

# Newsletter Nov/Dec 2010



Website: [www.fermilabnaturalareas.org](http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org)

Blog: [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 of this writing, fall has come and nearly gone (!). In this issue, we report on three very pleasant and productive prairie harvests at Fermilab. Two were public and one was dedicated for the students at Wheaton-Warrenville South High School and their sponsor, Mr. Novakowski. Dave Spleha reports on the birds of Fermilab, one of the highlights of the natural areas on the site. It's also time to remind you that the holidays are coming up, and FNA tee-shirts make great gifts! See our ad on page 4. Finally, the strength of any organization is in its volunteers, and this year, Fermilab and FNA honored two of the longest, most faithful volunteers for over 30 years of harvesting – Keith Olson and Ruthanne Baird. Their story is on page 2, and in Fermilab Today at [http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/archive\\_2010/today10-11-04.html](http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/archive_2010/today10-11-04.html).

Speaking of volunteers, FNA is in need of an accountant to help us, now that we've reached the end of the year. If you or someone you know would be willing to spend a few hours helping to arrange our accounts, please contact Treasurer Jolie Macier at 630-840-2353.

As usual, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to [email](#), or call me at 630-840-2565.

## *and A Word from FNA Newsletter Editor Paula Lambertz* [paula4parks@att.net](mailto:paula4parks@att.net)

This issue marks a complete year's worth of newsletters. I hope that you've enjoyed reading about the depth and breadth of FNA activities. For future issues, we'd like to cover any FNA topics that you are curious about. If you have questions or ideas for articles, please [email me](#) or call 630-840-4505. Also, anyone knowledgeable about an FNA topic is invited to write about it! Anything from a few sentences to an entire article would be welcome. I'd appreciate hearing from you.

### *FNA Calendar of Events*

- Nov 20** [Habitat restoration work day](#) Meet at 9 am in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work until noon. This will be the last workday of the year. Our next restoration day will be in March, weather permitting.
- Dec 2** Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, room One East, noon
- Dec ??** Possible Seed Processing event - check your email & the [FNA blog](#)
- Dec 18** Christmas Bird Count, on-site. For more information, see DuPage Birding Club at <http://home.xnet.com/~ugeiser/dbc/> or email jeffchapman1 @ sbcglobal.net
- Jan 6** Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon
- Jan 20** FNA Board meeting, 2 Northeast, Wilson Hall, 7 pm. All are welcome to come.
- Feb 3** Fermilab ELM Committee meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon
- Feb 17** **Annual Meeting** 7:00 pm, at Fermilab's Wilson Hall, room One West

*Watch your email or the [FNA Blog](#) for last-minute announcements from FNA about changes in plans, or additional events.*



Fermilab

### Three Successful Seed Harvests in October

Prairie seed harvests for the general public were held on October 2nd and 30th, with a special day arranged for students on October 16th (see below).

Despite showers in the morning, the Oct. 2nd harvest was attended by 135 people, with lunch prepared and served by the [Batavia Woman's Club](#). Individuals and groups participated, including the Reavis High School environmental club, Fermilab Junior Prairie Rangers, Cub Scouts, and Grace Lutheran Church.

Oct. 30th was a sunny day, a bit windy but nothing to stop **190** adults and children from gathering a bumper crop of prairie seed, including such rarities as swamp betony, stiff gentian, winged loosestrife (harvested for the first time) and hop sedge (a rare wet woodlands plant). Groups attending included Cub Scouts, [Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy](#) students, FNAL Junior Prairie Rangers, students from Batavia High School National Honor Society, Girl Scouts, FNA members, and Fermilab Director Pier Oddone with his wife Barbara and friends.



For more on the harvest, see our Blog at:

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2010/11/seasons-end-sunny-blue-sky-harvest.html>

### *Frank Novakowski, science teacher, writes of his students' seed harvest day:*

Students from Wheaton Warrenville South (WWS) High School recently participated in Fermilab's Prairie Harvest for a community service project. Environmental Biology classes from WWS came out on Oct 16 and worked together with Fermilab staff and FNA volunteers to harvest seeds from gentians, prairie clover, prairie sunflower and other species near the Lederman Science Center and the Interpretive Trail. The seeds will be used to enhance the Fermilab restorations. Our students learned some basic identification of native prairie plants, realized Fermilab's essential role in the restoration of Illinois' native landscape, and gained a greater appreciation for the natural areas present in Illinois.



F. Novakowski

### Volunteers Honored at Seed Harvest

Two loyal volunteers who have attended a total of more than 60 Fermilab seed harvests were [honored at the Oct 30th harvest](#). Laboratory Director Pier Oddone and FNA President Rod Walton presented Ruthanne Baird and Keith Olson with plaques proclaiming the Lab's thanks for their dedication. They were also given framed photos of the Fermilab prairie in full bloom, a view that they have helped create.

Both Ruthanne's and Keith's involvement began in the late 1970's. Keith Olson says his prairie participation started as a York High School science teacher in "1975 or 1976 when I brought a van load of students to the barn where we helped process seeds." The Fermilab prairie isn't the only area that has benefited from Keith's attention. He is also the [site steward](#) of the [Elmhurst Great Western Prairie](#).



Keith says a few words, aided by Fermilab Director Oddone.

Ruthanne Baird started her interest in prairies in 1977 when her two sons and daughter collected seed at the [Schulenberg Prairie](#). Soon after, one of her sons chose to clean up the Elmhurst Great Western Prairie as his Eagle Scout project. Her other son raised money for the Nature Conservancy to purchase Illinois prairie land. The allure of the prairie has obviously motivated Ruthanne to continue volunteering. As she puts it, "It is the people you meet on the prairie that continues to inspire you."

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## A Visit by the Prairie Oak Society; Rod Walton, Fermilab

On September 9, FNA hosted "The Prairie Oak Society" of the [Conservation Foundation](#) for a lunchtime outing at Fermilab. The Prairie Oak Society is a group of donors to the Conservation Foundation who annually give more than \$1000 each to help move their mission forward. Meeting in the middle of the Main Ring at Fermilab was especially fitting for this group, with the backdrop of the oak savanna greeting them on a beautiful early Fall day. Ryan Campbell and Rod Walton spoke briefly about the restoration and conservation efforts at Fermilab, and about Fermilab Natural Areas. Ryan and Bob Lootens then led walking tours through the savanna. This event was an excellent opportunity for two organizations, one very successful and established, and our fledgling FNA to get together, get acquainted and share our knowledge and experiences.

## Birds of Fermilab - An Overview; Dave Spleha

The [birds of Fermilab](#) fall into four main categories: year-round residents which spend their entire life in the area (Northern Cardinals, Black-capped Chickadees, etc), summer residents which winter in warmer climates and migrate to our area to breed (Dickcissels, Henslow's Sparrows, etc), winter residents which migrate south from breeding territories in the north and spend the winter where food is more abundant and more easily accessible (Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Shrike, etc) and finally, of most interest to birders are the migrants which pass through our area during the spring and fall (most of the Ducks, Shorebirds, Warblers and other families).



The Great Horned Owl is one of our more secretive year-round residents.



This Field Sparrow, with food for its young, is a common summer resident at Fermilab.

*All bird photos by D. Spleha*

This Lapland Longspur, seen in its nonbreeding plumage, is a rare winter visitor at Fermilab.



All of these groups of birds depend upon certain environmental conditions to thrive while they spend their time on our site. As a grassland bird volunteer monitor here at Fermilab, I witness the relationship between the quality of the environmental conditions and the quality of the birds that choose to breed in different locations throughout the Lab. The fact that Fermilab consistently proves to have one of the most diverse bird populations in the area shows that the efforts of the FNA and ELM groups and their members have been paying dividends.

One of the highlights of the 2010 birding year at Fermi was this migrant Willet, one of only several sightings over the last 23 years.



Read more about birding at the Lab: Fermilab's [Symmetry magazine](#) has published an article about FNAL physicist and bird monitor Peter Kasper. See "Working in a Birder's Paradise" [http://www.symmetrymagazine.org/pdfs/201010/day\\_in\\_the\\_life.pdf](http://www.symmetrymagazine.org/pdfs/201010/day_in_the_life.pdf).



## **Introducing a New Volunteer**

FNA recently gained a new volunteer and additional skills with Heather Williams. She is a newcomer to the area, having moved from England when her husband started a new job at Fermilab. As Heather has experience in gaining grants for non-profit conservation groups, she hopes to help FNA find new sources of income, as well as learning all about the wildlife at Fermilab. Heather is keen to hear from anybody with suggestions of fundraising ideas. Please get in touch with her at [fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto:fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com).

## **For Your Reference**

Enjoy Peter Kasper and Dave Spleha's birding reports at: <http://www.fnal.gov/ecology/wildlife/diary.shtml>

For help with plant identification, visit the website created by the Fermilab Science Education Office: [http://eddata.fnal.gov/lasso/plant\\_search/search\\_kids.html](http://eddata.fnal.gov/lasso/plant_search/search_kids.html)

## **For Sale by FNA**

Perfect for cooler weather (and gift giving), FNA has long sleeved tee-shirts for sale! We also still have the short sleeved 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.



## **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.

Benefactor	\$2,500 and up	Sponsor	\$100
Patron	\$1,000	Contributor	\$50
Supporter	\$500	Member	\$25
Donor	\$250	Student/Youth	\$15

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Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your check or money order to: Fermilab Natural Areas  
P.O. Box 500, MS 444  
Batavia, IL 60510

**Thank you!**

