

Woods of Woods

Newsletter
of the
Forest Preserve
District
of the Kankakee
River Valley

"All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively, the land... a land ethic changes the role of Homo Sapien from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it... it implies respect for his fellow members, and so also respect for the community as such."

— Aldo Leopold, "Sand County Almanac"

SOME OF THE Best Native Trees and Shrubs FOR BIRDS

"Every single person who owns a piece of property of any size can make a difference. They can begin by removing non-native plant species on their land and replacing them with natives. Why native plants? Native plants are important for many reasons, but they are essential as the only hosts for many native insects.

Insects are essential food for many birds, particularly nesting songbirds... A small yard, even in the heart of a city, can provide these crucial sites."

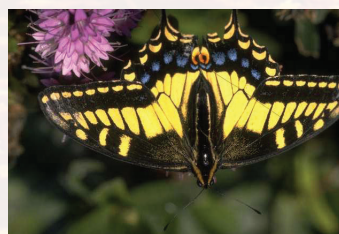
— Kay Charter, Founder and Executive Director of Saving Birds Thru Habitat

Blackberry and Raspberry: the thorny brambles provide protection from predators and nesting sites. The flowers also attract insects, which attract those birds which are insect eaters and generally will not visit bird feeders. The summer berries are loved by many species of birds.

Shadbush or Service Berry: *Amelanchier* species are hardy and do well in full sun and well drained neutral soil. Also known as Juneberry, or Sarvisberry, there are about 20 species native to North America. There are several varieties that are hardy to northern Illinois, very beautiful on the landscape and providing a rich source of nutritious berries. Downy Service berry, *Amelanchier arborea*, has showy white flowers for a week or so in the spring, and tart dark purple berries and the foliage turns bright shades of orange, red and yellow in the fall. It is one of the smaller varieties, growing 15-20 feet in height with multiple stems. Another Illinois native is the Smooth Shadbush – *Amelanchier laevis* – is a smaller tree, with purplish-black berries that many will say taste like blueberries. Some will say the best tasting *Amelanchier* is the Saskatoon service berry - *Amelanchier alnifolia*. This native shrub grows 3-10 feet and is considered by some to be the best tasting berry. The fruit is highly nutritious and was used by Native Americans to make pemmican. The fruits of all the *Amelanchier* family are good to eat, if you can get to them before the birds do. This family of shrubs provide spring blossoms that attract insects, the fall berries provide food and the foliage is not only beautiful but provides essential nesting habitat.

More information on Native Service berries can be found here:

www.beeculture.com/native-serviceberries/



Viburnums: another understory shrub, this large family will thrive in sun or part shade under larger trees. Insects are attracted to the blossoms and the berries offer fruits loved by many species of birds.

Juniper and Red Cedar: These hardy natives will provide year-round cover for birds that overwinter. The berries of the Eastern Red Cedar are especially loved by the Cedar Waxwing, a bird

Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.

— John Muir

that is often a year-round resident in northern Illinois. Juniper berries are a staple food for them, and will provide year round food supply.



Red Mulberry: A hardy and fast growing tree providing bountiful spring blossoms that attract insects, and rich crop of mid-summer berries loved by birds of all kinds. Get the native red mulberry, not the invasive introduced white mulberry.

Elderberry: These are native small trees or shrubs with abundant, fragrant flower umbels in spring and midsummer berries that birds love. They are hardy and easy to grow. The berry is the main ingredient for the traditional elderberry syrup for colds and flu. Although the fresh berry is very tart, it is highly regarded for making jam and wine, if you can get the berries before the birds do.

Hollies: providing food and shelter, the foliage of many species is evergreen, providing winter protection. Although the fruit of American Holly and the deciduous shrub Winterberry are toxic to humans and pets, native birds love the berries which provide winter food.

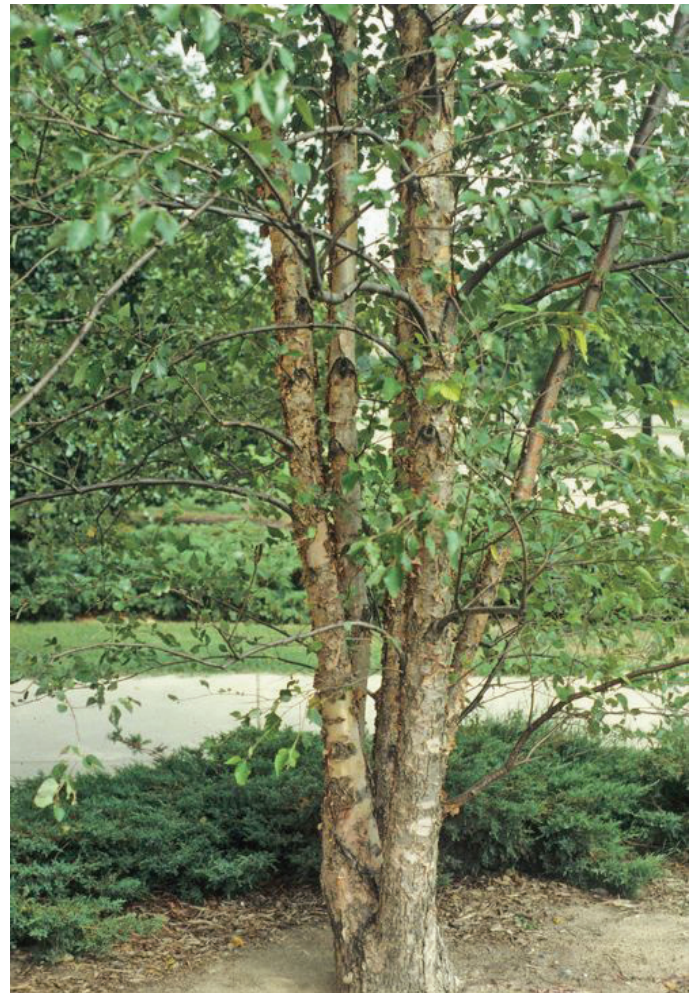
Flowering Dogwood: a hardy native species that likes wet areas, this shrub makes a good background planting for a rain garden or wetland area. In spring the creamy-white blossoms attract insects, and birds come for the white berries in the fall. The Red Twig Dogwood is native to Illinois, and is well suited for planting in a wet area. It typically reaches heights of 6-12 feet. Although it can be invasive, with a rapid growing and spreading habit, it can be kept trimmed to fit in a landscape. It is very attractive in all seasons, from its spring flowering, fall foliage color and its distinctive red bark which is very attractive in the winter landscape.

More information on Red Osier, or Red Twig Dogwood can be found here:

www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-plant-descriptions/red-osier-dogwood



Red Osier Dogwood



River Birch

Birches: A native to northern Illinois that is well adapted to wet areas is the attractive River Birch – *Betula nigra*. River Birch has attractive variegated shaggy bark, which shelters a number of native invertebrates. The leaves attract butterfly and moth species; buds and seeds attract small mammals and birds. It thrives in our variable climate, and it has a multi-branched spreading shape with relatively rapid growth rate. It will grow 40-70 feet in height with a spread of 40-60 feet. It will tolerate moderate flooding and is especially well adapted to wet areas and makes a beautiful feature tree for a rain garden or wetland area on the landscape. It will also tolerate some drought, so typical late summer dry spells does not bother this attractive tree.

Cherries: the fruit of native cherries, the Common Chokecherry – *Prunus virginiana*, and Black Cherry – *Prunus serotina*, provide food for birds. Many species of caterpillars feed on the leaves, which in turn are a major food source for birds which feed on insects.

Willows: native willow species such as Black Willow and Pussy Willow attract moths and butterflies. The willows make attractive borders, especially for wet areas such as a rain garden or wetland planting.

Oak: the buds, leaves and acorns provide food for many species of insects, birds and wildlife.

More information about native oak varieties can be found here:

www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-and-plant-collections/taxonomic-collections/oak-collection

www.edgeofthewoodsnursery.com/nine-reasons-plant-oak

“...oaks are the quintessential wildlife plants; no other plant genus supports more species of Lepidoptera [butterflies and moths], thus providing more types of bird food, than the mighty oak”

– Douglas Tallamy, “Bringing Nature Home”



Oak

RESOURCES:

www.abcbirds.org/blog/native-trees-shrubs-attract-birds

www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-plant-descriptions/red-osier-dogwood

www.beeculture.com/native-serviceberries/

www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-and-plant-collections/taxonomic-collections/oak-collection

www.edgeofthewoodsnursery.com/nine-reasons-plant-oak

Lorax – a children’s book by Dr. Seuss, his personal favorite. Published in 1971, it is a story concerning the destruction of the environment; “Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

Silent Spring – by Rachel Carson

Having Faith: An Ecologist’s Journey to Motherhood – by Sandra Steingraber

Raising Elijah: Protecting Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis
– by Sandra Steingraber

Living Downstream: A Scientist’s Personal Investigation of Cancer and the Environment – by Sandra Steingraber

Silence of the Songbirds – by Bridget Stutchbury

The Dying of the Trees – by Charles E. Little

Hope for the Land – by Charles E. Little

Tom Brown’s Field Guide to Living With the Earth

– by Tom Brown Jr., with Brandt Morgan

Tom Brown’s guide to Healing the Earth

– by Tom Brown Jr., with Randy Walker, Jr.

Botany in a Day – by Thomas J. Elpel

Sacred Lands of Indian America – Jake Page, editor

Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth – by James Lovelock

Our Stolen Future – by Theo Coburn

All the Light in High Places – by Joe Hutto

Touching the Wild – by Joe Hutto

Illumination in the Flatwoods – by Joe Hutto

A Sand County Almanac – by Aldo Leopold

Half Earth – by E. O. Wilson

Also, <https://www.half-earthproject.org/>



GEMINIDS 2020

The Geminid meteor shower is one of the major meteor shows of the year, active from December 4-17, with the peak activity during the overnight hours of December 13 and into the morning of December 14. During the peak hours of the shower, there may be as many as 120 per hour. Viewing should still be good the night of December 14 and into the wee hours of the morning of December 15. They may be seen beginning about 9 p.m., and the best time to see the Geminids is between midnight and 4 a.m. At 2 a.m. the radiant will be directly overhead and display the highest rate of meteors. This year the viewing will be especially good, as it will be a moonless night sky.

For the best viewing experience, dress warm and find a location away from light pollution. Because the shower tends to come in bursts, allow at least a half hour to a full hour for viewing. As patience is necessary, bring snacks, warm clothing and a chair or lounge with a sleeping bag to help to stay warm and comfortable while enjoying the show. Don't use a flashlight or look at a cell phone as it will ruin your night vision; it will take a good 20 minutes of full dark to get your night vision back.

The Geminid meteor shower gets its name from the constellation Gemini, which appears to be the source, or radiant, of the meteor shower. which is the origin, or radiant. After sunset, look Northeast; by 10:00 pm, look East. Look to the South at 2:00 am and closer to dawn, look West.

The meteors of the Geminids do not actually come from the constellation Gemini;

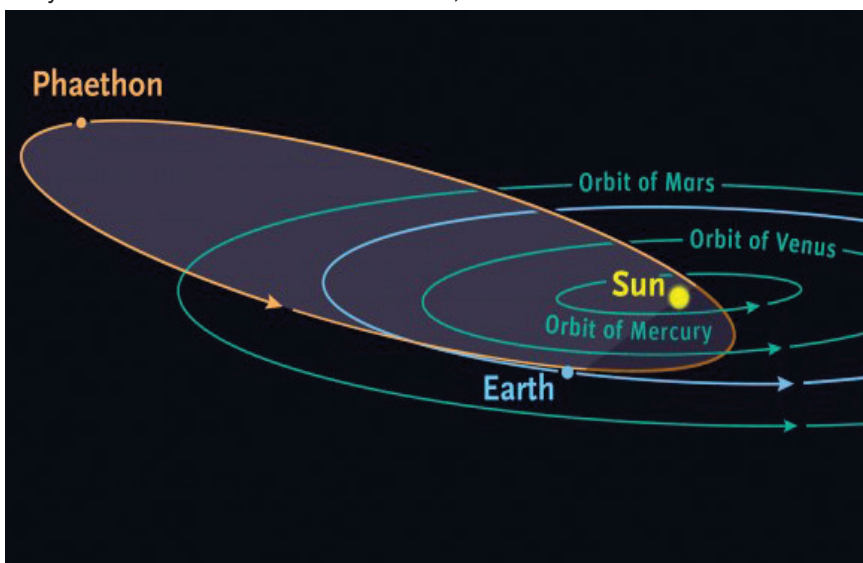


this is just a stellar marker to locate the source in the night sky. Astronomers believe that the source is a debris field from an object called 3200 Phaethon. This is an asteroid-type body sometimes called a rock comet. It is a 3 mile wide space traveller that passes between Mercury and the Sun every 1.43 years. As it passes near

these bodies, the intense heat causes the object to break up, shedding a trail of rubble along its orbital path. When Earth crosses this path, where bits of this debris field enter Earth's upper atmosphere at speeds of 80,000 miles per hour. As they vaporize, they light up as fiery "shooting stars" that we see as a meteor shower.

RESOURCE:

www.solarsystem.nasa.gov/asteroids-comets-and-meteors/overview/
www.skyandtelescope.org/observing/best-meteor-showers-in-2020/



Homemade Laundry Soap and Dishwasher Soap

Free of perfumes, dyes, micro and fillers, for a fraction of the cost.

More than a billion laundry jugs are used and discarded every year in the United States. The popular laundry and dishwasher soap pods are plastic that not only end up in the environment, clogging drains and adhering to clothing. Save money and avoid plastic contamination of the landfills and oceans from jugs, packaging containers and micro plastic beads.

LAUNDRY SOAP

INGREDIENTS:

14 oz Washing soda - (Arm & Hammer washing soda)
14 oz Borax - (20 Mule Team Borax)
1 bar (45 oz) shaved bar soap - such as dr bronner's, Kirk's Castile soap, ZOTE, Fels-Naptha, or a handmade natural bar of soap.

Stir together, or mix in food processor or blender. Wait a bit to let the dust settle before opening lid on the blender.

Use 1 Tablespoon for a light load, or 2-3 Tablespoons for large or heavily soiled load. This is a 32 ounce recipe and should be 32-64 loads depending on size and how soiled the load. To more easily disperse the soap, dissolve the soap in a pint or so of warm water before adding to the washing machine, and add the soap while the washer is filling, adding the laundry after it is nearly full.

The total cost of each 32 ounce batch is less than \$4.00.

DISHWASHER SOAP

INGREDIENTS:

2 parts borax
2 parts washing soda
1 part citric acid
1 part salt

Use 1 Tablespoon per load. Some options:

For an extra boost - add a few drops of dishwashing liquid. For a rinse agent, add white vinegar.

Add a couple drops of essential oils for scent.

RESOURCES:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - microplastics:
www.oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html

Snopes fact check:
www.snopes.com/fact-check/detergent-pods-warning/

Environmental Working Group:
www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/

Sustainable Jungle: some eco-friendly readymade cleaning products
www.sustainablejungle.com/zero-waste/zero-waste-laundry-detergent/

More Recipes:
www.mommypotamus.com/natural-dishwasher-rinse-aid/
www.mommypotamus.com/homemade-dishwasher-detergent/

Kankakee Valley Audubon Society



Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area

Jasper-Pulaski is a fall gathering place for migrating sandhill cranes. At dusk cranes fly into the area by the thousands from every direction. Peak numbers occur from late October to mid-November. Take IL 114 east from Momence and proceed on IN 10. Keep going straight (regardless of the route numbers) until you must turn. Then go south ½ mile and turn east again. It is then about 3 miles to Jasper-Pulaski. It is a one hour drive from Momence. It is best to arrive a bit before the sun begins to set.

Christmas Count

Jed Hertz is again organizing the Christmas Bird Count. We have tentatively set the date for Saturday, December 26, 2020, but a final decision has not yet been made. There will be more information later. Contact Jed at jhh_60910@yahoo.com or 815-937-9530 if you'd like to participate.

KVAS OFFICERS:

President: David Atkinson
815-932-6457

Email: daveannatk@att.net

Secretary-Treasurer: Roberta Slaby
815-791-5955

Email: robertaslaby@gmail.com

Field Trip Chairman: John Baxter
815-937-5059

Email: xxjb7z@aol.com

ANNUAL DUES

Single - \$10; Family - ???

Send correspondence to:

Roberta Slaby
3956A N 3000 W Rd.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914.

Please make checks payable to
Kankakee Valley Audubon Society.

Kankakee Valley Audubon Society is
an affiliate of the
Illinois Audubon Society.



Have you visited our website lately?

www.krvfpd.org

WEB RESOURCES

ASTRONOMY & METEOROLOGY

www.noaa.gov	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
www.ngdc.noaa.gov	National Geophysical data center
www.hubblesite.org	Hubble Telescope
www.nasa.gov	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
www.skyandtelescope.com	Astronomy site
www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/skychart/article_1220_1.asp	(daily local sky chart)
www.usno.navy.mil	U.S. Naval Observatory (including moon phases)
www.tycho.usno.navy.mil/vphase.html	Virtual Reality Moon Phase Pictures
www.mlo.noaa.gov/	Mauna Loa Observatory
www.whoi.edu/institutes/occi/currenttopics/ct_abruptclimate.htm	Climate Change

GEOLOGY

www.usgs.gov	United States Geological Survey
www.scotese.com	Paleo map Project
www.vulcan.wr.usgs.gov	Cascades Volcano Observatory
www.drgeorgepc.com	The Tsunami Page

FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES

www.dnr.state.il.us/	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
www.fws.gov/	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
www.fs.fed.us/	USDA Forest Service
www.nps.gov/	National Park Service

CONSERVATION & PRESERVATION

www.amrivers.org/	American Rivers
www.nature.org	The Nature Conservancy
www.naturalarea.org	Natural Areas Association
www.lta.org/	Land Trust Alliance
www.oceanconservancy.org	Ocean Conservancy
www.audubon.org/	Audubon

SUSTAINABLE

www.theresiliencyinstitute.net/	Permaculture & medicinal herbal classes
www.buildinggreen.com/	Green construction design

Look at the trees, look at the birds, look at the clouds, look at the stars... and if you have eyes you will be able to see that the whole existence is joyful. Everything is simply happy. Trees are happy for no reason; they are not going to become prime ministers or presidents and they are not going to become rich and they will never have any bank balance.

Look at the flowers - for no reason. It is simply unbelievable how happy flowers are.

~Osho

Outdoors Skills Programs

University of Illinois Extension, Kankakee County Master Naturalists:
www.extension.illinois.edu/gkw/kankakee-county-master-naturalists

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (Bow) – giving women introductory experiences and instruction in various outdoor activities. Three-day workshop activities include recreational activities, shooting sports, and outdoor crafts and hobbies:
www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/BOW/Pages/default.aspx

REI Classes and Events near Chicago, Illinois:
www.rei.com/events/p/us-il-chicago

Wild Nature Project - Nature, Animal Tracking, Medicinal Plants, Youth Programs, Teen Camps, Wilderness Survival Skills, Leadership - Located in Bloomington, Indiana:
www.wildnatureproject.com/index.html

On Trail At The Forest Preserve

Programs are temporarily suspended until further notice due to Covid-19

FOREST PRESERVE SITES

Shannon Bayou Environmental Education Center and Administrative Office

This 46-acre preserve is located at 3301 Waldron Road in Aroma Park, along the Kankakee River. The Center provides space for programs about natural history, ecology and preservation of open space in the Kankakee River Valley. The walking trail features plantings of many native trees and plants, including native tallgrass prairie species and a butterfly garden of native plants. The site includes 3/4 mile asphalt and fine gravel walking trail, a picnic shelter, and picnic tables.

3301 Waldron Rd • Aroma Park, IL 60910
41°04'47.61"N
87°48'44.31"W

Aroma Land and Water Reserve

One of the best sites in the area for woodland wildflowers, this 140 acre site is located on Hieland Road, 1.4 miles south of Highway 17 East. A 1.2 mile walking trail winds through several different types of natural areas, including high quality forest, prairie, and wetland ecosystems. It also has nearly 1/4 mile of Kankakee River frontage and the associated flood-plain forest.

The Forest Preserve mows a loop trail that branches off the existing 1 1/4 mile trail that meanders through the main body of the Aroma LWR. In the summer of 2011, 49.5 acres of mixed pine and hardwood forest was added.

Approximately 40 percent of the Aroma Preserve is a wetland and lies within the flood plain of the Kankakee River. In the spring, the wet oak forest gives a spectacular wildflower display while the wetland and sand prairie are the most colorful in the summer. There is ample parking in the parking lot on Hieland Road next to the playground.

1578 S. Hieland Rd. • St. Anne, IL 60964
41°06'02.90"N
87°45'24.08"W

Gar Creek Trail and Prairie Restoration

Approximately 85 acres, this site is located about one-half mile east of Route

45 on River Road adjacent to Kankakee Community College. The 16-acre restored tall grass prairie was planted in 1992. A 3/4 mile trail begins at the prairie and winds along Gar Creek through oak woodland and down to the banks of the Kankakee River.

At river's edge, the trail connects with the Kankakee Riverfront Trail Project, which starts at the River Road Ball Diamonds. It then continues through Kankakee Community College, Kankakee River Valley Forest Preserve, and Shapiro Developmental Center. The trail connects through the City of Kankakee and runs through the Perry Farm which is a part of the Bourbonnais Township Park District.

501 River Road • Kankakee, IL 60901
41°05'30.84"N
87°51'32.78"W

Waldron Arboretum

Located 1.1 miles south of Interstate 57, this site was once a landscape nursery. On this 90 acre site, there is a fine gravel hiking trail suitable for bicycling and cross country skiing. The trail winds through 30 acres of woods, including a small prairie restoration area. In the winter of 2008, the District acquired the other 60 acre parcel which had been primarily in agriculture. Future development plans are pending based on the district's needs and funds available through federal and state grants

2755 Waldron Rd. • Aroma Park, IL 60910
41°05'36.28"N
87°49'26.51"W

Hieland Lakes Nature Preserve

The Hieland Lakes Nature Preserve is located on Route 17, 6.6 miles east of the center of Kankakee. The new site is 64 acres, including two connected lakes. An aquatic survey will be conducted to determine the fish population; meanwhile, limited fishing is allowed. Bluegill may be kept by anglers - all other fish are catch-and-release.

Plans for the site include planting native wildflowers, prairie restoration and creation of a walking path. At this time, there is a mowed walking path, a parking lot, and a bridge at the point where the two lakes connect.

The site is a former sand gravel quarry, and while at this time before restoration

gets underway, there is not much in the way of native ecosystem remaining. The site offers a sparse population of native plant life and the area is abundant with wildlife such as deer, fox, coyote, and waterfowl including wood ducks, great blue heron and egret.

6692 Route 17 East • St. Anne, IL 60964
41°7'02.23"N
87°44'24.82"W

Strasma Grove

Nestled adjacent to Sunnyside neighborhood in Kankakee, this site is 2 acres of mature native trees with a mowed trail.

Duane Boulevard • Kankakee, IL 60901
41°06'28.33"N
87°59'43.56"W

Limestone Reforestation Site

This site is a 30 acre preserve and reforestation site, with mixed trees and grasses. The site is presently being managed by the Limestone Park District as part of an intergovernmental agreement.

County Road 3750 West
Kankakee, IL 60901
41°08'38.96"N
87°56'51.08"W

Zeedyk Meadows

Four acre sanctuary, although wet, contains many young trees and grasses that hold some songbirds and migrant species in the spring and fall. The Forest Preserve is still working on a long range development plan for this property. Located across the street from Station 2 of the Aroma Fire Protection District.

Warren Street • St. Anne, IL 60964
41°06'24.92"N
87°44'35.77"W

Snake Creek Preserve

Four acre finger of property running parallel to Snake Creek as it meets the Kankakee River. The creek and small woods are full of birds, owls, ducks and heron. There are also beaver, muskrat, frogs and is a great place to fish or just relax.

5800 Darline Dr. • St Anne, IL 60964
41.109752"N
87.756308"W



Kankakee River Valley Forest Preserve District

3301 Waldron Road • P.O. Box 13
Aroma Park, Illinois 60910
815-935-5630

Web address: www.krvfpd.org
E-mail: forest@krvfpd.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/KRVFPD/

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Doug Short Restoration Ecologist,
Site Development Director
Jean Hurrle Editor

But when I consider that the nobler animals have been exterminated here - the cougar, panther, lynx, wolverine, wolf, bear, moose, deer, the beaver, the turkey, etc., etc. - I cannot but feel as if I live in a tamed, and as it were, emasculated country... I listen to a concert in which so many parts are wanting... for instance, thinking that I have here the entire poem, and then, to my chagrin, I hear that it is but an imperfect copy that I possess and have read, that my ancestors have torn out many of the first leaves and grandest passages.

- Henry David Thoreau, Journal,

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free Newsletter, or to send an article,
contact the Forest Preserve Office
at 815-935-5630**

