



PAW PRINTS

The John and Mary Dahlem Environmental Education Center
A Program of The Dahlem Conservancy

January 2009

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Dahlem Center Hours

Tues - Fri. 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Monday Closed

The trails and grounds are open from dawn to dusk every day. The entrance gate is opened at 6:30 a.m. and locked at 9:00 p.m.

Contact

Phone: 517 - 782 - 3453

Fax: 517 - 782 - 3441

Website: www.dahlemcenter.org

Address: 7117 South Jackson Rd.

Jackson, MI 49201

Holiday Bazaar 2008: A Great Success



On December 5th and 6th, Dahlem held its annual Holiday Bazaar. Every year both classrooms and the Nutshell Gift shop are decorated and filled with various holiday items donated from caring individuals throughout the community. Dahlem uses the money raised through the event to sponsor educational programs.

Among the wide array of items available were wreaths, baked goods, bird seed, bird feeders, clothing, paintings, drawings and other wildlife-based merchandise.

This year's Bazaar, like every previous one, was very successful. Hundreds of individuals came and supported Dahlem, while at the same time completing needed holiday shopping. As a result, Dahlem raised nearly \$6,000.

Dahlem would like to thank everyone that came out and generously supported the Conservancy. In addition, a big thank you to all who contributed to the sale with donated merchandise and/or help setting-up for the event.

Mission Statement: The mission of The Dahlem Conservancy is to provide environmental education and land conservancy services to the residents of South Central Michigan.

Paw Prints is published for members of The Dahlem Conservancy.

DAHLEM CONSERVANCY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: John McLaughlin
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Education Director: Kimberly May
Office Coordinator: Denise Bigham
Receptionist: Linda Danley
Naturalist: Carrie Benham
Maintenance: Mark Snedeker
Weekend Clerk: Andrea Fitzgerald
People for Wildlife Coordinator: Gary Stegrist
Development Coordinator: Rebecca Mehall
Communications Assistant: Cody Porter

Are You A Dahlem Member?

If not, become a member today and you will receive:

- Free admission to most public programs
- Advanced registration and reduced rates for Day Camps and Goblin Walks
- 10% discount on purchases in the Nutshell Gift Shop
- Paw Prints monthly newsletter of events and information
- Access to trails for cross-country skiing.

Membership Fees:

Individual Membership \$24
 Family Membership \$36
 Senior Membership \$12

Memberships also make great gifts for friends and family!!

Help us protect the outdoors for future generations!

Message from the Executive Director...

Thanks for making 2008 a wonderful year for The Dahlem Conservancy!! The whole Board and staff would like me to thank you, our membership, and the entire community for our successes this year. You can see by our "Year in Review" page that much has been accomplished and that we have much to be thankful for – but the key is you! Member, volunteer, donor, Friend, participant, ambassador, supporter; whatever role you see yourself, your support is much appreciated.

Membership is back up to levels we haven't seen since the 1990's. Day camp attendance is growing by nearly 50% each year and we'll be adding a 3rd week this summer. Public visitation is up for a 3rd year in a row and we're planning new exhibit and trail improvements. All of this contributes to a larger, stronger organization and one that can make a bigger impact in our community.

Accomplishments like this will take a commitment from our community. We are calling on you to get involved in the ways most important to you. We are currently seeking applicants for our Board and the Board Committees; please let us know if you are interested. We are currently seeking trail leaders to become trained in working with the school groups visiting the Dahlem Center. We have a variety of "behind the scenes" special projects that we would like to undertake this year. Our Friends of Dahlem (a separate supporting organization) would love some new members and

light-duty workers.

We know many of our members may not be able to make a commitment of time right now, and so we ask that you consider other ways to help support. The Nutshell gift shop is open year round and has so many items that would be perfect for that hard-to-buy-for-person. While shopping at the Nutshell, you are really doing double duty for Dahlem. Your purchases contribute locally towards our education programs and you are also passing on the gift of the outdoors when you select a bird feeder, reptile identification book, or kid's butterfly net!

Possibly one of the most meaningful things you can do, is simply to introduce someone new to the Dahlem Center. So often we hear "I haven't been out there since my kids were little," or "I've been driving by for 10 years and have never stopped in." Pick one of the great weekend programs that are lined up in these next few months and invite your neighbor, mom, brother and family, or friend from church to come along!

You know we have a great thing going here, or else you wouldn't be receiving this Paw Prints. I thank you for all your support in 2008 and ask for it again in 2009. Help us make this the year that Dahlem really explodes in the community!

Brad Whaley
 Executive Director

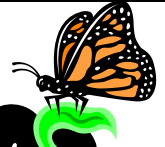


Cross Country Skiing at Dahlem





This winter promises to be a snowy one! Come out and make the most of the snow at Dahlem! Cross country skiing is free to all Dahlem members. With over 5 miles of scenic winter trails, its hard to imagine anywhere better in Jackson to enjoy the breathtaking beauty of winter in Michigan. Not a member? Call 517-782-3453 or stop by to join the Dahlem family!



2008 at Dahlem

- A Year in Review



Dahlem held its first annual "Birds, Blooms and Butterflies" festival. Pictured is a juvenile Bald Eagle courtesy of the Leslie Science Center.



Over 70 volunteers participated in Dahlem's annual "Work-bee". Many thanks to everyone and all that was accomplished.



"The Monarch Butterfly Tagging Project" reared and tagged 68 Monarch Butterflies this summer.



The "Donald E. Dutcher classroom" was constructed thanks to a generous donation from Don Dutcher.



Hundreds participated in the annual Goblin Walks despite inclement weather.



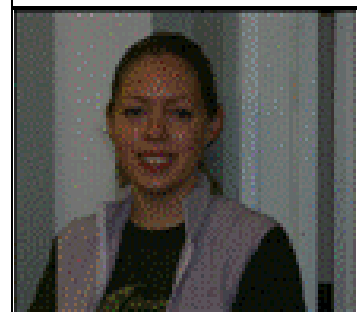
182 campers joined us in July for Dahlem's "Outdoor Adventure Camp".



On November 12th, nearly 300 guests gathered to hear about the Dahlem Conservancy mission and vision, raising a record-breaking amount.



"Bring Back the Bluebirds" project at Dahlem fledged 35 Bluebirds, 16 Tree Swallows, and 68 House Wrens.



Kimberly May was hired as Dahlem's Education Director.

Free to
Big Brothers
Big Sisters
With ID

January 2009 Weekend Programs:

Free to
Big Brothers
Big Sisters
With ID



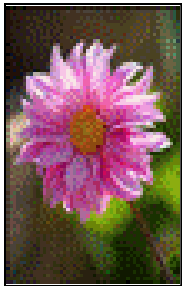
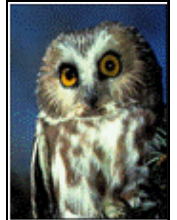
Family Wildlife Adventure.....

Hunters of the Night 3:00 p.m. Sunday January 4: Come join The Howell Nature Center as they teach us about Michigan owls with live birds. Owl pellets will be provided to each family to take home and examine. Afterwards, a guided pellet dissection will be conducted, as well as an introduction of several local owl recordings. An Owl Prowl will be held at 5:30 p.m. after the dissection*. Advanced registration for the prowl is required, as only 24 spots are available. First come, first serve!

**Please note the change in time. This change will increase our chances of hearing owls.*

Family Wildlife Adventure.....

Owl Prowls 5:30 p.m. Monday January 5 - Wednesday January 7: Due to the overwhelming turnout of last year's Owl Prowl, additional hikes will be held the following Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, starting at 5:30 p.m. There is a limit of twelve people per hike, as traveling with a smaller group will increase the chance of hearing owls, so reserve a spot in advance, because these are sure to fill! Bring a flashlight, warm coat, hat and gloves.



Art in Nature Series

Nature Photography Workshop: 2:00 p.m. Saturday, January 17

Want to advance your photography skills and capture nature with success? Join Master Photographer, Bob Guiliani, for an introductory workshop on close-up nature photography. Photographers of all levels are invited to learn the tips, techniques, and equipment used by professionals. Bob and his wife Linda are owners of Guys and Dolls Photography portrait studio in Clare, MI and have produced numerous instructional photography presentations. After the workshop you're invited to hear the details on **Dahlem's Nature Photography Contest-"Capture Dahlem's Seasonal Essence"**.

Outdoor Travel Adventure.....

Isle Royale: 2:00 p.m. Sunday, January 18

Venture into the primitive wilderness of Michigan's national park, Isle Royale. Master Photographer, Bob Guiliani will share his stunning photographic journey across Lake Superior's largest island and introduce you to its bountiful rare and beautiful wildflowers and wildlife.



Outdoor Travel Adventure.....

Birding the Soo: 2:00 p.m. Saturday, January 24

Expert birder, Lathe Claflin, and People for Wildlife Coordinator, Gary Siegrist, are at it again as they explain why anyone would go to Sault Sainte Marie in February for a birding vacation. Join Gary and Lathe as they teach you about the best birding spots and what high Arctic birds can be found in the U.P. of Michigan, including owls, hawks, finches, and sparrows.

Family Wildlife Adventure.....

Insects in Winter: 2:00 p.m. Sunday, January 25

Have you ever seen dragonflies in January? Believe it or not, the six-legged have their own set of winter survival strategies that are unlike any other animal! Come explore how many insects secretly spend the bleak days of winter. This excellent one hour program for *all* ages will feature up-close encounters with live insects and specimens. Presented by Jim McGrath from Wildlife Discovery.



*** Please check our website for the most current and up to date Weekend Program schedule. www.dahlemcenter.org**

All programs presented at the Dahlem Center at
7117 S. Jackson Rd.

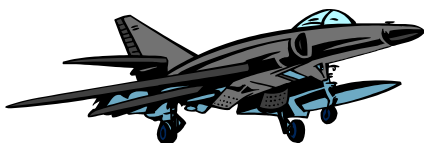
Advance Registration is required.

To Register Call 517-782-3453
Admission is \$3.00 per person

Dahlem Conservancy Members Admitted Free

*The Dahlem Conservancy is proud to announce that
These Programs are Sponsored By a Generous Grant From*





AIR FORCE VOLUNTEERS AT DAHLEM

On Friday, December 12th, The Dahlem Educational Center received a generous gift in kind from the 339th Air Force Recruiting Squadron.

Despite the frigid temperatures and chilly winds, MSgt Michael McMillen, MSgt Michael Hore, MSgt Chris McDaniel, SSgt Ryan Ballard, SrA James Rogers and Ms. Carol Forslund all came out and put in extremely appreciated labor to help Dahlem's population of birds.

After installing a new feeding station near the gathering patio, the group broke off into two teams to venture out onto the trails and install a new Flicker nest box, three Screech Owl nest boxes, Wren houses, and various nest boxes that could house an assortment of birds including Black-Capped Chickadees



and Tufted Titmice.

The work at Dahlem is not the first act of community service by the team, as they quarterly donate their time and efforts to various organizations throughout southern Michigan. The most recent projects conducted by the squad

include a habitat construction, an Adopt-A-Highway project, and a Gospel mission.

Perhaps even more impressive than the squad's history of volunteer work, is the reason that they continue to undertake such projects.

"We are always looking for ways to help out people in the area, just for the simple fact that we enjoy doing it," said Master Sergeant Michael McMillen.

The team's contribution to Dahlem will be an exciting one to watch this year. Everyone at Dahlem sends a sincere and grateful thank-you to the team for all their hard work and generosity.

Naturalist Corner

Migration: Not just for the birds

It is painstakingly clear to birders that the time has long come and gone for many of our feathered friends to leave our area once again, in the innate process of fall migration. Every year, during both spring and fall, thousands of wildlife enthusiasts from around the world gather in a collective awe at the breathtaking aesthetics bird migration provides. Any one person, with even the slightest curiosity regarding the world around him, easily obtains cherished entertainment at the aerial display of a large, soaring group of Sandhill Cranes in the skies above. For this reason in particular, it is easy to see why we both crown these avian navigators "Kings of Migration", and tend to ignore the vast numbers of other species that participate in the event as well.

Wilbebest Migration



Though it is perhaps the easiest to observe and appreciate for all it's visual pleasure, avian migration is merely one of many forms of seasonal migration among animals. Other animals that migrate include certain types of whales, salmon, butterflies, salamanders, sea turtles, Dall sheep, caribou, numerous insect species, and even humans at one point in our history,

Despite the variety among the many species in seasonal migration, the reason for each species is virtually homologous. Nearly all of the species listed above (and those not listed) are active members of migration for one or more of three main reasons. Reproduction, food availability, and the ability to survive temperature change. One aspect that is quite varied however, is how certain animals navigate during migration. Many animals such as birds, salamanders, salmon, and even mole rats are able to use the earth's magnetic fields to orientate themselves during migration. This is most likely due to a collection of specialized nerve cells in the brains of such animals. Other means of navigation include cognitive mapping, smell, using the sun and stars, and many scientists believe genetics play a key role in many species.

"Everybody's Happy When the Sun Shines"

A seemingly familiar, yet indistinguishable tune of fluttering notes and keys slowly eeks its way into existence through my ears.

"What in the world could that possibly be?" I am barely able to, yet groggily ponder in the depths of my more than half-sleeping mind. However, my state of absolute content and comfort proves to be too much to warrant any further investigation, and I resume my warm, cozy position beneath my blankets.

The noise continues. Deciding that one could not possibly carry out a decent period of sleep given such a disturbance, I decide to quickly discover and destroy the blasphemous ringing. A quick and sloppy rummaging of my left hand across my nearby coffee table unveils a possible suspect. Hastily, I bring the culprit to my attention to execute my plan. To my dismay however, it is an inescapable truth. The devastating noise, whose existence I had been desperate to deny, was none other than my alarm clock, which now read 12:30, 2 hours later than my scheduled wake-up.

Typically, given such circumstances, I would find myself in a state of well-organized and productive panic, in an attempt to compensate for my laziness. However, despite my routine behavior and a justified reason for alarm (at this point I am extremely late for a day of very important errands), I decide it's too late to accomplish anything worthwhile (despite knowing otherwise), and again retire to my dreams.

I would find little reason to worry had this been either a once or twice occurring event, or my usual manner in approaching things, however, neither are so. As of late, I have found myself in a constant state of low energy and lethargy. Accompanying this have been strange feelings of hopelessness and uncertainty. Luckily for me

(depending on your view of the situation), I am nearly certain of the cause. It has been a reoccurring theme throughout essentially my entire life, that with snow and gray skies comes the blues.

Though I am no doctor, nor possess any desire to become one, I have self-diagnosed myself years ago. After hearing my grandfather speak of a similar condition he too experienced, I concluded years ago as a child, that I must have some form of Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Once put into context with my symptoms, S.A.D. has done a fantastic job of explaining them. To further justify my diagnosis, it would make sense to point to the state of pure bliss I find myself in during spring. Contrast these feelings with those in winter, and you have a fair analogy of a bipolar patient, though perhaps not as severe.

As my curiosity has continued to expand throughout my life however, I am now in a quest to understand more. Not just the obvious physiological causes and effects of such a condition, but what about its origins? How and why did such a condition ever occur? After doing a bit of research and thinking, a possible explanation seems apparent.

Studies show that S.A.D. is most prevalent in Nordic countries, where there are long periods of winter and low light. It has also come to my attention that as I engage in activities outside during periods of sunlight, I tend to feel at least slightly better. It is also worth noting that the most common and effective form of treatment for S.A.D. is light therapy.

Scientists have found that darkness and dim light stimulate production of melatonin, a hormone that aids in circadian rhythms, most notably sleep.

After doing a bit of thinking in

terms of evolutionary history among our species, I am going to go out on a limb and propose a few ideas. Due to the obvious effect light has on the condition, and not only our, but all life's dependence on the sun, it seems logical this condition came about in response to the lack of sunlight we experience during winter. It would then seem obvious that due to our ancestor's immediate and dire need for sunlight, as both a food provider and source of warmth, food supply became scarce during such times, and became much harder to obtain. In response to this scarcity, would it be crazy to think that our ancestors' bodies, like most all other animals, became slightly more dormant during the winter months to lower the energy needed to survive? Given our ancestor's drastically greater dependence on sunlight when compared to our own (due to advances in technology, oh and grocery stores), I would also propose that the condition experienced by them was far more severe than our own. It would make sense to conclude that given less-advanced brains, with only survival in mind, that our ancestors became much more lethargic than I or anyone else could ever imagine. However, as technology advances, and our immediate dependence on the sun is becoming less and less with every day, I will declare that S.A.D. is becoming less severe and widespread with time.

Despite the trouble and sometimes inconvenience that S.A.D. provides, in a twisted way, I almost appreciate the condition. To me, it is nothing more than an innate window to my species' past, through which, a better understanding of my own identity is obtained.

Cody Porter
Communications Assistant

Members Corner

(Through 12/16/08)

We Welcome the Following New Members

James & Bernadette Dewland
 Dan & Sherry Dodge
 Linda Goings
 Lois Heady
 Nolan Hughey
 Kathy Jordan-Sedgeman
 Cathy Julian
 Douglas & Marlene Laing
 Joseph & M. Karen Mclary
 K.V. Rao
 Edward Scott
 Nancy Walker

Thanks to the Following for Renewing Their Memberships

Anita Allen
 Dale & Nancy Boyers
 Richard & Pat Byler
 Dr. Ann Clark

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Colcun
 Harold & Ruth Crites
 Jean Davis
 Doris Defoe
 Richard Dixon
 John & Joan Dobben
 Jim & Carolyn Drake
 Robert Eder
 Dennis Hackett
 Frank Jamieson
 Colleen Kirtland
 Gary & Jann Krupa
 John & Carol Lent
 Karen Marsack
 Ron & Sue Niedzielski
 Rebecca Jo Petersen
 Douglas & Thressa Race
 Cheryl Roe
 Mark Schissler Sr.
 Sherman & Norma Smith
 Mary Steusloff
 Mike & Mary Tylutk
 Marilynn Waite
 Mary & Don White
 Bob & Marie Whiting
 Mary Williams
 Ruth Wing

Thank You to the Following For Their Generous Donations:

(11/27/08 - 12/18/08)

Barbara T. Anderson
 Karen Barnes
 William & Kathi Beiswenger
 Myrna Bertlet
 Dave Betz
 Bill & Vi Sigmund Foundation
 Laurence & Valerie Bullen
 Diana Chalfant
 Shirley Chu
 Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Colcun
 Comerica Cash & Care Program
 Harold & Ruth Crites
 Douglas & Karen Davey
 Doris Defore
 Charles & Cheryl Degroote
 Jim & Carolyn Drake
 Thomas & Jeanne Draper
 David & Susan Emmons
 Reginald Fennel
 Raymond Fix
 Travis & Georgia Fojtasek
 Barbara Franklin
 Cyril Frolich
 Jim & Joyce Grace
 Robert Grover
 Robert & Allie Mae Henning
 George & Shirley Hoaglin
 Michael Klaeren
 David Knight
 Phyllis Kostich
 Gary & Jann Krupa
 Marnie Krzyzaniak
 Jeff Kurfess
 Sheldon & Jean Laughlin
 John & Carol Lent
 Constance & Harold Bischoff
 Lucia
 Karen Marsack

Joe & Karen McAlary
 David Mitchell
 Marjorie Muhich
 Ronald & Susan Niedzielski
 Linda Porter
 Kon & Chris Prokos
 R. Douglas & Thressa Race
 William & Linda Rehor
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 The Robert & Rose Glick
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 Thelma Thorson
 Vera Tuttle
 Kenneth & Julie Walz
 Mary & Don White
 John & Phyllis Woodruff
 Jimmie Wright

For Endowment
 American 1 Federal Credit Union

For Educational Displays
 Jackson Women's Garden
 Association

In Memory of Dr. William Wilson
 Edwina, David & Glen Divins

In Memory of Mabel Wooten
 Edwina, David & Glen Divins

...Donations Continued

In Memory of Margaret Dahlem
 Frank Jamieson

Taxidermy - Red Fox
 Margaret Strawbridge

In Memory of Rozlin Shea Kennedy
 Kim & Valeria Kennedy

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Tony Hurst and Todd Emmons for their work on and coordination of the parking lot resurfacing.
- Jim Hendrickson and Hendrickson Trucking Company for donation of the crushed stone and gravel.
- Jerry Bailey and Bailey Sand & Gravel for donating the use of a front end loader and backhoe.
- Zack & Max Rappleye for donation of the pumpkins used for the Goblin Walks. Zack and Max grew the pumpkins on the Willard Rappleye Farm, owned by their grandfather.

New Items at the Nutshell!




Pictured left to right are bags of Shade-Grown Coffee and Beanpod's Soy Bean candles. Shade-Grown Coffee is grown exclusively in forests as opposed to farmed-fields, preserving the habitat for migratory songbirds and other wildlife. Soybean candles are earth-friendly and clean-burning.

Nature's New Year Resolutions

Looking to make some changes this year? Having trouble setting goals you would like to accomplish? Listed are just a few of the many ways in which you can make a difference this year for your local environment. Try a few out. You'll be amazed at how much these small steps can greatly benefit the world around you.



• **Plant with Natives** - Introducing and using Native plants and flowers in your garden is possibly one of the most effective ways of helping your local environment. Native plants provide food for local insects, which in turn supplies birds and other animals with an abundant food source. This way, you provide a natural habitat and plentiful food source for all sorts of local animals, which encourages bio-diversity. Natives are also extremely low-maintenance, as they are specifically adapted to the area.



• **Install Bird and/or Bat Boxes** - Installing bird and bat boxes can benefit your home, mainly your yard, in many ways. In addition to providing an excellent opportunity to observe these animals up-close and personal, both will provide your yard with a natural insect-repellent team, which can help control the population of insects at your native garden.



• **Recycle** - Perhaps the most obvious, yet undeniably effective way to help not only your local environment, but the world, is by recycling. The statistics that support recycling are truly astounding, and too numerous to list. If you find yourself curious however, check out some of the numbers at <http://www.oberlin.edu/recycle/facts.html>.



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