

Spring 2016

Horizons

The Voice of Friends of Havenwoods

From the President

A member's support of Havenwoods. Friends recently received a generous donation from member Cheri Briscoe. Ms. Briscoe has been an avid supporter of all things nature for many years. I'd like to quote her sentiments in the letter with the donation.

"I have learned that your education programs, particularly for schools has been further cut . . . Havenwoods means a lot to me as a special re-naturalized green place in the northern part of Milwaukee County and as an educational resource for your neighborhood. Its unique multi-layered history also makes it important. I'm sending this extra contribution to further demonstrate my belief in the value of Havenwoods as an important State Forest and an environmental education resource in Milwaukee County. Thank you for what you do and for what Judy Klippel does. Sincerely, Cheri Briscoe"

With the loss of GPR (General Purpose Revenue) funding to the State Parks program, those of us who love our parks, forests, trails, and recreation areas need to do what we can through financial assistance, volunteering, or partnering to preserve them for future generations. Our

Friends of Havenwoods

Board of Directors

President: Judy Dollhausen

Vice President: Diane Warner

Secretary: Rachel Jones

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Board Members: Cathy Harrison, Dennis Kaehny, George Morrison, Lorraine Schlut, Gaylord Yost

thanks to Ms. Briscoe for stepping forward to make this donation to Havenwoods.

Revised committee structure. At the January meeting, the Board was asked to consider a restructuring of the current committees. Currently, the Bylaws lists six committees: Executive, Publicity, Programs, Membership, Projects, and Fund Raising. With feedback from last year's listening sessions and staff from a local business, the officers decided that an update of the committee structure would be a better tool in attracting and retaining new members to the Board. A proposed revised structure of three committees would consist of:

1. Public Relations & Marketing (membership, external relations, and publicity)
2. Programs & Projects (special events, building & grounds projects, and annual membership meetings)
3. Development (strategies for fundraising and community support).

The Board will consider this revised committee structure at the April meeting. Please contact any member if you would like to comment on these revised committees.

Havenwoods publicity. The DNR *Wisconsin Natural Resources* bimonthly magazine for February carries an extensive article on the history of the Forest (always a fascinating read), featuring the House of Correction and US Army years and the process of creating the state forest, along with pictures of participants enjoying last year's Harvest Fest. The article can be viewed at <www.dnr.wi.gov> by entering "Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine" in the search box or stop by Havenwoods to read it. The magazine is a great resource for all nature lovers, campers, hunters, and hikers. It is also a bargain at \$8.97 for a 1-year subscription.

Nature is a Gift, Use it Often
Judy Dollhausen (jadollh@gmail.com)

From the Superintendent

by Judy Klippel

A few months ago I reached a milestone in my career—30 years of working at Havenwoods. It never occurred to me while I was preparing for this field in college that I might someday work in the city. I thought of parks with nature centers as being mostly in rural areas. Most of my experiences exploring nature started when I was a young adult and took me to relatively wild spaces. I canoed remote rivers, backpacked in national parks, and camped in places where we hung our food in trees to keep the bears away. I loved it. My growing connection to nature was unlike anything I'd ever felt before.

When I came to Havenwoods, this place grabbed hold of me and never let go. Working here and getting to know its people helped me to think of nature in different ways and to shape new values for myself. Discoveries in nature here came to be just as energizing for me as those in wilder places. I loved the passion that I saw in the volunteers and staff working to restore this urban space. I was captivated by the kids on our field trips, who clearly hadn't had many experiences with nature, as they got excited about walking in tall grasses and by touching turtles and snakes.

The longer I've been here, the more strongly I've felt about the importance of what we do: connecting city people with nature in the city. Two of the factors that help guide my thinking on this are the remarkable benefits of being in nature and increasing urbanization.

A great deal of research in recent decades has shown that there are multiple physical and mental health benefits for people of all ages who spend time in nature. In particular, research on children finds that ongoing experiences in nature are important for their development physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.¹ Connecting with nature is just plain healthy for us, as well as being enjoyable.

According to the Population Reference Bureau, in 2008 half of the world's population lived in cities and towns; and by 2050, 70% of the population will.² In a world that is already heavily urbanized, we can begin to imagine some of the diverse challenges that more urbanization will pose. Even today, many city folks don't have easy access to nature or may not realize its benefits in improving their lives. Finding and accessing natural areas could become more difficult for many urban people in the future.

Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods* and leader of the "new nature movement", writes and lectures extensively about these challenges. Here is a sample:

Help Grow Tomatoes & Kids!

It's going to take \$6650 to run the Buds 'n Sprouts summer kids' garden program this year. We already have \$1800. Can you help us raise the remaining \$4,850?

Make your check out to FOH and send it to Havenwoods. Put "Buds 'n Sprouts" on the memo line. You can also stop by or call to contribute by credit card.



If human beings are to enjoy nature, they'll likely have to do it in urban areas. This transformation will produce one of two outcomes: either the end of meaningful daily experience in nature, or the beginning of a new kind of city – and a new view of our role in and our definition of nature.

Milwaukee and many other cities are addressing this "new kind of city" to varying degrees in their planning for their current and future residents.

About 40 years ago, some visionary people in Milwaukee and in the DNR looked at this much-used triangle of land and envisioned a different future for it. I often think about them and silently thank them for their belief in what this place could be and their efforts to make it happen. So many people over the years have benefited from their hard work.

Havenwoods and other urban nature centers are becoming increasingly important in people's lives as green spaces close to home where they can find serenity, health benefits, and connections to the Earth. We all need nature; whether or not we realize it. An essential part of our work at Havenwoods is to welcome people and help them discover what urban nature can be to them. Each of us—staff, volunteers, FOH members, and visitors—who have found meaning for ourselves in this place can help share it with others.

Sources:

¹ www.childrenandnature.org/research

² www.prb.org/Publications/Lesson-Plans/HumanPopulation/Urbanization

³ richardlouv.com/blog/seven-reasons-for-a-new-nature-movement/

Mystery Photos!

by Beth Mittermaier, Conservation Biologist

Mystery Photo #26 (the new mystery)

I think I have seen this species of butterfly flying around Havenwoods during almost every month of the year except December. What kind of butterfly is it and how does it manage to fly in all seasons? Check the next Horizons for more information!



Answer to Last Issue's Mystery

In the last issue, I said, "Just when you thought it was safe to go into the forest, you see this under your favorite evergreen tree! Should you be worried or should you be excited?" I can answer with enthusiasm that I would be excited!

At first glance, the object in the photo would appear to be scat (an animal's droppings). Take another look. It is an owl pellet. Lacking teeth, owls are forced to swallow most of their prey whole.



A whole mouse enters the owl's two-part stomach where the parts that can't be broken down are separated from the digestible parts. The fur, toenails, teeth, skull, and bones are compressed into a pellet, coated with mucus, and moved back up the esophagus. This pellet is regurgitated 10 to 16 hours after eating. The whole process rids the bird of the indigestible matter and helps keep the esophagus clean.

Studying pellets can help scientists determine birds' food preferences. I like to look for them because it is one of the few ways to know that owls live in an area.



The size of the pellet is related to the size of the owl. A great horned owl pellet is about 3" long. A screech owl pellet is only 1" long.

Since owls' feathers do such a good job of hiding them during the day—you will rarely find an owl by simply walking around. You can, of course, walk around at night and listen for their calls. I like Cornell University's website. Visit <www.allaboutbirds.org> and search for "owls" to hear the amazing variety of calls different owls make.



However, even if you are a creature of the day, you can still find owls. Besides searching for pellets, you can look for "whitewash" on nearby tree trunks. Since owls get rid of most of their solid waste in their pellets, their droppings are just a white liquid dripped, splatted, and sprayed below their roosting spots.

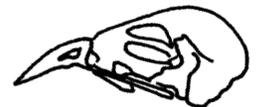
Another way to find owls is to listen to the neighborhood crows. If crows find an owl, they will cause a ruckus, harassing the owl until it leaves the area. If you hear crows "mobbing" an owl, walk toward the sound and watch for an owl searching for another hiding place.

But, I digress! Back to the pellets! If you are a frequent hiker at Havenwoods, you've probably noticed the lone spruce tree in the grassland to the south of the nature center. This tree is an excellent hideout for our owls. It's worth the walk to check the ground for pellets and the trunk for whitewash. After the snow melts is an excellent time to look. While you are out there hiking, look under the other large evergreen trees scattered around the forest.



Mouse and vole skulls feature a narrow "nose" and brown-tinted front teeth.

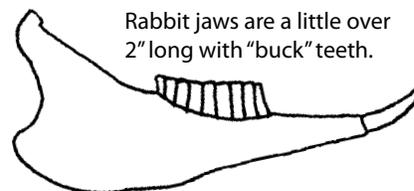
If you find a pellet, take a stick and gently pull it apart. You will find all kinds of small bones, but look for the skulls, jaws, and beaks (shown here about life size) because these will be the best clues.



If you find beaks, look for feathers and claws.



Shrews have tiny skulls and sharp teeth.



Rabbit jaws are a little over 2" long with "buck" teeth.



Moles have oddly-shaped heads and jaws.

Many species of birds produce pellets, including hawks, eagles, shorebirds, herons, grebes, gulls, shrikes—even small songbirds like warblers and swallows. But because most of these pellets are smaller and are not filled with fur and bones, they disintegrate quickly and are hard to find. Happy hunting!



Friends of Havenwoods, Inc.
6141 North Hopkins Street
Milwaukee, WI 53209-3565

Membership News

New Brochure. The Board has spent much time on a revision to the membership brochure. We hope to have a revised brochure available soon with colorful, eye-catching pictures and more information about the Friends organization, benefits of membership, and support of and volunteer opportunities with FOH.

Membership Dues. At the January meeting, the Board voted to amend the FOH Bylaws, Article 2, Membership. Notice the new categories and fees to the right. The Senior/Student category has been deleted. The Lifetime category has no year requirements and is available to members only. Annual membership fees will continue to be payable by November 1.

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Friends of Havenwoods

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Amount \$ _____

Individual Memberships

___ Single..... \$15

___ Family \$20

___ Lifetime \$400

Corporate Supporters

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Please send your membership check to:

Friends of Havenwoods, Inc.
6141 N. Hopkins Street
Milwaukee, WI 53209-3565