



ANNUAL BANQUET

Thursday, April 19, 2012

Speaker

Katie Eggers Comeau

**“Frederick Law Olmsted and the
City Park Movement - Ongoing!”**

Cash Bar-6:00 PM Dinner-7:00 PM Speaker 8:15 PM

Location:

GLENDOVEERS
An elegant woodland setting
2328 Old Browncroft Rd.
Rochester, NY 14625

Bounteous buffet dinner, all-inclusive at \$22 per person
Reservations requested by Wednesday, April 11, 2012
Make checks payable to BANC, and mail with form below to:

Art Trimble, 37 Song Bird lane, Rochester, NY 14620

Number of dinners _____ @ \$22 each: _____

List names of attendees(for nametags)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The Tanager

Published Quarterly by the
Burroughs Audubon Nature Club
c/o John E. Gordon
126 Ayrault Rd. Fairport, NY 14450
www.bancny.org



Volume 42, Number 1

March, 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to welcome you to a new year as a BANC member! Welcome back to you seasoned members and hello and a warm welcome to you newcomers! I hope that all of you will attend as many events as possible! You have all received your Handbook of Information and Activities. Please keep it accessible and you will always know what's happening at the club or St. John's Meadows (during the winter months) and what field trips we have planned. Also, you can access our website at www.bancny.org twenty-four hours a day!

I am very honored to be your president once again. I feel that Burroughs Audubon Nature Club is a very important organization and its members are very special and caring people. We are people who appreciate nature and all its wonder and we are willing to work hard to care for our very valuable sanctuaries – the one on Railroad Mills Road and our sanctuary located near Dansville. These sanctuaries are just that – sanctuaries to protect living plants and animals that reside there. They are also sanctuaries for us humans! We can take walks in our sanctuary on Railroad Mills Road and appreciate the stream, the birds, the beautiful plants, the trees, the butterflies and whatever we may come across at the preserve that we make possible!

And we do, indeed, make this possible through our membership dues and through the efforts and dedication of our hard-working council, committee chairs and members, members who make presentations, volunteer at clean-up days and pot-lucks, keep up the property, and guide hikes. We have many members who are devoted presently and also members who have given so much in years gone by.

An amazing gentleman named William B. Hoot first organized BANC in the year 1913! Through hard work by its members, BANC has thrived for ninety-nine years!!!! Next year will mark our centennial year! It is sure to be very exciting! If you would like to participate in the 100th Anniversary Celebration Committee, please contact me at 249-9489.

If we are to continue to thrive as an organization, we, as members, are obligated to work together and help to keep our club and sanctuaries in business and well cared for! We are so very fortunate to be a nature club with a meeting house! And a great clubhouse it is! We also have a stunning butterfly garden (with stunning gardeners) and a great trail system on our land with Irondequoit Creek flowing through it. We are very fortunate!

In your 2012 Handbook, you can see what committees we have. If you would like to help out or assist in any of those committees, kindly call the committee chairs whose phone numbers are found next to their names. If you love to garden, there's a job for you. If you like to work with your hands in the outdoors, there's a job for you! If you enjoy technology and working with computers, there's a job for you! We have no shortage of jobs!!! Please peruse our committees in the handbook. If you'd like to share your talents, please share them with us!

If you have friends who love nature, please tell them about BANC. Invite them to pot lucks in the summertime or to open houses! Kids really like to explore the out-of-doors. We would love to have more children at our events – bring your nieces, nephews, grandchildren! Don't forget about our Annual Banquet coming up soon on April 19th at Glendoveers on Old Browncroft Road. More info is in this issue. See you there!

Sincerely,

Julie Clayton

Tar Sands Oil, the Real Issue

The Keystone XL pipeline is designed to bring 900,000 gallons of tar sands oil a day over 1700 miles from Alberta, Canada, to refineries on the Gulf Coast. Its route would cross hundreds of bodies of water and the Ogallala Aquifer, the source of drinking water for millions of people in the Midwest. The Keystone XL pipeline will also cut through important wildlife habitat for at least 20 imperiled species including the whooping crane, and threatens Nebraska's Sand Hills, the largest intact natural habitat left in the Great Plains ecosystem. There is a lot of worry the pipeline will leak, and for good reason. Tar sands oil is more acidic and corrosive than conventional oil and has to be piped at a higher temperature and pressure. The earlier Keystone 1 pipeline from Alberta to Missouri and Oklahoma, has had 14 serious leaks in its first year of operation. In 2010, the Enbridge pipelines from Alberta spilled over one million gallons of tar sands oil into the Kalamazoo River, 275,000 gallons in a suburb of Chicago, and 126,000 gallons in North Dakota.

Pipeline leaks are a major concern, but the real issue is the tar sands oil itself. The production and refining of tar sands oil is a disaster for the environment. Tar sands contain a dense and extremely viscous form of petroleum called bitumen, which is so thick that it won't flow unless heated or diluted with lighter hydrocarbons. This tar-like substance has been known to man for thousands of years and was often used for waterproofing boats by early cultures. Only in the last few years have oil prices been high enough that it can now be profitably extracted and refined into petroleum products. Tar sands oil can be found in Venezuela, Russia, and other countries, but Canada has the largest deposits and the only large-scale commercial tar sands oil industry.

Tar sands are found in Alberta under the Boreal forest in deposits the size of Florida. The oil is extracted by first removing all the trees and then strip mining 4 tons of soil and rock for each barrel of oil. If the sands are buried too deep to be strip-mined, the viscosity of the oil is reduced with injections of steam, solvents or hot air into the sands for several months and then the oil is pumped up. Both of these processes use more water and larger amounts of energy, mostly from natural gas, than the extraction of conventional oil. Then it must be pre-processed or upgraded into synthetic crude oil before it is fit for conventional refineries.

The extraction process destroys tens of thousands of acres of Boreal forest, pollutes hundreds of millions of gallons of water from the Athabasca River, and leaves behind vast ponds of

contaminated wastewater, toxic to migrating birds and other wildlife. Each barrel of oil from tar sands requires 3 barrels of water to produce and releases many dangerous pollutants into surface and ground water. 34 million acres are being mined for tar sands oil, and the roads and pipelines fragment even more habitat for wildlife.

Tar sands oil is the dirtiest oil on earth. It contains more sulfur, nitrogen, and metals like lead, nickel, mercury and arsenic, than conventional crudes, and creates emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide, which contribute to acid rain. The refining process also produces large quantities of ammonia and sludge. Some of the refineries are on the Great Lakes and discharge the ammonia other pollutants into them.

The most serious problem is that greenhouse gas emissions from tar sands oil development are 2-3 times higher than those from conventional oil operations. The expansion of tar sands oil development would make it impossible to cut the world's greenhouse gas emissions enough to stop global climate change. Only conservation, energy efficiency and alternative energy can prevent further climate change.

The American Petroleum Institute's multimillion-dollar campaign promotes the pipeline with promises of thousands of jobs and a supply of oil to the US so we won't be dependent on oil from the Middle East, but the US State Department estimates that only a few permanent jobs would be created and this pipeline is designed to export oil. The existing pipelines have brought an oversupply of tar sands oil to the Midwest, so oil prices there are being discounted. The Keystone XL pipeline would allow some of that oil to be sent to the Gulf Coast instead, where it can be exported to other countries from refineries in a free-trade zone in Texas, without paying US taxes. Midwest oil prices will rise, seriously impacting Midwestern farmers, but the oil companies, already the richest industry on earth, will profit.

The world is running out of oil that is easy to obtain, but corrosive tar sands oil is highly toxic, dangerous to transport and almost impossible to clean up when spilled. It would threaten our air, water, land, and economy, increase the demand for natural gas, and worsen climate change. Tar sands oil is not the answer to our energy needs.

Carol Hinkelman

Information for this article comes from The Center for Biological Diversity, The National Resources Defense Council, Wikipedia, National Wildlife Federation, and Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club.

Black Squirrels

This past week I saw a black squirrel under our birdfeeder, eating seeds the birds kicked off the tray. It was beautiful with glossy black fur and quick eyes. I had never seen one in Victor and wanted to learn more. An article by Gayle Pille, a bird nest box expert at www.woodlandhabitat.com/articles/black-squirrels gives a wonderful explanation:

"The black squirrels are really eastern gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) with a genetic mutation that causes excessive pigmentation or 'melanism'. Biologists estimate that nationwide about one of every 10,000 gray squirrels is the black mutant.

"Black-phase gray squirrels are by no means a genetic mistake. Gray squirrels in New England were almost all black before the days of early European settlers. The black fur more readily absorbs heat from the sun's rays providing warmth during cold northern winters; equally important, the black coloration is a defense mechanism.

"Dr. Bill Hamilton, a biologist with Penn State New Kensington, explained; 'early northern forests were very primeval. They were shaded, dense and dark. It's said that they were so dense that a squirrel could go from one end of the state to the other without ever touching the ground. The undisturbed North American population of gray squirrels was, according to historical records from the 1600's and early 1700's, predominately made up of black-phase gray squirrels due to the effectiveness of the black coloration as an aid in hiding from avian predators such as hawks or owls'.

"As Europeans settled the New World, forests were cleared for farmland and squirrels were commonly hunted. Dr. Hamilton added, 'as the continuous forests of Pennsylvania and on westward were broken up and the human hunting and bounty pressures on squirrels were increased, the black form of the gray squirrel, even though it is the genetically dominant variant, became less and less abundant. The black squirrel was very clearly outlined against the light colored sky when humans hunted squirrels from the forest floor. This human hunting pressure apparently favored the mixed, 'gray' coloration that even today predominates in most North American populations'.

"Squirrels were not only a food source for early settlers; they were perceived as a serious threat to crops. Nearly all states in the northeast had bounties on squirrels. Dr. Hamilton further explained, 'in 1749 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania put a 3-cent per skin bounty on gray squirrels to try to reduce the population. Over

640,000 pelts were turned in. In 1749 dollars, the outlay by Pennsylvania was huge, nearly bankrupting the state. In 1807 Ohio tried to reduce their squirrel population but also keep their state budget in tact by requiring each taxpayer to turn in squirrel pelts with their taxes in proportion to their tax bill. Each taxpayer had to turn in between 10 and 100 squirrel skins'.

"Intense hunting pressures in northern states caused the black-phase squirrel to mutate to the now common gray color in a relatively short period of time. Dr. Hamilton added, 'the impact on gray squirrels was a classic example of natural selection that can take place over a period of only decades'."

Chris Benard

Thank you to member, Lois Bircher, who winters in Clearwater, Florida, for this fine article written by Loren Westenberger, now deceased, who was a certified arborist.

"In 50 years, a tree grows to be worth \$196,250.00:

- \$62,500 in air pollution control
- \$37,500 in water recycling and humidity control
- \$31,250 worth of oxygen
- \$31,250 in soil benefits
- \$31,250 in wildlife shelter
- \$2,500 worth of protein in the leaves and bark consumed by wildlife
- a properly placed tree provides shade benefit equivalent to a 4-ton air conditioner
- the aesthetic value is priceless."

WANTED: LIBRARIAN

BANC is in need of an organized person who can be the chairperson of our library committee. We have two very good assistants. We also have a very accurate listing of books and materials that has been entered via computer. Please help, if you are interested! Call Julie at 249-9489.

MEET A MEMBER – DAVID SOUTHBY

We are blessed to have among us in BANC a number of wonderful people who demonstrate three traits – a great knowledge of one or more areas of natural history; a willingness, even an eagerness, to share that knowledge; and the energy to apply that knowledge in active work for the club and the local natural environment. David Southby is one of those people.

David was born and grew up in Plumstead on the eastern outskirts of London, England. His interest in, and love of, nature in general and flowers in particular was nurtured at an early age as he tended his parents' garden with its chrysanthemums and roses.

He received both his undergraduate degree and Ph.D. in the field of chemistry and biochemistry from the University of Wales, where he also met his wife Carol. After a brief period working on pharmaceuticals at Hoffman-La Roche, David joined Kodak Ltd. as a researcher at Harrow, where he worked for twelve years.

In 1987 David accepted a one-year assignment in the Kodak Research Laboratories here in Rochester. This was extended to two years, then three and four, and eventually became a permanent transfer. He worked there for twenty one years on projects spanning the technology transition from film to inkjet printing, before taking an early retirement in 2008.

David's introduction to BANC was through Carol Hinkelman and Lois Jenkins by way of his wife Carol (more of this in a later column). His involvement with the Railroad Mills sanctuary started around 2001 with work on the new butterfly garden, and soon expanded to wider renovation of the gardens, particularly the removal of non-native plants and poison ivy and the planting of native ferns

and other annual and perennial species. This developed into an annual program of clearance and replanting in various areas of the sanctuary. David joined the Executive Council and has served on it ever since in various capacities, including Trustee and Finance Committee member.

I asked David about the changes he had seen in the club and the sanctuary over the course of his membership. Like others, he is disappointed that busy schedules and competing interests have led to fewer people participating in club activities; in turn this has adversely impacted the club's finances and necessitated a more 'professional' management of our resources – an endeavor in which he has been closely involved. However, David points out, BANC is still the only local organization which encompasses all aspects of nature – plants, trees, birds, butterflies, fungi, astronomy,...

He has also spent time at the BANC preserve in Dansville and considers it an important site, primarily for wildflowers.

David's other vocation is woodworking. His father was an accomplished carpenter and David inherited his woodworking tools. Since his retirement, and with the help of two classes in Kentucky, he has been devoting a lot of time to creating beautiful custom furniture, much of it constructed from wood collected from fallen trees in their extensive backyard. At present his pieces are in his Penfield home, although he is running out of space there and considering the possibility of selling pieces in the future.

As winter ends, you are likely to find David again working on the gardens at the sanctuary when he is not completing projects in his own yard, which has twice been featured in the Genesee Land Trust's backyard habitat tour. As you enjoy the beauty of the flowers, reflect on all the hard work which makes it possible each year, and think what you might be able to contribute to the effort.

Richard Ashworth

TREASURER'S REQUEST

Look at the mailing label on this Tanager! If it says "2011 dues are due", it's time to pay. The dues are \$15 single, \$25 per couple, \$30 per family, \$50 Supporting Membership, & \$500 per person for life membership. Make check payable to BANC, and send to BANC, c/o John E. Gordon, 126 Ayrault Rd., Fairport, NY 14450.

NATIVE TREES AT THE SANCTUARY

7. Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)

This is the tree that causes the gardeners at the Sanctuary much frustration. However, to a furniture maker, it is a glory to behold and to a squirrel or a woodpecker it is a great food source. Black Walnuts are trees at home in flood plains like the Sanctuary. They have dark brown, sometimes silver tinged bark and will grow to over 100 ft, providing a bright open shade. Their leaves are divided into up to 23, three inch long leaflets, each toothed and pointed. Male catkins and female flowers appear with the leaves in spring followed by the fruit clusters of husks containing edible nuts enclosed in a tough shell.

The frustration comes because a chemical, Juglone, in the leaves, husks, and roots is a natural herbicide. Thus, gardeners trying to use ground near a Black Walnut can grow only those plants that have resistance to Juglone. It is thought that contact of the walnut roots with those of another plant leads to the latter's demise. The process is called allelopathy. It may be that Juglone is also released into the soil, and poisons the plants or that it kills beneficial fungi or bacteria in the soil that are needed for plant growth. In any case, don't use Black Walnut leaves as compost on your vegetables! At the Sanctuary this allelopathy is a major reason why some of the plantings in the butterfly gardens, like the butterfly bushes (*Buddleia*) for instance, are stunted, no matter how well we feed them.

On the positive side, the wood of the Black Walnut is justly prized by furniture makers and finds use in a wide range of wood products because of its strength and rot resistance. The fruits are tasty and even the shells, when ground up, have been used industrially as abrasives for sandblasting metals and as thickeners in textured paint. A most useful tree.

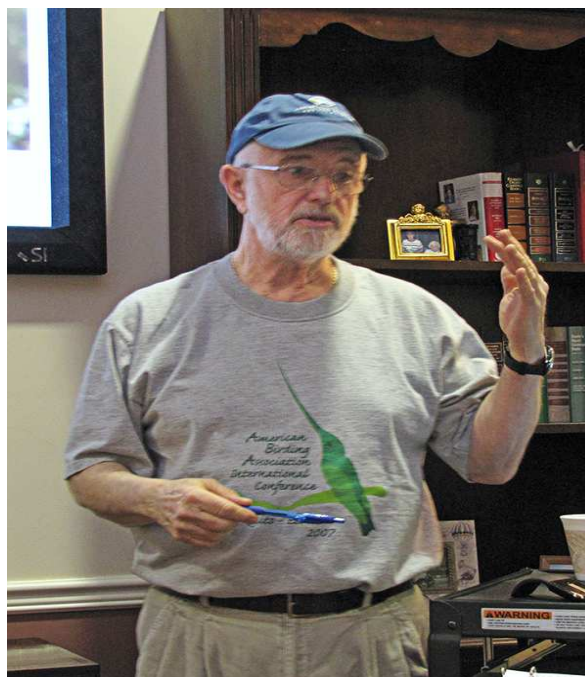
David Southby

NOTICE

For questions or suggestions regarding the *Tanager*, please contact the Editor, Jerry Jenkins, at: gljenkins@juno.com



BANC President Julie Clayton (right) presented Nancy Rosenberg with a Thank You gift, at the February meeting, for her work and dedication as President (2010 – 2011).



February Speaker Bob Mauceli makes his point!

The Tanager

**Burroughs Audubon
Nature Club
c/o John E. Gordon
126 Ayrault Rd.
Fairport, NY 14450**



TO:

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**Friday, March 9, 7:30 PM
St. John's Meadow
NEWFOUNDLAND ODYSSEY
Presenters: Art Trimble & Barb Binder**

**Saturday, April 14, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
BANC Sanctuary
SPRING CLEAN- UP**

**Thursday, April 19, 6:00 PM
Glendoveers
2328 Old Browncroft Rd.
BANC ANNUAL BANQUET**

**Saturday, April 21, 8:00 AM
High Acres Wildlife refuge
JOINT BIRDING TRIP
BANC Leader: Janet Miles**

**Thursday, May 3, 9:00 AM
Rush Oak Openings
SPRING FLOWERS, BIRDS, and FAIRY SHRIMP
Leader: Steven Daniel**

**June 1 - 3
Allegany State Park
ALLEGANY NATURE PILGRIMAGE
Representatives: Harold & Jane Stock**

**Monday, June 4, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
BANC Sanctuary
OPEN HOUSE
Hostesses: Janet Miles & Nancy Rosenberg**