



# ILLINOIS

## STATE NEWSLETTER



### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

**Tom Tomlinson**

Illinois State Chairman

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**A**s spring starts to unfold for those of us in northwestern Illinois, I am reminded that everything starts anew. That is true of our Ducks Unlimited family in Illinois, depending on how you view it, we are either starting anew or finishing up with the old. Ducks Unlimited is on a fiscal year that ends the end of June, but much other work is calendar year oriented. So, that presents us with several interesting potentials. First, a look outside both windows here in Illinois:

#### DESCRIPTION

Event Income  
Members  
Sponsors  
Volunteers

#### FISCAL 2-18

Up 1.8%  
Up 4%  
Up 3.9%  
Down 15.5%

#### CALENDAR 12-17

Up 4.3%  
Flat—no change  
Up 0.8%  
Down 15.6%

As you can see, we are doing pretty well in all categories except Volunteers. As I indicated in my acceptance speech at the State Convention, Illinois should have at least double the number of volunteers that we currently have! It is disturbing to see our numbers this far down. What can be done about it? It really is up to each of our volunteers to increase those numbers—bring a friend, get more friends involved! Be proactive in looking to inspire others by telling the Ducks Unlimited story about conservation and acres conserved. Enthrall potential prospects with the fun you have at Ducks Unlimited events and the fact the friends you make are priceless.

Without volunteers, our success will slowly die. The same leaders can't continue to lead. Many of our leaders are getting older and we need new blood, new young volunteers. Can't you help mentor some new members and get them excited about the DU story and the DU effort? We need everyone involved here; we need everyone to help us gain a lot more volunteers!

Our Youth and Education Chair, Vicki Mandurano, with the help of Dennis Wooten, our past State Chair, have done some amazing youth and education work in the Joliet High School and neighboring marsh. Please follow Vicki's write-up and see what the youth of today can accomplish with some meaningful leadership and education!

We need more leaders; we need more volunteers; we need more committee members. If you are at all interested, please let me know. Thanks much!



## YOUTH & EDUCATION UPDATE

**Vicki Mandurano**

State Youth & Education Chairman

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Things are steaming up for Spring with a lot of activity! Remember last fall in one of the newsletters, I mentioned ILDU is going to school? Well, we did it!



We partnered up with Chicagoland Speedway to create a class curriculum for two classes – Woods and Environmental courses. The Woods class crafted Wood Duck Nesting boxes and the Environmental class installed them at the Des Plaines Conservation Area. The Environmental class will maintain the nesting boxes for years to come. The students enjoyed being out in nature despite the windy cooler day. We had three locations near ponds and installed two nesting boxes at each location so we divided up the students into three groups.

They installed the boxes and put in the cedar shavings with our guidance. We used PVC piping for predator guards. It was impressive to have them so engaged by asking questions and pitching in. Of course, seeing other wildlife made it more

interesting. After installing the boxes – they were ready for their sandwiches and chips.

Every one of the students thanked Illinois Ducks Unlimited volunteers for an educational trip. Personally, I think they understand the impact they can have on our environment and a better understanding of conservation. Most of the students did not know what the Des Plaines Conservation Area was about or that it was there – they will visit more often now as they have invested in this project. The teacher, Ms. Bloom, mentioned the class is already talking about setting up a blog so students can track the progress of the nesting boxes, etc. It would be great to involve art or media class too for further participation.



Many thanks to **Dennis Wooten, Wally Klopp, Bill Sarafin, James Roberts** and **Dan Rosselli** for making this a fun experience and assistance in prior preparation to get posts anchored. Many thanks to **Denny Hartwig and Scott Paddock** (Chicagoland Speedway), **Miss Bloom** (Environmental Teacher), **Jeff Riley** (Director of Strategic Partnerships – JHS), **Mike Sertle** (DU Biologist) and **Jeff Wepprecht** (Site Superintendent at Des Plaines Conservation Area) for all the support to make this happen.

[Click here](#) to read what the Daily Herald had to say.

If you have a school with an after-school program or a class interested into a similar program – please reach out to me anytime. I carry a wood duck nesting box with me all the time now and have used it in three schools. It's a great way to start conversation and demonstrate how, what, where and about ducks habitat and showing YouTube videos of the chicks coming out of the nests. For more ideas.....let's chat!



#### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

- June 16 - Waterfowl Classic at Chicagoland Speedway
- August - Chairman, Y&E Meeting and Third Term at NHQ

For more information visit [www.greenwing.org](http://www.greenwing.org) or [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)

In you haven't peeked in on the Greenwing website recently – see this limited time offer!

#### LIMITED TIME PROMOTION FOR DU GREENWINGS!

For a limited time, sign up a child for a Greenwing membership and they will receive a Ducks Unlimited Mallard Magic duck call in one of two colors: pink or green. For FREE!! Made exclusively for Ducks Unlimited by Buck Gardner, this is a hand-tuned, individually-tested, Cajun-style double reed duck call with a naturally raspy sound built in.

Choose which call you want to give your Greenwing when you sign him or her up! **PINK** or **GREEN**

Thanks for your Greenwing Support!

## STATE CAMPAIGN REPORT

### GOALS FOR 2018 STATE CAMPAIGN BUSINESS PLAN

Life Sponsors 25, Upgrade Major Donors 32, and 6 Feather Society

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**W**ith the help of not only our Illinois Ambassadors but all Illinois Ducks Unlimited members, this should be a banner year. With the Capstone Gala July 21 celebrating the culmination of the Rescue Our Wetlands campaign and the planned Evening for Conservation events, I am confident our goals are within reach.

All Illinois Ducks Unlimited members and volunteers play an important part in preserving our wetlands. Major Gifts are only a portion of the important work Ducks Unlimited is doing on the landscape. Whether a member, volunteer, sponsor or Major Donor your contributions are important to the success of the Ducks Unlimited mission.

Everyone can help provide insight to someone who is wanting to contribute to our mission in whatever way possible, be it volunteering at an event or becoming a Major Donor. If you know of someone who shows an interest in a higher level of giving or wanting to perpetuate a gift through the Feather Society, please help them or yourself by contacting me or co-chair Jim Callaway ([robglore@aol.com](mailto:robglore@aol.com)) anytime for assistance.

### DUCKS UNLIMITED LIFE SPONSOR MEMBER ACHIEVEMENT AT WINDY CITY CHAPTER

*Illinois Director of Development James Roberts (left) with Windy City Chapter Chairman Bill Fester present new Life Sponsor member Keith Shimon, with his daughter Ashley, his life member plaque.*





# ILLINOIS CONSERVATION REPORT

Here is a run-down of the projects we'll be working on this coming year:

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**BROOKS TRACT ACQUISITION (57 acres – Jackson Co.):** Located adjacent to the previously completed “Cemetery Road” project and located in the center of the U.S. Forest Service’s Big Muddy Wetlands Complex just south of Oakwood Bottoms, Ducks Unlimited will begin the multi-year process of donating this property to the Forest Service for inclusion into the Shawnee National Forest. Once transferred, the Forest Service will manage it as a seasonal wetland and it will be open for public recreation.

**KENNEDY ACQUISITION (34 acres – McHenry Co.):** Ducks Unlimited will transfer ownership of the property to the McHenry County Conservation District.

**JENKINS MARSH WETLANDS RESTORATION & ENHANCEMENT (72 acres – Woodford Co.):** Ducks Unlimited is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources plans to restore 17 acres of emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands within the “Triangle Marsh” portion of the property, remove and control six acres of invasive Phragmites, and remove an additional 49 acres of woody invasive species from the future restored wetlands.

**CHILLICOTHE BOTTOMS (232 acres – Peoria Co.):** Ducks Unlimited is finalizing plans to donate the property IAS in early 2018. IAS will manage the property for public use, including maintaining the Ducks Unlimited cairn, walking trails, and wildlife viewing blind.





**CYPRESS CREEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE REFORESTATION (435 acres – Alexander, Pulaski, and Union Cos.):**

Ducks Unlimited is combining North American Wetland Conservation Act and Climate Adaptation funds with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge funds to reforest flood-prone agricultural lands along the Cache River back to mast-producing bottomland hardwood forest and cypress-tupelo swamp.

**HAYGLADE MOIST SOIL/GREENTREE UNIT 28 RESTORATION (321 acres – Jackson Co.):** Utilizing funds from its Heart of the Big Rivers NAWCA grant, and in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation and the Sand Ridge Road Commission, Ducks Unlimited will create a new moist soil unit and a flooded hardwoods unit at Oakwood Bottoms. Completion is planned prior to the 2018/19 waterfowl hunting season.

**OWENS TRACT RESTORATION (80 acres – Johnson Co.):** Located adjacent to the Cache River, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will utilize funds from DU's Heart of the Big Rivers NAWCA grant to restore this former agricultural field back to bottomland hardwood forest. This property will be managed by Illinois DNR, and opened to public recreation.

**TWO RIVERS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE:** Ducks Unlimited will provide engineering and construction assistance to the Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge to restore and enhance between 500 and 700 acres of moist soil and emergent wetland habitat. This project will be the first steps taken by DU to expand its IL conservation program further into and along the Mississippi River as part of the Big Rivers Initiative.

**FRIENDS OF HACKMATAK WETLANDS CONSERVATION SMALL NAWCA GRANT (161 acres – McHenry Co.):**

Ducks Unlimited has worked with McHenry County Conservation District, The Land Conservancy of McHenry County, Illinois Openlands and Nippersink Watershed Association to acquire and restore 161 acres of wetland and upland habitat in support of the newly established Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. Ducks Unlimited and its conservation partners will complete the final grant projects in 2018.

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE – PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE, WETLAND RESTORATIONS & ENHANCEMENTS (50 acres – Pulaski, Johnson, Massac, Alexander, Union, and Jackson Cos.):**

Combining other federal and private funding with DU's Heart of the Big Rivers NAWCA grant, this project will work with private landowners to restore and enhance wetlands within DU's Heart of the Big Rivers Area located within historic floodplains of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers' Confluence. These private land conservation projects will complement the extensive public lands projects that Ducks Unlimited is also completing in the Heart of the Big Rivers, and assist in growing landscape-scale wintering and migration habitat at the northern end of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley.

# **EVERY VOLUNTEER SHOULD OWN A DU LICENSE PLATE!**

**We MUST sell at least 1,000 Illinois DU license plates per year.**

If we fall below 1,000 plates for 2 consecutive years, the Secretary of State's office may pull all existing Illinois DU specialty plates off the road and replace them with the universal specialty plate with a Ducks Unlimited sticker. We currently have 734 IL DU specialty plates on the road.

**To get your DU license plate, go to [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com) and click on "Pick-A-Plate" to order your DU license plate today.**

Any questions, call Bill Sarafin at 815-440-5494.

