash Trees, Sweetbay Magnolia, etc.). Other species like the Monarch butterfly are specialists and *only* lay their eggs on plants of the genus *Asclepias* (e.g. Milkweed & Butterfly Weed). Eastern Black Swallowtails lay eggs on any plant in the Carrot family (celery, dill, lovage, parsley, fennel, Queen Anne's Lace, etc.). So step one in your butterfly gardening endeavors is to provide a variety of host plants in your garden. An excellent list of native host plants for North Carolina can be found in an article entitled "Butterflies in Your

Backyard" published by North Carolina State University.

Keep in mind that baby butterflies (caterpillars) will eat the host plant, meaning they will eat part of your garden. This is what nature intended so do not be tempted to remove them or they will starve and you will forever in your heart struggle with the knowledge that you are a butterfly killer! Do not fret, however, most plants will tolerate the loss of foliage just fine and continue to grow. I recommend to clients that they just plant a little extra to share with the caterpillars. Once the caterpillars reach a certain size, they will migrate and form a chrysalis. After a week or two an adult butterfly will emerge, and you will feel like a proud parent!

Now we are on to step two, **nectar plants**. With all that fluttering about and laying of eggs, adult butterflies get pretty hungry and require a reliable nectar source in the form of flowering plants. I recommend a mix of primarily native flowers with a few old fashioned heirlooms mixed in. Native plants are important because they are adapted to our particular area, tend to require less water and maintenance, and are

(Continued on page 4)



Lake Norman Friends!

LNWC volunteer **Ken Teeter** captured a few friends on camera this spring while surveying the lake for project sites.. On the right is Island Habitat Program chair **Tim Lindstedt** with student volunteers.



(Butterflies continued from page 3)

filled with the nectar and pollen needed by hungry bees and butterflies. Some non-native flowers that are fantastic for butterflies are the old-fashioned heirloom zinnias like 'Cut and Come Again' and Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia rotundifolia*), both of which are easy to grow from seed and reliably attract a plethora of pollinators. I generally advise clients not to rely on new cultivars or hybrid ornamental flowering plants in the butterfly garden because they have been bred to be a certain color, size, or bloom type and often have lost much of their nectar/pollen in the process.

When choosing your plants, select a variety of flower colors and sizes--small butterflies need tiny flowers whereas large butterflies prefer bigger blooms--and choose plants that bloom at different times during the growing season. Some of the very best native nectar plants are as follows: Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), and Ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*). A complete listing of native nectar plants can be found in the aforementioned article.

Final thoughts: location, location, location. A sunny location is a must for two reasons--

butterflies need to warm their bodies in order to fly, and most of their preferred nectar plants grow in full sun. Provide a flat rock or two in the garden where they can rest and warm up on chilly mornings. Choose a spot that is somewhat protected from strong winds, as many butterflies will avoid areas where they are rudely blown about. Provide a source of water in the form of a shallow, sand-filled "puddling" area where male butterflies will congregate to ingest water and salts needed for reproduction.

Finally, avoid chemical pesticides! You may be trying to kill aphids, but you will also kill adult butterflies, baby caterpillars, and beneficial insects like ladybugs, thus defeating the very purpose of your butterfly garden. Remove pests by hand or with a strong spray of water, or opt for a homemade insecticidal soap sparingly applied. Now you are ready to begin your butterfly garden--relax, have fun, and enjoy the jewels in flight.

*Text and photo by Christine M. Lisiewski, nature photographer and butterfly & native plant specialist at **Dearness Gardens Nursery** in Huntersville. Follow her photo blog at christinesbeautifulworld.wordpress.com or ask her a question at christine@dearnessgardens.net.*



Christine Lisiewski and Sid Smith get ready to dig in at the Earth Day Butterfly Garden planting event in Cornelius. Sid reports, "It is becoming inhabited by critters (including) yellow butterflies, baby grasshoppers, small frogs, and dragonflies."

MHS joins with LNWC for conservation work!

By Eric Peterson, Conservation Chair

LNWC is reaching out to the **Mooreville High School Environmental Club** to provide an opportunity for a "win-win" partnership in environmental stewardship.

Our organization has compiled an exciting list of impressive projects for implementation this year for volunteers to join forces with LNWC members in building heron and osprey nesting platforms, help with shoreline stabilization projects, work to develop a new nature preserve habitat at Robbins Park in Cornelius, and more!

This spring, Environmental Club members expressed interest in shoreline litter-picking by kayak as a means of promoting a "litter-free Lake Norman." LNWC has an ongoing interest in involving young people, their parents, and teachers in conservation work around our beautiful lake area. Please visit our website or contact info@lakenormanwildlife.org for information.

Robbins Park partnership takes giant step forward

By Sid Smith, VP

LNWC activities have really begun in **Robbins Park** in Cornelius. Our "Build it and they'll come" field of dreams is working!

In early March a group of volunteers cut bamboo into proper lengths to make fence posts for a fence to surround a pond at the Westmoreland Athletic Complex where turtles from the Robbins Park ponds will be relocated while the park ponds are being rehabilitated. LNWC provided the fencing material for the holding pond. On March 27, the fence was installed by employees of University Turf Management. UTM has a grounds maintenance contract with Cornelius PARC.

On April 9, LNWC started developing a new section of a walking trail in Robbins Park. This trail will be about 500 feet long, requiring brush clearing and cleanup. LNWC also supported Earth Day in Robbins Park on April 26 with a booth, exhibits, and a nature walk through the park. The Robbins Park Butterfly Garden, designed by volunteer **Christine Lisiewski**, was planted on Earth Day, as well. Around 30 volunteers, including two Girl Scout troops, dropped in to help with the planting. LNWC provided the plants through **Dearness Gardens** in Huntersville.

Robbins Park is located at 17738 West Catawba Ave. See you at the park!



LAKE NORMAN
WILDLIFE
CONSERVATIONISTS

PO Box 4096
Mooresville, NC 28117

E-mail:
info@lakenormanwildlife.org

We're on the web!
lakenormanwildlife.org



Conservationists Updates

LNWC Library Programs

Good news! Mooresville Public Library will again, for the eighth straight year, host our free nature series. LNWC holds programs there the second Thursday of each month, eight months out of the year, starting at 7 p.m.

This year's program dates are Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Jan. 8, Feb. 12, March 12, April 9 and May 14. Mark your calendar! No reservations are required.

The ever-popular fishing guide Capt. **Craig Price** will speak at our November program. Do you have any ideas for speakers or presentation topics? Please email **Sid Smith** at grizzer2010@yahoo.com

Thank You from The Board!

The LNWC Board of Directors welcomes **Amanda Cuer** as our new membership chair. Amanda is a Mooresville resident with a degree in Earth Science from UNCC. She is an Environmental Risk Analyst in Charlotte. Amanda is taking **Ken Conrad's** place on the board. Thank you for your service, Ken!

New Web Address is Coming!

Soon, our organization will change its web address to lnwc.org. A notice will be sent out when this happens.

LNWC

Officers

Billy Wilson, President
Sid Smith, VP
Don West, Treasurer
Julie Higgie, Secretary

Directors At-Large
Eric Peterson, **Jim Ray**
Ken Teeter, **Don Higgie**
& **Kristen Meng**

Standing Committees

Conservation
Eric Peterson
Education Programs
Sid Smith
Projects
Ken Teeter
Membership
Amanda Cuer
Island Habitat Program
Tim Lindstedt
Youth Activities
Your Name Here!
Grant Writer
Theresa Fink
Community Relations
Don West
Website Manager
Jim Ray
Newsletter & Publicity
Julie Higgie

The *Inland Sea Chronicle* is published by the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists, a chapter of the NC Wildlife Federation. Direct comments and inquiries to jchiggie@yahoo.com