



What Are You Getting For Your Time and Money Contributions To The Waukesha County Land Conservancy?

(Closing Remarks of a speech presented by Marlin Johnson at the Annual Meeting of the Waukesha County Land Conservancy, March 10, 2004)

In closing, I want to talk about what you are getting for your contributions to the Waukesha County Land Conservancy.

First, I would like to list some things you do NOT get from your contributions. Our properties do not create a new demand for public infrastructures or services. We do not demand new roads, silt fences or transmission lines. We do not demand, or need, buried telephone cables, cell towers, water towers, sewer extensions or sewage treatment plants, We do not create a demand for new houses, new schools, libraries, parks, parking lots, police or fire protection or snowplowing. In other words, we do not create a need for new taxes! Everybody wins when we buy property. If you want 'no new taxes', vote for us!

So what DO you get for your time and money?

1. Open space and natural scenery
2. Better water quality for surface- and groundwater
3. Preservation of soil and geological features
4. Preservation of natural history and human history
5. Educational opportunities. A place to teach about nature first hand rather than from a book or television.
6. Research sites. Science needs real places and real plants and animals living in a natural setting to further our knowledge of our environment. Our properties may be the ecological standards for future restorations of prairies, woodlands and wetlands.
7. Preservation of biodiversity. We save both the rare and the common species. We strive to keep the rare ones stable and the common ones common.

8. Preservation of genetic material. Who knows what wild plant or animal may contain a chemical or gene for curing cancer. Who knows what native species we protect will contain the genetic material to survive and spread with impending global warming. Our lands serve as a gene bank we may draw on for future needs.
9. Preservation of whole communities not just species. We are more than a zoo or botanical garden.
10. Preservation of the invisible ecological processes essential to maintain natural systems. Things like food chains where one organism depends upon another for its food. Food chains provide natural checks and balances to keep each species from getting out of hand. Each native plant and animal has a role to play in this balance. We want to see insect holes in our plants. We want to see hawks eating mice. We want to see natural diseases killing our plants and animals. This is what keeps the balance of nature. Another ecological process we save on lands is the recycling of nutrients. If we did not have mushrooms, molds, or bacteria, nothing would rot and nutrients would become tied up in dead bodies. Nutrient recycling is critical for regeneration of new life. In order to maintain these ecological processes intact, we need to save all the pieces: we need kit-tentail plants, poison sumac, red shouldered hawks.
11. Preservation of the sounds of nature. There will be no 'Silent Spring' if we do our job of preserving frogs, birds and insects.

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12. Preservation of silence. We save quiet places away from the noise of civilization.

So, whether you appreciate it or not, these are the things you are preserving by your contributions to our organization. Our lives, and everyone else's, are richer because the Waukesha County Land Conservancy is here and is doing its job! Keep your money and volunteer time coming!

By Marlin Johnson



Golden buttercups, called yellow water-crowfoot, are found in the ephemeral ponds at Tamarack Swamp Nature Preserve

TAMARACK SWAMP NATURE PRESERVE GENERATES EXTRA DONATIONS

by Ellen Gennrich

Was it the rare bird species that nest on here that attracted your attention, the alder flycatcher or the golden winged warbler? Or perhaps the fact that the Waukesha Land Conservancy's latest acquisition is Class I Wildlife Habitat and a Natural Area of Regional Significance, according to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission? Or maybe it was simply the size of this parcel, preserving almost 150 acres in the eastern part, the heavily-developed part of our county?

For me it was the beech trees. I love beech trees. I love their smooth gray bark, their tiny, triangular nuts, their scalloped leaves hanging on all winter, like layers of sheer yellow fabric draped in the woods. I think for Marlin Johnson it was the ephemeral woodland ponds where frogs live and reproduce without danger from predacious fish and where golden buttercups, called yellow water-crow-foot, float on the surface.

Whatever it was that made you decide to give an additional donation toward the purchase of the 147-acre Tamarack Swamp Nature Preserve, we thank you – and assure you that it was money well spent.

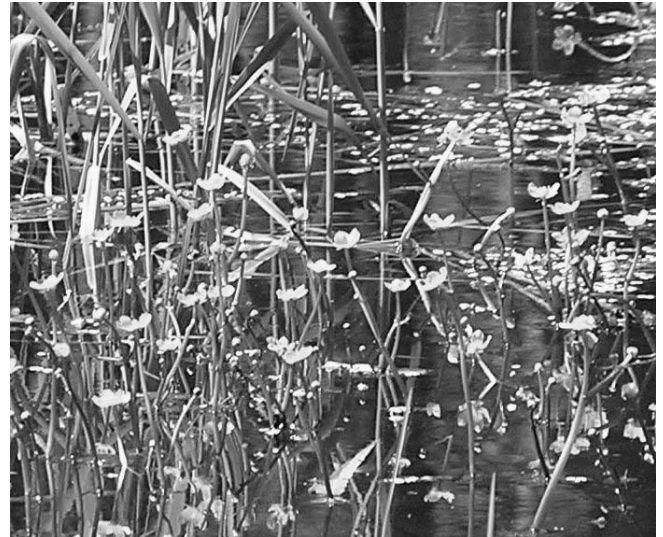
The following members made these special contributions:

Richard & Barbara Baker
Dr Jergen & Jean Barber
Elaine Burke
Linda Chivers
Charles Congo
Sue Dinsmoor
Mary Lou Findley
Beachy Gallagher
David & Ellen Gennrich
David & Velma Geraldson
Christopher & Nancy Gloe
Ms Claire P Greene
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Richard & Kristine Heinrich
James E & Diane Holmes
Edward & Patricia Horn
Kristine Jensen
Marlin Johnson
Dr Craig & Noreen Jordan
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Kenneth & Maxine Leenhouts
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Dennis & Claudia Schreiner
Robert & Sally Schwarz
Richard & Betty Smith
William D Smith MD
Joyce Sorden
Vincent Voss Ventures LLC
Wendy Watson
Wild Ones



Above
WCLC member Hilde Wiegmann looks
for beechnuts at the Tamarack Swamp
Nature Preserve

Right
Yellow water-crowfoot



Garter snake found at Tamarack Swamp Nature Preserve.
Is this the threatened Butler's garter snake?

WCLC's Wish List:

Chain Saw(s). New or used. Or a donation of \$250 to purchase one.

\$100 to buy helmets, ear protectors and chaps for interns using chainsaws. Three sets needed.