



Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District

ForeverGreen

Fall 2006

www.KaneDuPageSWCD.org

Vol. 14 No. 4

Smart Shopping and the Three R's



We are all familiar with the slogan Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. We are not as familiar with America Recycles Day. November 15, America Recycles Day, is a national day of awareness to promote social, environmental and economic benefits of recycling and buying recycled. Being a smart shopper is one way to observe America Recycles Day and to practice the three R's all year round.

Think about the effect of your purchases have on the environment when you shop. Green purchasing means learning about all the ways that a product can affect the environment, from the materials used to manufacture it, to how you use it, to what you do with it when you are finished.

Avoid Excess Packaging
Look for products that have less packaging, or buy in bulk. Items with excess packaging and products that need to be discarded after only a few uses cost more money, use up valuable resources and create more waste.

Avoid Excess Packaging

Ten cents of every shopping dollar is used to pay for packaging. Small sizes use more packaging for each ounce of product than larger sizes. So, if you buy large sizes, you save money, reduce waste and help the environment. A family of four can save \$2000 a year

Continued on Page 6 ,see Smart Shopping

Cost-Share Practices Money Available

The Soil and Water Conservation District has money available to provide cost share funds for various conservation practices on agriculture land through the Conservation Practices Program (CPP). CPP is a component of the Conservation 2000 program which provides cost-share assistance and other financial incentives for the construction or adoption of projects that conserve soil and protect water quality.

Conservation practices such as no-till and strip till planting systems, filter strips, and grass waterways are eligible for CPP funding. No-till and strip till planting systems are limited to \$10/ acre with an 80 acre maximum and must be maintained for one year. Maximum cost-share rates for other practices are 60% and must be maintained for 10 years.

To qualify for the program, land upon which the owner plans to install a conservation practice must be experiencing erosion at rates greater than one and one-half times the tolerable soil loss level.

Contact Ken Towles at 630.584.7961 Ext. 3 for more information on funding limitations, forms and deadlines.

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Forever Green

A publication of the Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District

*Providing assistance to enable people to
achieve their natural resource goals using
responsible and sustainable practices.*

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SWCD Board Meetings

Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
District Board meetings are held the third Thursday of
the month at 7 p.m. at the District office. Meetings are
open to the public. Please phone ahead to confirm
the date and time.

*The Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
offers all programs and services without regard to
color, national origin, religion, sex age, marital status,
or handicap.*

Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District

2315 Dean St., Suite 100
St. Charles, Illinois 60175
630.584.7961 Ext. 3
FAX: 630.584.9534

www.KaneDuPageSWCD.org

New Carex Book

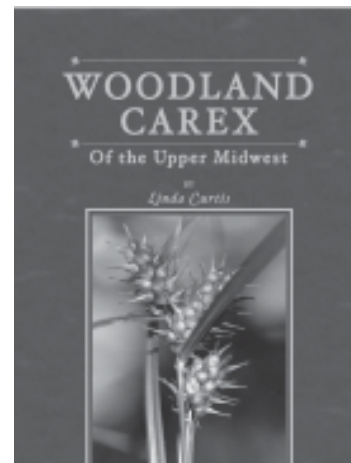
You have probably seen sedges, but you may not have known it. Sedges are flowering plants that superficially resemble grasses or rushes. Some well-known sedges include the water chestnut and the papyrus from which the Ancient Egyptian writing material was made.

Sedges in Kane and DuPage Counties are all over the place, but few people can identify them. Botanist Linda Curtis has written a field guide to Woodland Carex of the Upper Midwest that will make identifying these sedges easier.

Over 50 Carex, or sedge species, grow locally in our woodlands but they are often dismissed as just another grass. Not so! Sedges have triangular stems, that support their seed heads, while grass stems are round. Grasses have nodes and split sheaths around their stems but Carex are more the “turtle-neck” type with enclosed or wrap-around sheaths.

These design features and others are enhanced in the book with photos taken by Curtis. The species are divided into sections based on sac type. There are keys in each section plus special keys that Curtis devised while working as a wetland delineator and botany consultant for environmental firms.

Name all of the sedges that you know now and then try again after you read this book. You will be pleasantly surprised. To order, send \$19.95 plus \$3.00 shipping to Curtis Third, P.O. Box 731, Lake Villa, IL 60046.



NEW HRP RECIPIENT SELECTED

The Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) has selected one new recipient from the Fox-Kishwaukee watershed (Kane County) during the August 2006 application round. Based on the thorough completion of their application and the high score received through the Technical Oversight Committee's ranking system, the Kimball Farms Homeowners Association was awarded grant money to help with the costs of restoring wetlands and an oak savanna which runs in a wide swath through the middle of the neighborhood.

Kimball Farms is a recent addition to Carpentersville, and has over 800 residences in single family homes. There are five wetland areas totaling 28 acres within the neighborhood and all 28 acres will be undergoing restoration to remove invasive species such as reed canary grass and small patches of phragmites (common reed). They also wish to promote native plant growth within these areas. Three of the five wetlands connect with the Dundee Township Park District property and future Kane County Forest Preserve land to Raceway Woods and eventually the Fox River, making this an important bird and wildlife corridor.

The small two acre oak savanna within the Kimball Farms neighborhood has become overgrown with unhealthy plant species such as buckthorn, thistle, and box elder. Much of the buckthorn has been removed, but there are still invasive plants that are growing in the savanna. To ensure strong growth of the oak trees, these plants which compete for water, nutrients, and sunlight must be removed. This harmful undergrowth will be eliminated to promote the growth of not only the oaks, but also some other "healthy" undergrowth such as dogwoods and viburnum. The HRP Technical Oversight Committee is looking forward to the renovation of such a lovely site in our area.

The Habitat Restoration Program (HRP) is intended to provide cost-share and technical assistance for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of aquatic resources, with secondary benefits to wildlife habitat, to landowners in priority areas in Kane and DuPage Counties. Kane County is considered part of the Fox

and Kishwaukee River watershed. Counties included are: Kane, McHenry, Boone, northern DeKalb, and western Lake. DuPage county is part of the Lower Fox-Calumet-Aux Sable-Des Plaines watershed which also includes Will, South Cook, Kendall and Grundy.

Kane-DuPage Soil and Water Conservation District selects new HRP candidates twice a year, in March and August. Applications for the next round of HRP in Kane County may be submitted in 2007. The Technical Oversight Committee is looking for all types of natural areas and wetlands in every setting: private landowners, homeowners associations, or commercial developments with protected natural open spaces. The Technical Oversight Committee will meet in the middle of March to select new projects.

The Lower Fox-Calumet-Aux Sable-Des Plaines watershed (DuPage County) did not have any projects selected for the August 2006 round of HRP, due to lack of funding. The Technical Oversight Committee will meet to discuss funding options for the program. Until these matters are resolved, the Kane-DuPage will not be taking HRP applications from DuPage County.

If you have any questions about HRP projects in our area or details of the contract, call Stasi McCrory or Deb Pendell at 630.584.7961, ext. 3, or visit our website at www.kanedupageswcd.org and click on Conservation Programs.



oak savanna under restoration in Kimball Farms

Soil and Water Management Workshop

A statewide Soil & Water Management workshop will be offered simultaneously at 5 different locations on December 5th 2006. The University of Illinois Extension sponsored workshop will discuss nitrogen management and nutrient transport, amongst other related topics.

Five continuing education units in soil and water management will be provided to Certified Crop Advisors attending the workshop. Portions of the program will be provided via Extension's distance learning technology and portions will be offered live at the site.

The northern Illinois workshop will be offered at the DeKalb County Extension office located at the Center for Agriculture on Bethany and Peace roads in Sycamore. The meeting will start presentations at 9:00

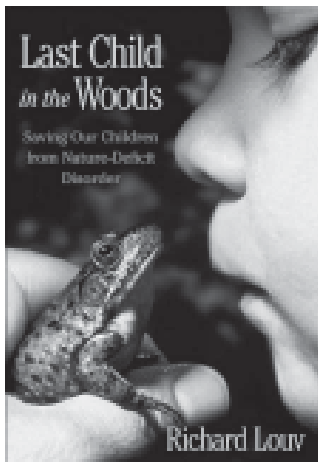
a.m. and will end by 2:15 p.m. Lunch will be provided for registrants.

The registration fee is \$25.00 per person and must be sent to the University of Illinois Extension office by November 28. To obtain registration forms, contact the Extension office of DeKalb County at 815.758.8194.

Other locations for the workshops are Pontiac, Oakwood, Hillsboro, and Salem.

Forms can also be requested from neighboring local Extension officers or by contacting Duane Friend, University of Illinois Extension Educator, National Resources via email at friend@uiuc.edu or phone at 217.782.6515.

Author to Speak at College of DuPage



On November 16th, 2006 at 7 p.m., the Conservation Foundation will be offering parents, grandparents, educators and conservationists the opportunity to see Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, for FREE at the College of DuPage's Jack H.

Turner Conference Center. There will be a book signing immediately following. This event has been made possible through the generous sponsorship of Itasca Bank & Trust Company.

Mr. Louv will speak about the relationship between children and nature, how society is teaching young people to avoid direct experience in nature. That unintended message is delivered by schools, families, even organizations devoted to the outdoors, and codified into the legal and regulatory structures of many of our local communities. He will also describe

the exciting new body of scientific evidence demonstrating just how important direct contact with the outdoors is to healthy child development, touching on such health issues as ADHD, child obesity, stress, creativity and cognitive functioning. To stimulate a "Leave No Child Inside" movement, he offers practical suggestions for action by parents, grandparents, government agencies, conservationists, urban planners, educators and others concerned about the future of childhood and the Earth itself.

Richard Louv is the author of seven books about family, nature and community. A columnist for the San Diego Union Tribune, he has written for the New York Times and other newspapers and magazines, and has been a columnist and member of the editorial advisory board for Parents magazine. He is also the chairman of the Children & Nature Network. (www.cnaturenet.org).

Admission to this exciting event is FREE, but seating is limited and reservations are required. Call 630.428.4500 Ext. 10 or email cthompson@theconservationfoundation.org for more information or to register.

Do's and Don't of Recycling

Every community has its own guidelines for what should and should not be recycled, and how the process should take place. Take a few moments to find out these details. Call your local public works department or recycling organization.

In general, here are a few things to keep in mind:

Cleanliness Counts

Rinsing cans and keeping boxes out of the weather makes them easier to process. That keeps costs down.

Pay Attention to what goes in Your Bin

Take it upon yourself to be an accurate recycler. A cereal box is probably great, but a greasy pizza box may not be. Maybe milk jugs are good, but not the caps. Call or visit your municipal web site to find out the rules. Then follow them.

Good Bets

Tin cans, aluminum cans, newspaper, magazines, phone books, plastic beverage bottles, milk jugs, glass bottles and jars, cereal boxes, other clean and dry cardboard boxes.

Probably not

Plastic grocery bags, Styrofoam, light bulbs, food-soiled paper, wax paper, ceramics.

For more information:

Kane County

Visit <http://www.co.kane.il.us/Environment/recycle> or call 630.208.3841

DuPage County

Visit <http://www.dupageco.org/building/> or call 630.407.6700

Taken from: <http://www.americarecyclesday.org>



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Smart Shopping, Continued from page 1

in the supermarket by choosing large sizes instead of individual serving sizes.

Here are a few examples, look for others the next time you shop.

- Buy items such as cereal, raisins and chips in a large box instead of in individual serving sizes.
- Buy juice in concentrates and in reusable containers instead of single serving packages.
- Save money by buying bottled water in a large plastic jug instead of six packs or 16 ounce bottles. Reuse plastic water bottles.

Buy reusable and long lasting items

Products that can be reused are cheaper in the long run than those you throw away and buy over and over again. Goods that are designed to last a long time are also cheaper in the long run than those that wear out quickly. A family can save \$1000 each year by buying reusable and long lasting products.

- Use rechargeable batteries in toys, flashlights, radios, etc. You can save \$200 a year by using rechargeable batteries instead of disposables in one cd player used two hours a day.
- Use a real camera instead of disposable ones. If you take 24 pictures each month you will save \$144 each year.
- Many families spend over \$260 each year on paper towels and napkins. Switch to cloth napkins, sponges and cloth towels or wipes.
- Use washable plates, cups and silverware for parties and picnics instead of disposable products.
- Use an electric razor or hand razor with replaceable blades instead of disposable razors.
- Buy high quality/long life tires. They cost less

per mile traveled and reduce the problem of disposing of used tires.

- Use a washable commuter mug for your morning coffee or water and eliminate a Styrofoam or plastic cup every day.
- Bring bags to the market, either cloth or your old paper and plastic. Some markets will credit your bills for using your own bags. When buying only a few items, do not take a bag.
- Clean and service your appliances, computers, tools, and cars so that they will enjoy even longer lives. And, before you replace them, check to see if they are repairable. Consider sharing equipment that is use infrequently such as hedge clippers, pruners, fruit pickers, or chain saws.

Buy products in recyclable containers

It is important to familiarize yourself with the types of containers and items that can be recycled in your local recycling program. Once you know, you can look for products that come in the containers that you know you will be able to recycle.

Buy recycled

Buying items made with recycled-content materials means that fewer natural resources, such as trees, were used to produce the products. Products made from recycled paper, plastic, and other materials are usually easy to recognize.

Buying used items is another form of recycling. Buying used means that your purchase does not use more resources or energy. You can find authentic retro cloths, room accessories, and even sports equipment at your local thrift store.

Taken from:
Green Shopping Tips,
<http://earth911.org/usa>
Let's Go Green-
United States
Environmental Protection Agency



A FISH IN WINTER

Winter is upon us and there is much to do! Not only do we need to begin thinking of winterizing our homes and our cars, but we cannot forget about our ponds. Below are a few effective and easy steps you can use to get your pond ready for winter.

• REMOVE ALL POND DEBRIS

Hydrogen sulfide can develop during the breakdown of debris that has accumulated during the summer months. This harmful chemical can prove deadly not only to fish, but also to aquatic plants. To avoid this situation, keep your pond free of debris by removing dead leaves, algae and fish waste. Pond filters can take care of tiny wastes. Closer to winter, cover your pond with a net to avoid leaves from entering, but make sure to keep the net clean to prevent it from sinking.



• BRING SURFACE PLANTS INSIDE

Bring floating and surface aquatic plants indoors for protection during the winter as the frost will cause them to die in the water. This will cause them to rot and pollute the water. All potted aquatic plants should be kept in the deepest level of the pond to prevent them from freezing. If the plant is inexpensive, it may be best to discard the plant from the pond all together.



• EVENTUALLY STOP FEEDING FISH

Gradually stop feeding your fish toward the onset of the winter months and completely stop once the temperature reaches 40 - 45 degrees Fahrenheit. Fish do not have the ability to digest. Due to the inactivity of any beneficial bacteria in the water during the winter months, continued feeding will result in fish waste, causing ammonia to build and the fish to die.

• CUT-OFF PLANT SURFACE GROWTH

Most underwater plants can survive bitter cold because, unless the pond is kept extremely shallow, the bottom level of ponds does not freeze. However, if the plants are showing above water, you need to cut off the extra growth. The growth above the water will eventually die when the water surface freezes in the winter. Eventually, it will fall into the water and polluting the pond.



• MAKE SURE POND IS DEEP ENOUGH

Make sure your pond is deep enough if you intend on leaving the fish in your pond during winter months. Because deeper water does not freeze, fish tend to reside there. Your pond should be at least 7 to 8 feet deep for the fish to survive winter.

if your pond is not deep enough, and you do not have many fish, consider bringing the fish indoors. Doing this, though, can cause the fish stress, so practice extreme caution. If you use an indoor pool, make sure to have proper pumps to ensure oxygenation and to cover it with a net to avoid fish from jumping out.

• PREVENT POND FROST COVERAGE

A frozen pond surface will not only cut off the oxygen supply to the fish in your pond, but a build up of toxic waste will also develop and become trapped. This will cause both your fish and plants to die. To prevent this situation, you can make use of floating pond headers for keeping small pond areas frost free. To keep the oxygen supply available at all times, make sure to use air pumps to oxygenate the water. NEVER try to break the ice on the top of your pond as it can send shock waves to the fish causing them to die.

Preparing your pond properly during the winter months will ensure the enjoyment of your pond and fish during the sunny spring and summer months.



Books Make Great Gifts!

Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? The Kane-DuPage Soil and Water Conservation District has a number of books for sale that are perfect for your favorite conservationist.

Kane County Wild Plants and Natural Areas, 2nd Edition. Dick Young's definitive catalog of Kane County plants based on over 25 years of experience. The book also lists 47 natural areas with descriptive text. \$12.50.

Creating Habitats and Homes for Illinois Wildlife. Whether you are interested in developing fish and wildlife habitat on your property, or just wanting a greater understanding of the natural world, you will find this book full of useful information. \$25.00.

Landscaping for Wildlife. Learn the benefits and principles of landscaping for wildlife to attract species to your yard or farmland. \$12.00.

Woodworking for Wildlife. Features general bird house information, nest boxes and platforms for use

in various habitats, and woodworking plans to build your own bird house. \$12.00.

Wild About Birds. Learn techniques to increase the variety of birds at your feeders, tips on food, and detailed descriptions and photos of feeder-using species east of the Rocky Mountains. \$18.50.

Critters of Illinois Pocket Guide. Designed for kids but useful for anyone wanting concise information on 50 Illinois critters. \$6.00

Birds of Illinois. This field guide contains 111 species of Illinois birds, and provides an easy-to-use color guide. \$13.00

Trees of Illinois. Contains color photos and full-page descriptions for 124 species of Illinois trees. \$14.00

Books can be purchased at the Kane-DuPage Soil and Water Conservation District office or order forms can be downloaded from our website.



Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District

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