



Door County Land Trust

# *Landings* News Splash

Fall 2021

*News from the Places You Protect: A Newsletter for Door County Land Trust Members*

**Members make a difference!**

**Thank you for protecting the lands, waters, and wildlife that make Door County so special.**

**Conservation Stories: Thanks to You...**

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# Our Conservation Family Story

It takes a lot of love to protect Door County's exceptional lands and waters!  
Send your notes and stories to [photos@doorcountylandtrust.org](mailto:photos@doorcountylandtrust.org).



Photo by Amy Sullivan



Photo by Joanne Kurowski

I love Door County Land Trust nature preserves because they remind me of the beauty in simplicity.  
- Kendra Vandertie

Tread lightly, take only pictures and appreciate these gems this fall!  
-Emily Moravic

I love that there are so many nature preserves around and walking all the trails is so fun! I love taking my toddler there to explore.  
-Cady Paschke

It's in the name—TRUST. These land trust areas provide me assurance that visitors will respect the land and the denizens living there—because they want the same experience. It's the place we go to find out not who we are, but what we are. What a gift to have places like this—away from the madding crowd.  
-Lynn Sommers



Photo by Nicky Blasier

I believe in what the Door County Land Trust is doing because Door County is my home... and home is of the most value.

-Stephanie Harlow

An appreciation for nature is a beautiful thing. An old oak is more than a stack of lumber, a prairie is more than future building sites, and the Great Lakes are more than bottled water.  
- Tony Rieth



Photo by Amanda Carlson

My husband and I love going for walks and the Land Trust trails have been such a place of peace and bonding for the two of us. Our favorite is Clay Banks, and last fall he proposed to me by the water! - Abby Heimbecher



Photo by Abby Heimbecher

# thank you!

for being a part of our conservation family.  
you protect Door County!



# Fantastic Fall

Photo by Dan Eggert

## Favorite Fall Strolls

As daylight shortens in fall, photosynthesis slows down and the green chlorophyll in the tree's leaves breaks down, revealing the gorgeous red, orange and yellow carotenoid pigments that have been masked all summer by the chlorophyll. Stroll the trails at Kangaroo Lake, Bayshore Blufflands, White Cliff Fen, Lautenbach Woods, Legacy, Detroit Harbor and Little Lake Nature Preserves to view these spectacular fall colors. And, Three Springs Nature Preserve is a great place to view the smoky gold of Wisconsin's only deciduous conifer, the Tamarack, which loses all its needles each fall.

Photo by Dave Heilman



Photo by Nick Wilder

## Magnificent Monarch Migration

The last generation of summer's monarchs are currently making their incredible 1,700-mile migration south to their wintering grounds in central Mexico's Oyamel fir mountain forests. Monarchs from Ontario, Canada and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan congregate near Escanaba. Using the north winds, they island hop their way down to the Door Peninsula where they'll rest and refuel. Monarchs like to visit the meadows of Three Springs, Ship Canal and Legacy Nature Preserves to feed on the nectar of goldenrods and other fall flowering plants to refuel for their journey south. After overwintering in Mexico, these same monarchs will migrate in the spring back to Texas to lay eggs which starts a multi-generational migration back north! It takes three generations of shorter-lived monarchs (2-6 weeks), to reach their summer breeding grounds in Wisconsin.

## Fish Spawning Frenzy

Fall brings thousands of spawning trout and salmon into Door County's creeks along Lake Michigan. It is here that they lay their eggs for the next generation. A fall walk through Heins Creek Nature Preserve provides views of these giants spawning and finding rest in the rockpools and shade of overhanging trees along the banks of Heins Creek. Strawberry Creek near Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal Nature Preserve is Lake Michigan's primary source of Chinook salmon eggs for DNR restocking efforts. Chinook and coho salmon were introduced into the lake to control the alewife population in the 1960's and have become an angler's favorite catch.

Photo by Dan Eggert





# Key Wetlands Protected in Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp...



Along Door County's low-lying shorelines, cedar wetlands dominate. These trees thrive in the wet muck where little else can grow. On recent research adventures in the swamp, the web of hair-like roots from cedars were the only thing that kept our land protection staff from sinking completely into the muck.

But, this web of roots gives the cedar trees their super-power to soak up extraordinary amounts of water (think rapid snowmelt or a rainy deluge). What's more, these wetlands filter the rain and snow runoff from neighboring upland areas before it flows out into Eagle Harbor. These wetlands are key in preserving the water quality of Ephraim's Eagle Harbor.

With high lake levels over the past two years, coastal wetlands like those found within the Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp Natural Area play an ever more important role in helping to buffer extraordinary rainfall events which could otherwise worsen flooding.

Benefits of coastal wetlands aside, Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp also happens to be home to a plethora of Door County's most treasured species. Uncommon birds in and around the

swamp include the Red-shouldered hawk and a number of other species of greatest conservation need. Rare orchids abound here. The footprints and traces of mink, fisher, porcupine, coyotes, deer, and other mammals are a sure sign that you are never alone for long in these woods.

Door County Land Trust recently completed the permanent protection of a new portion of forest, which adds to the ongoing work to protect the basin of the Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp and portions of the upland areas around the swamp. Purchase of the newly protected land was made possible through grants from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Environmental Protection Agency Act. A grant from the John C. Bock foundation funds a portion of the Stewardship Endowment Fund contribution required for the long-term care of the property.

Financial support for additional conservation costs and the long-term care of the property is funded thanks to YOUR membership contribution and other donations. Thank you!



# Thanks to You!



Photo by Joe Taylor

Above: A bird's eye view of Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp shows the vast cedar forest wetland which filters rain and snowmelt before it flows into Eagle Harbor at left.

Examples of rare orchids that may be found at Gibraltar-Ephraim Swamp include...

Right: The pale green petals of the diminutive tall green bog-orchid (*platanthera aquilonis*) could be easily missed, but the 18" tall bold pink showy lady's slipper are easily spotted throughout the swamp during the early June bloom time.

Below right: The ram's head lady's slipper, which stands only 6-8" tall, remains well hidden under its brown dorsal sepal petal.



Photo by Cinnamon Rossman

Photo by Cinnamon Rossman

Photo by Cinnamon Rossman



# CHAMBERS ISLAND NATURE PRESERVE GROWS AGAIN!



Photo by Dan Eggert

Door County Land Trust is pleased to announce the addition of a newly protected parcel at the Chambers Island Nature Preserve. The new addition is located on Chambers' northeast shoreline and includes an upland hardwood forest as well as a stretch of the Green Bay shoreline. From this hilltop property, visitors can look out over Lake Mackaysee, Chambers Island's largest—but not its only—inland lake.

The newly protected property was formerly known as the “prayer maze” when owned by the Green Bay Catholic Diocese Holy Name Retreat Center. Its proximity to the marina means it could be home to a future kiosk and educational signage. In 2018 it was home to the Chambers Island BioBlitz which was a research filled week with citizen scientists and experts exploring the area.

The combination of habitats on Chambers Island draws birds year-round. You'll find wood thrush, red-eyed vireo, and magnolia warblers among the 175 bird species that have been spotted on the island. Chambers Island provides a critical stopover habitat for migratory birds in spring and fall. Lake Michigan, Chambers Island, and all of Door County lie along a major migratory route—the Mississippi flyway. More than 300 species of birds are known to migrate through Wisconsin each year, and places like Chambers Island provide a much-needed place for birds to rest and refuel on their 2,000-mile spring journey to summer breeding grounds and their fall journey to wintering grounds.

The Chambers Island Nature Preserve is the largest Door County Land Trust nature preserve and encompasses most of the interior of the island and about half the shoreline of Lake Mackaysee. These protected lands contain rare habitats like a leather-leaf muskeg bog and a variety of forests that are thriving thanks to a lack of white-tailed deer on the island. Without deer, successive generations of tree saplings fill the understory—one of the signs of a healthy, verdant, and naturally regenerating forest.

This project is entirely funded thanks to the generosity of Chambers Island landowners and Door County Land Trust members!!! Thank you!



**Wood Thrush**

Photo by Naseem Reza



**Red-eyed Vireo**

Photo by Naseem Reza



**Magnolia Warbler**

Photo by Naseem Reza



# Shoreline at the Edge

## Door County's Lakeside Forests and Wetlands

### A First Look Inside Door County Land Trust's New Book

Door County's beauty inspires the imagination. In a new book, titled *A Shoreline at the Edge: Door County's Lakeside Forests and Wetlands*, photographer Paul M. Lurie captures the imagination with a series of stunning aerial photographs taken from the sky above Door County's eastern shoreline. His photographs show the transition from forest to farm field, from wilderness to development. And, upon closer look, they show where Door County's dark conifer boreal forests hug the cooler climate areas of the shoreline.

Paul Lurie's photographs beg the question of how to protect the uniqueness of Door County as we lose wilderness habitat to development and as our boreal forests are visibly transitioning in response to climate change. Former executive director of The Ridges Sanctuary, Steve Leonard, and Door County Land Trust's director of charitable giving, Cinnamon Rossman, co-authored the narrative and captions that accompany Paul Lurie's photographs. They narrate Lurie's photographs with history that spans from geologic times to present, adding ecological and scientific facts throughout.

The final result is a book that will deepen an appreciation for the Door Peninsula, its islands, and surrounding waters. Ultimately, it serves as a call to action—for the preservation of Door County's remarkable wilderness and forests, and for taking bold action against climate change that threatens these lands.

Photographer Paul Lurie, along with co-authors Leonard and Rossman, created the book as a volunteer effort to help further land conservation across the peninsula. Thanks to a significant contribution from Paul M. Lurie and a grant from a private foundation, Door County Land Trust is able to offer the book to the general public upon request, at no charge, except \$7.00 handling.



**Toft Point**

Photo by Paul M. Lurie

Hardcover with dust jacket,  
105 pages, 10.25" x 11.25" x .75".

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Door County Land Trust

**Reserve your book today!**

**[www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/Book](http://www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/Book)**

**About this offer:** A minimum donation of \$7 is required to cover shipping and handling. One book per household, please. A limited number of books are available and requests will be fulfilled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Additional books may be purchased at The Ridges Sanctuary's Nature Store, Novel Bay Booksellers, and The Clearing.

**The writing, creation, and publication of this book is thanks to the generosity of Paul M. Lurie and the Raibrook Foundation.**



# Protecting More, Doing More.

You've heard the saying, "Change is the only constant." And, after a drive around Door County, that can quickly be proven true. It's not just the changing leaves.

The vision of the Door County Land Trust—a vision to preserve the ecological diversity and beauty of the Door Peninsula and its islands—is another constant. And, that's why efforts to protect more land, to steward and care for more of Door County's protected landscapes, and to preserve more of Door County's unique ecology are so critical now—before these landscapes are forever changed.

Door County Land Trust is poised to take on the opportunities and the challenges of preserving the peninsula and its islands. And, to help meet the needs of our land protection program...

**We welcome our 12th staff member,** Carrie Ehrfurth! Carrie has a background in historical preservation that perfectly suits her new role with Door County Land Trust. As the Land Protection Project Specialist, Carrie will oversee the details of land acquisitions, grant requirements, and record-keeping. Read more about Carrie at [www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/Staff](http://www.DoorCountyLandTrust.org/Staff).

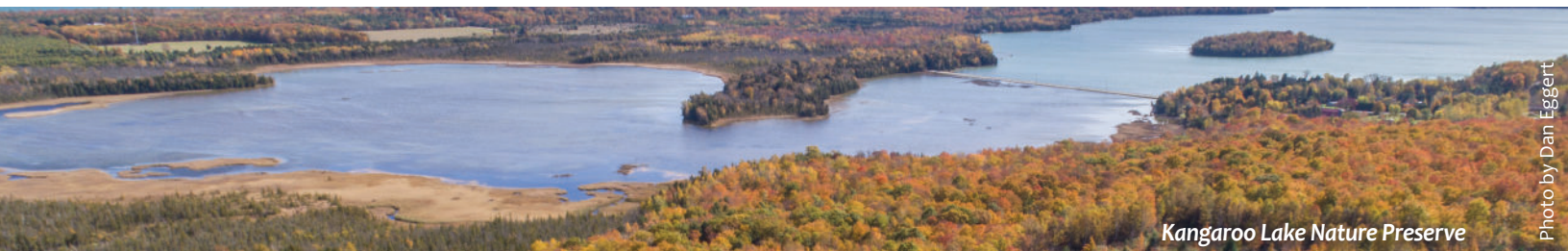


*"Every leaf speaks  
bliss to me,  
Fluttering from  
the autumn tree."*

*Emily Brontë*



Photo by Dan Eggert



Kangaroo Lake Nature Preserve

Photo by Dan Eggert

## Join us in thanking our Annual Business Members!



Alibi Marina and Harbor Guest House  
Ashbrooke Hotel  
Bay Ridge Golf Course  
Blue Dolphin House  
Camp Store At Nicolet Beach  
Door County Courier  
Door County Eye Associates  
Door County Nature Works

Door Landscape & Nursery  
Eagle Harbor Inn  
Ecology  
First Light Arts, Jim Perry  
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Gills Rock Pottery  
Glidden Lodge Beach Resort  
Hatch Distilling Company

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Jerry's Flowers  
Out of the Woods Woodworking, Curt Wessel  
Pinkert Law Firm, LLP  
RentShadowLawn.com  
Ross Estate Planning  
Smile Designs of Door County

Sunnypoint Landscape  
Terra Cottages  
Dr Timothy Tishler, DDS  
True North Real Estate  
Wagon Trail Campground  
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