

Michigan
Botanical Club
Southeastern Chapter
Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2007

Editor - Emiiy Nietering

WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMS

We will try a **new meeting location** for our March and April programs. We will meet at **Heritage Park in Farmington Hills**. Heritage Park is located at on the west side of Farmington Road between 10 and 11 Mile Roads. See the map on the back. We will meet at the **Vagnozzi Visitors Center**. These meetings will be on SUNDAYS.

March 4 Sunday, 2:00 pm

Our March speaker will be President of the **Belle Isle Botanical Society**, Jan Ellison.

BIBS assists and supports the preservation of the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, gardens and greenhouses; supports and further advances all gardening preservation efforts by the City of Detroit on the Conservatory grounds, provides educational programs for adults and children, provides volunteers to work in the Conservatory, gardens and greenhouses, and raises funds for these purposes. BIBS is moving in a new direction in assisting the City of Detroit with the preservation of the Conservatory. Join us to hear about their new plans as well as their continuing efforts. Light refreshments and social time will follow the meeting.

April 1 Melissa Damaschke of the **Sunday, 2:00 pm** Sierra Club, Michigan Chapter will show us the movie "**Living a Nightmare, Animal Factories in Michigan.**" It relates the horrors of living in a community literally swimming in animal sewage from 12 polluting Concentrated Animal Feeding

Operations (CAFOs). The powerful 22 minute video documents the water pollution, the un-breathable air, the intimidation and economic damages inflicted upon Michigan citizens by more than 200 CAFOs. She will also highlight other issues relating to Great Lakes water quality.

STATE MBC PROGRAM

May 25-28 The MBC Annual Spring Foray. Sponsored by the Huron Valley Chapter, we will be staying in Ludington, MI and exploring the Nordhouse Dunes area on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Watch for details in the spring issue of our state newsletter, *Arisaema*, and on the MBC website www.michbotclub.org

2007 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Our 2007 membership year began on January 1. Please check your mailing label to see the expiration date of your membership. If you have not renewed for 2007, please send your dues (\$20 for both individual and family membership) to our treasurer at the following address. There is also a Benefactor membership category (\$30) for those wishing to include a donation in addition to their membership.

Mr. Richard Fowler
2045 McIntosh Drive
Troy, MI 48098-2238

METROPARKS SURVEY

by Ruth Hart

I attended the seventh HCMA (Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority) Community Action Meeting held on the evening of December 7 in Dearborn. Eight meetings were scheduled in the 5 county area: 2 in Macomb Co., 2 in Oakland Co., 2 in Wayne Co., 1 in Livingston Co. and 1 in Washtenaw Co. Four of the meetings were held at Metroparks: Huron Meadows, Metro Beach, Oakwoods, and Indian Springs.

There were about 34 participants at the December 7 meeting. We were each given a door prize ticket, an electronic device for responding to survey questions and a paper survey. Cookies, pop and water were provided.

The paper survey had four questions. The first listed the many metropark amenities and asked the participant to circle the ones you or your household had used in the last 12 months. The second listed man-made amenities and activities and asked which were the five most important and, of these, the most important. Natural areas did not appear on this list, nor did botanizing or bird watching. The closest thing listed was walking/hiking/fitness trails, which were lumped together. The third question was to check the items the participant wanted more of. Again, nothing resembling natural areas appeared on this list. The fourth question was to check the 5 items that could be removed without decreasing the participant's use of the park.

The next part of the survey consisted of questions to which we could give a rating on a 7 point scale. These were questions relating to familiarity with and general feeling about the metroparks, and questions on service, safety, grounds maintenance, cleanliness, and food quality. Next, there were questions on activities the participant household did at the metroparks: swim in lake, golf, nature observation, jogging and running, backwoods hiking, tent camping, RV aka family camping, canoeing and kayaking, disc golfing, group picnicking, family picnicking, biking, and

mountain biking.

Next came many questions, to which we also responded electronically, in the categories: Picnic/Beach/Golf and Metropark Use (how often we came to the metroparks and for what reasons). Then there were questions under a category called Natural Areas Management. These related to water quality. Then a couple questions about Governance. These were multiple choice questions about who was responsible for maintaining the metroparks, and how they are funded. Next, questions on how we were informed about the metroparks. And finally, questions about nature and historical centers in the metroparks.

The next big section of the electronic survey was called Trade-offs. These were questions done by showing us two pictures and asking us to turn our dial toward the picture we preferred. How far we chose to turn the dial was to reflect the intensity of our preference. Several of these questions had to do with the types of trails we preferred. There were also trade-off questions relating to camping, fishing, canoeing and reestablishment of native plants, symbolized by a picture of a controlled burn. There were trade-offs in the category Recreational Facilities, many of which had to do with swimming and play areas. Habitat Restoration showed up among this list twice.

Then Facilities trade-offs, having to do with restrooms and food service.

The next question was whether the participant preferred to see the metroparks: 1. Purchase additional land, 2. Build new facilities in existing parks or 3. No preference.

Next came questions about our park use and feelings about entrance fee amount and quantity of facilities. Then a list which included: maintenance, new facilities, protect natural areas, active sports, picnicking and a few other things, of which we were asked to choose 3 priorities.

The last couple of questions were demographic. (I couldn't help but wonder whether my responses would be weighted in some way depending on my responses about demographics, or frequency of park use, but I

didn't think to ask at the time.)

In the final part of the survey, we were put into small groups and a marketing strategies staff person asked questions of the group. In my group, we responded to him individually, and there was not really any discussion among us. He asked quite a bit about events in the metroparks, what might attract young people (to which the quick and facetious response was "ports for their computers"). We talked about concerts in the parks, publicity, some people even suggested marquees at the entrances. There was a little opportunity to put in our own special concern or plea at this time, although I don't know that they were all recorded or reported by marketing strategies staff. There was also an opportunity on the paper survey to write about things we thought were important.

For me, it was an interesting quasi-public experience. I found it frustrating that there wasn't more emphasis on natural areas stewardship. I am curious about how the HCMA will process and use the information gathered.

No further meetings are scheduled at this time, but anyone wishing to comment on Metroparks issues is welcome to call HCMA Chief Park Planner Sue Nyquist at 1-800-477-2757, or e-mail her at sue.nyquist@metroparks.com Information gathered from the surveys will be released in late March. -Editor

OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

Huron Valley Chapter MBC meets at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Ann Arbor, 7:45 pm.

March 19 □Special species and communities resulting from restoration efforts at Matthaei Botanical Gardens/Nichols Arboretum, □ by Sylvia Taylor, Aunita Erskine and Connie Crancer.

April 16 "The Oak Openings Region from the Ground Up: Diverse geology founding incredible biodiversity, □ by Todd Crail, University of Toledo graduate student, a Kitty Todd Preserve volunteer, and Director of the Toledo Area Wild Ones Chapter.

The HVC frequently goes to dinner with the speakers before the meetings. If you wish to attend a dinner e-mail HVC President Larry Nooden at ldnum@umich.edu or call him at 734-764-4436.

Royal Oak Nature Society meets at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center in Royal Oak, 7:30 pm. Call 248-246-3380 for more information.

March 7 □The Rising Threat of Invasive Species, □ by Dr. David Susko, Asst Professor of Biology at UM-Dearborn.

April 4 □Management of Wildlife, Habitat and Public Use at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, □ by Steven Kahl, manager of SNWR.

Holliday Nature Preserve Association
www.hnpa.org

March 17 □Almost Spring □ Walk. Meet at Noon at Hix Park, Hix Road, north of Warren Rd.

Friends of the Rouge 313-792-9621

March 13 Rain Gardens Workshop 7-9 pm held at the Environmental Interpretive Center, UM-Dearborn.

April 21 Earth Day Festival 10 am-2 pm. EIC, UM-Dearborn

ANN ARBOR ORCHID FESTIVAL

Ann Arbor Orchid Society 734-418-2055

March 17-18 at Matthaei Botanical Gardens,
1800 Dixboro Rd. Ann Arbor. Noon to 4:30
on Sat. 10-4:30 on Sunday. Photographer's
Hour 9-10 am Sunday. Orchids for sale.

*Surely as cometh the Winter, I know
There are Spring violets under the snow.*

R. H. Newell

City Park Locations



231 Nash St.
Dearborn, MI

48124