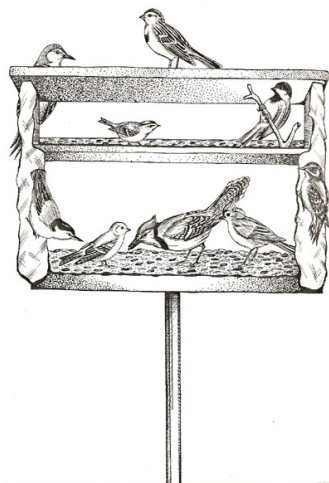




Friends of Thorn Creek Woods

# Thorn Creek News

Winter 2020



## Birding By Sight and Sound

Sunday, February 23 \* 1-3:30 p.m.  
Ages 7-12. \$10 fee.

Call or email to register by Friday, February 21  
Learn simple ways to identify and observe our most common birds,  
using binoculars, field guides, and bird call tapes.

The class includes a Beginner Bird Guide  
and other birding materials to take home.

Sponsored by the Thorn Creek Audubon Society.

*Tips on Identifying Birds \* Games \* Crafts \* Using Binoculars \* Field Guides*

## Make a Gourd Birdhouse

Sunday, March 1 \* 1-2 p.m.

\$10 per house; limit one per person.

All ages; children younger than age 6 must be accompanied by an adult.

Registration required by Friday, February 28

A fun family workshop to create natural style birdhouse from a gourd  
to be a welcoming nesting space for birds in your own backyard.

Sponsored by the Thorn Creek Audubon Society.



## Spring Clean Up and Trail Workday

Sunday, March 15 \* Noon- 4 p.m.

Shake the winter blahs and come help in our annual spring cleaning.

There will be indoor and outdoor work.

Help clean inside the nature center.

Or help maintain the trails or build and repair boardwalks  
throughout the preserve.

Or come weed and nurture our Prairie Sampler  
and butterfly garden.

Bring a lunch and gloves and dress for the weather.

Children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult

Registration required 2 days before the program day.

Community groups are welcome!



## The View From My Kitchen (or the Preamble to a Bird Watching Walk)

Seven in the morning on Saturday, and Alex and the girls are asleep. Snowy (our rodent), worn out from her night's activities, has curled up in a corner of her cage for a long day rest. Max and I have been up for over an hour. While he chased squirrels off the feeder stand (made four feet high for the juncos and other ground feeders), I folded laundry and did other quiet jobs. In a small house there's little one can do without waking everyone so Max is now draped on his favorite sofa cushion watching for squirrels or that cat from across the street while I have taken the latest Michael Crichton thriller to the kitchen to read.

Sometimes at this hour it is difficult to concentrate as from my chair I can see three feeders. Outside the window nearest the table hangs a round feeder with thistle seed. A red-breasted nuthatch has been flitting back and forth having breakfast. He clings to the opening on the far side so the most I can see is his muted underbelly and tucked-in tail.



At another feeder Alex made for finches and other birds that prefer vertical perches, three male finches, now in winter drab, are breakfasting. This usually means endless chatter or arguing which only worsens when the females arrive. Once this summer the party got out of hand when there were seven on the feeder. Number eight missed his stop and flew into the window. That didn't stop him. He caught hold of a window projection and hung there until there was a vacancy at the feeder.



Ooops! The squirrel is back on the four foot feeder. Above him on one of the two hanging tree feeders two chickadees have just been run off by a red bellied woodpecker. After a brief tree consultation the chickadees moved to the other feeder. Same menu, different restaurant.

In the back of the yard sparrows are congregating at the standing feeder. The menu here is not for gourmets; it's the standard "fast food" fare.

Neither hairy nor downy woodpeckers have arrived for their suet. The juncos haven't come for the corn arranged on log slices in the shelter of their corn stock teepee. But it's just after seven. The view from my kitchen window has just begun to take on activity. Wait until nine.



-Laurie Hamilton

Editor's note: This was reprinted from the January-February 1983, No. 36, edition of Thorn Creek Preservation Association Newsletter. Thorn Creek Preservation Association became our Friends of Thorn Creek Woods. Laurie and Alex Hamilton were long time Thorn Creek Friends. They are listed in our Seasons of Thorn Creek Volunteers as 1980's WHITE OAKS-These stalwart oak trees held firm in preserving the land, establishing the management commission and developing the nature center.



## Forest Bathing or *shinrin-yoku*

*Shinrin* in Japanese means “forest,” and *yoku* means “bath.” So *shinrin-yoku* means bathing in the forest atmosphere or taking in the forest through your senses. It’s not just a slow walk in the woods - it’s a more deliberative, meditative engagement of all the senses immersed in nature.

First, find a spot. Make sure you have left your phone and camera behind... Let your body be your guide. Listen to where it wants to take you. Follow your nose. And take your time. It doesn’t matter if you don’t get anywhere... You are savoring the sounds, smells and sights of nature and letting the forest in...through your ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands and feet. Listen to the birds singing and the breeze rustling in the leaves of the trees. Look at the different greens of the trees and the sunlight filtering through the branches. Smell the fragrance of the forest... Place your hands on the trunk of a tree. Dip your fingers or toes in a stream. Lie on the ground. Drink in the flavor of the forest and release your sense of joy and calm. *Dr. Qing Li, author of Forest Bathing: How Trees Can Help You Find Health and Happiness.*

You can do *shinrin-yoka* wherever there are trees. It can be guided or done solo. Hot, cold, rain, snow - anytime and anywhere there are trees.

Articles and books on forest bathing ascribe many health benefits to the practice: lower stress levels, improved working memory, lower blood pressure, boost to immune function and more. But the overall benefit of *bathing in the forest* is the awe experienced when viewing natural beauty, feeling part of the vastness of nature, and the peaceful mindfulness.



Although forest bathing is viewed as a new practice in Japan since the 1980’s and has been gaining popularity in the United States in the last 10 years, (there is a Forest Therapy Society that certifies guides), humans have long believed in the power of nature to heal the mind, body and spirit. The Norwegian word *friluftsliv* means open-air life. *Walseinsamkeit* is a German word describing the feeling of solitude when you’re alone in the woods. *Information from Tree Time article in National Geographic by Kelly Dinardo.*

When we walk together along easy trails under the forest canopy, I’ll invite you to touch and listen to the trees, to smell and taste what is on the wind, to notice what you are seeing for the first time. Slowly, time deepens and the stresses of the modern world fall away. Come, let’s take a walk and find in {the woods} what you really need...and perhaps what you have to give. *Phyllis Look, Hawai’i’s first and only certified forest therapy guide.*

For Friends of Thorn Creek Woods, forest bathing is not a new idea at all.

## Create a Raffle Basket

We're setting up a fabulous Spring Raffle at the Nature Center. We hope to have your donations by March 1 so the raffle can be set up in March with the items awarded at our Earth Day: Our Local Amphibians program Saturday April 18.

Baskets are particularly popular. Ideas for basket creations could be: amphibians, gardening, wildflowers, coffee, chocolate, kids, Italian/pasta/garlic, etc. Let your imagination go wild.

We are **not** looking for nature pictures this year since we have a number of donated framed pictures that we can raffle.



So, if you can create a raffle basket or contribute items for a raffle basket let April know (708-747-6320 or thorn\_creek@att.net). We have a few large baskets that you can use for your creations. As usual we'll set up two tables for raffle basket creating.

Also, if you can fix up our raffle table, that would be helpful. This means coming by once or twice (before raffle opens at the end of March, to organize stuff collected, put out signs etc. (Signs for the raffle ticket bins and the table are already created.) This would help April.

*If you have any baskets/items for the raffle you can bring them by Fridays or Sundays. We're closed on Saturdays. It would be best to call or email to make sure we're open and/or to arrange a day/time. Bring items before March 1.*

We always have wonderful raffles, thanks to you!

Local artist, long time nature center supporter and program artist Pat Moore is facing health challenges. A GoFundMe page has been set up to help Pat. Our thoughts are with Pat and we are looking forward to seeing her up and about soon.

## Bob Pierce

Bob Pierce passed away September 11, 2019.

Bob was a long time Village Manager for Park Forest who actively supported open space and in particular Thorn Creek Woods. His leadership and support in the Preserve's formative years was crucial.

In the Thorn Creek Woods preservation efforts, a Joint Planning & Management Committee was created in May 1973. Bob represented Park Forest on this committee along with representatives from Park Forest South (University Park), Forest Preserve District of Will County, Illinois Department of Conservation, Governors State University, and Thorn Creek Preservation Association (Friends of TCW).

In 1980 this committee transformed into the Thorn Creek Management Commission which, to this day, continues to manage the Woods as a whole - a single unified dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve providing habitat for native plants, animals and their communities.

Bob served on the Commission and continued to effectively provide Park Forest support and cooperation in acquiring and developing the nature center and managing the preserve. I served on the Commission with Bob for a few years. He was a joy to deal with-efficient, sensible, caring and effective. He was a very nice person.

After his retirement Bob and his wife Delores continued supporting the preserve as members of Friends.

We offer his family our condolences.

-Judy Dolan Mendelson

## Be an Open Hours Volunteer

Come one Friday a month to keep the nature center open to the public from noon to 4 p.m.

- Greet visitors and answer the phone and... other helpful things such as....
- Fold and collate and stuff mailings
- Deliver flyers
- Set up for programs
- Update our mailing lists
- Clean the nature center- sweeping, mopping, vacuuming, dusting.



*Sign up now to give one day a month as an Open Hours Volunteer.*

*-We particularly need volunteers for the first and fourth Fridays-*

*We provide training, snacks and a variety of fun tasks.*

## Nature Center Needs Things and Helpers of All Kinds



- ◇ *Helpers for Nature Center Open Hours*
- ◇ *Trail workers-scouts, groups, individuals*  
Trail work of all kinds from monitoring trails to clipping, hauling, digging water bars, repairing benches and bridges and boardwalks
- ◇ *Assist at programs and hikes*
- ◇ *Assist with clerical tasks*

- △ Batteries—C and A's
- △ Hand clippers, loppers & hoes
- △ Large plastic storage boxes 1.5' x 3' w/lids
- △ Middle sized plastic boxes with lids
- △ Shoe box size boxes with lids
- △ Night scopes
- △ Cases of bottled water
- △ Birdseed (mix or black sunflower seed—no corn)
- △ Suet cakes
- △ 1" x 2 5/8" address labels – ink jet or lase
- △ 6" x 9" mailing envelops



Call or email the Nature Center 708-747-6320, thorn\_creek@att.net.

*Sign up today to help!*

## Winter Events at Thorn Creek Woods

247 Monee Rd  
Park Forest  
708-747-6320



Thorn\_creek@att.net  
Nature Center open Friday and Sunday, noon to 4 pm

Closed:  
April 12—Easter

Birding by Sight & Sound for Kids	Sunday Feb 23 1-3:30 pm Ages 7-12. \$10
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Wednesday Walkers starting March 4	Wednesdays 9-10:30 a.m. Ages 13-adult
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Make a Gourd Birdhouse	Sunday March 1 1-2 pm \$10/birdhouse
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"Chili" Evening Hike Ages 10-adult \$5/person	Monday March 9 6-8 pm
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Spring Clean Up & Trail Workday	Sunday March 15 Noon-4pm
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Woodcock Watch	Sat, March 28 Rain date: Sat. April 4 6:45-8 pm
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March Into Spring Hike Free! All ages.	Sunday April 5 1-3 p.m.
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Earth Day at Thorn Creek: Our Local Amphibians	Saturday April 18 1-4 p.m. Free! All ages.
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Newsletter editor:  
Judy Dolan Mendelson  
Friends: P.O. Box 32,  
Richton Park, IL 60471,  
dolanmendel@aol.com

Friends of Thorn Creek Woods  
Box 32  
Richton Park, IL 60471

Please clip commemorative stamps  
& bring to Nature Center for  
Audubon Stamps  
for Wildlife Habitats



Want to receive  
*Thorn Creek News*  
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then email editor  
Judy Dolan  
Mendelson at  
dolanmendel@aol.com

**Renew Now!**

## Be a FRIEND OF THORN CREEK WOODS

Membership....\$20 Organization & Business.....\$50 Life Membership....\$200  
New Member \_\_\_\_ Renewing Member \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I'd like to help as a volunteer at Thorn Creek Nature Center, please call me.

\_\_\_\_ I am donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Friends **Capital Fund** for  
improvements in the Nature Center building & in the Preserve.

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I am donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the **Jim Marzuki Memorial Fund** to  
make a difference in Thorn Creek public programming.

\_\_\_\_ I am donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to **Friends** general purposes.



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF THORN CREEK WOODS, Box 32, Richton Park, IL 60471

Annual Renewal Date is May 1st