

Anderson Park News

Irving & John Anderson County Park – 27201 Furman St. NE, North Branch

June 2012, Volume 14

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Kingsbury

First Prescribed Burn in May



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Barry Wendorf, Isanti County Parks Director and volunteer Tom Anderson monitor the first prescribed burn at the park. Seventeen acres were burned three different areas. Controlled burns are used in prairie restoration to remove non-native plants, which then allows prairie plants more nutrients and room to grow. Prairie plants can survive fires since they have deep roots. Prescribed burns are a crucial component in prairie restoration.

~~~~~ 2012 Bird Walk Results ~~~~~

An unusually early spring resulted in the identification of 39 species and several new birds for the Anderson Park bird list. This Indigo Bunting delighted bird walk participants by posing for a long time so everyone could see his iridescent beauty.



Several unusual Lark Sparrows were sighted near the park roadway. Some had nest-building materials in their beaks indicating they were going to raise young nearby.



This recently completed viewing platform, located along the long boardwalk on Horse Leg Lake, not only provides a great view of the lake and surrounding wetlands, but also serves as an excellent place to watch birds.



During the Bird Walk, Yellow Warblers were sighted on the park's boardwalks and from the new viewing platform. They nest in the wetlands. If one stands quietly on the platform for about 10 minutes, warblers will begin to dart through the tops of the Alder shrubs. Catbirds, Yellow Throats (warblers), Red-winged Blackbirds, Canada Geese and Trumpeter Swans are also commonly seen there.



Park Projects to Attract New Birds

The Friends of Anderson Park and the Isanti County Parks Department have entered into partnerships with the Minnesota Audubon Society and the Wild River Audubon Chapter to try to attract Chimney Swifts and Purple Martins to the park. These highly desirable species consume thousands of insects, especially mosquitoes! Sadly, their numbers are declining and both have become dependent on human-supplied nesting cavities. So the partners have erected a Martin house and a Chimney Swift tower by the park's picnic shelter.

Chimney Swifts

The Chimney Swift is a small, agile, energetic bird that looks like a flying cigar with long slender curved wings. It is a sooty grey-brown and has a short tail. Chimney Swifts gather in huge migration flocks in the fall.

Swifts have small feet and cannot perch. Consequently, they feed, drink and bathe in flight. They cling to vertical surfaces, like chimneys, and use their tails for balance and stability, much like woodpeckers. Hundreds of Swifts may roost together in a tower like this one.



Chimney Swift Tower

Purple Martins



According to the Purple Martin Conservation Association, it can be a quite a challenge to establish a Martin colony. It may take a few years for Martins to seek out the park's new state-of-the-art Martin house.

It will be kept open until late August, as fledglings will be searching for next year's breeding sites in late summer. In the meantime, European Starlings, highly undesirable, non-native birds, are trying to nest in the Martin house. Starlings destroy Martin eggs and will injure or kill both adult Martins and nestlings. So park staff and several volunteers will be discouraging the Starlings by continually destroying their nests.

Marlene Yenish an Extraordinary Friend of Anderson Park

Summer is here and the rain gardens around Anderson Park's picnic shelter are blooming thanks to Marlene Yenish. Marlene is responsible for designing the garden's layout, as well as acquiring, and even growing some of the grasses and flowers. The design and implementation of these gardens is, however, only one example of her many contributions to the development of Anderson Park.

Marlene has taken it upon herself to reward the hard-working volunteers at the park's work days with hot coffee and her decadently delicious cookies and home-made bars.

At park events, one can find Marlene wandering with her camera, talking and joking with people as she captures their work and the park's development with her photos. Her gardening, culinary, and photography expertise, coupled with her enjoyment of nature and community, hallmarks Marlene as an extraordinary friend of Anderson Park.

Marlene's warmth, generosity and multiple interests enrich the park and its volunteers. Thanks Marlene, Friend of Anderson Park Extraordinaire, for giving so generously of your talents and heart.

Save This Date!

**National Public Lands
Day Celebration at
Anderson Park**

September 15, 2012

9:00 – 2:00

Many Hands Make Light Work

On Saturday, May 5th members of the Friends of Anderson Park, local Boy Scout Troop #417 from Cambridge, the Cambridge Lions and interested residents helped in the process of restoring Anderson Park to its native state by planting several hundred trees and shrubs.

Under the direction of Isanti County Parks Director, Barry Wendorf, hundreds of native trees and shrubs were planted along the northern boundary of the park where they will also act as a wind barrier for the cross-country ski trail.

Special thanks go to the Cambridge Lions and Eric Gustafson of Branch Nursery for donating trees and the use of Branch Nursery's tree planter which sped up the process.

After all the saplings were in place, volunteers enjoyed a sense of accomplishment and delicious treats provided by Marlene Yenish.

Irving & John Anderson
County Park

27201 Furman St NE,
North Branch



Our mission is to preserve the natural beauty and primitive nature of Anderson Park and to assist Isanti County with its planning, development, and maintenance of facilities.

We're on the Web!

<http://andersonparkfriends-isanti.org>

Become a Friend of Anderson Park

All donations are tax deductible and 100% of the donations will go toward Anderson Park programs and development

- Individual Friend - \$25 /year
- Family Friend - \$50/year
- Business Friend - \$50/year
- Add \$10 and be a member of MN Parks & Trails

Make check payable to: Parks and Trails Council of MN

(Write "Anderson Park" in the memo line)

Mail to: Friends of Anderson Park

C/o Diana Horrigan

27440 Vassar St. NE

Stacy, MN 55079

The park is located in the southeast corner of Isanti County in Minnesota. It lies on both sides of County Road 18, a quarter mile north of County Road 9 and two miles south of County Road 5.

andersonparkfriends@frontiernet.net

Special Thanks to the Following Friends of Anderson Park

- **Tom Anderson** and **Steve Kingsbury** for helping with the prescribed burn;
 - **Lee Bakewell** for building, donating and helping erect the Purple Martin house;
 - **Kathy Bowlin** for regularly cleaning up the ditches by the park;
 - **Boy Scout Troop #417** for helping plant native trees and shrubs;
 - **Cambridge Lions** for donating native trees and helping to plant them;
 - **Eric Gustafson, Branch Nursery**, for donating trees and the use of his tree planter;
 - **Steve Kingsbury** for helping erect and for monitoring the Purple Martin house, and
 - **Don Yenish** for maintaining and updating the Friends website.
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