



# Franklin Creek Conservation Association

- Engage -
- Understand -
- Preserve -

Summer 2019

[www.franklincreekconservation.org](http://www.franklincreekconservation.org)

## Stewardship Workdays

Thanks to the Stewardship Committee for taking the time to help clear the sweet clover that was taking over a remnant hilltop within the Natural Area. The stewardship committee works with the DNR to remove invasive species from the natural area, and from our own properties, in order to increase the quality of habitat for the other plants and animals that live here.

This hilltop has Pale Purple Coneflower, Wild Petunia, and Bee Balm along with several other beautiful natives. If you're interested in volunteering to help restore and maintain the natural areas, our next scheduled workday is on **July 6th**. We will meet in the **gristmill parking lot at 9 a.m.** and head out to pull more sweet clover once we've gathered everyone. Please bring water and sturdy shoes. Long sleeve shirts are recommended but not required. We hope to see you there! If you can't make it on the 6th, **July 20th** and **August 3rd** will also be stewardship workdays.

If you haven't been out to a workday yet, this is the perfect opportunity to meet some of our newest board members who happen to be co-chairing the stewardship committee. Eric Thomas has recently returned to the area and was one of the first DNR employees at Franklin Creek. Makinley Klingenberg, from Sterling, IL, is new to FCCA as well. Makinley just graduated with his Associates from Sauk Valley and hopes to pursue a degree in botany or a similar field.



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## Project 1480

This project is moving right along! The staff housing portion is just about done. Recently the back deck has been installed, flooring was installed in the main bedroom, cabinets have been fixed up and put back together, and our coordinator has moved in! This brings us one step closer to having a full time staff member to bring you more fun-filled nature programs.

Once the upper level of the project is completed we can move on to the main floor. The goal for this area is to have a commercial kitchen installed along with space for programs. This will allow us to host programs during the winter months as well as give us a space that is more suited to outdoor education classes, with a concrete floor and classroom materials.

We have had an incredible team working on this project. All spring and summer they've been wiring, building, tearing down, painting, scraping the popcorn ceiling off, putting floors and trim in, and much, much more! Thank you for all those that have been a part of this project so far. If you would like to get involved with the rebuilding of



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the community and program space call the mill at 815.456.2718. Workdays will continue until the end of July when the housing portion is expected to be finished. In August, our crew will get a much needed break before we start on the main level!



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# Franklin Creek Conservation Association

## Saturdays

**July 13**—Fossil Hunt (10 a.m.)

**July 27**— Hike the Headwaters (10 a.m.)

**August 10**—Bird Walk (7:30 a.m.)

**August 24**— Osteology at the Gristmill (10 a.m.)

These Saturday programs are free to the public and open to all ages.



For the Fossil Hunt on **July 13<sup>th</sup>** we will be **meeting at the Banker Shelter** and then hiking to the quarry. Afterwards feel free to join us back at the mill to see how many fossils you can find in the stone wall.— **Register by July 11**

On **July 27<sup>th</sup>** we will be meeting at the **Headwaters parking lot** (For directions please call the mill). From there we will strike out to view the summer prairie and snap a few pictures along the way. —**Register by July 25**

**\*Call (815)456-2718 to register\***

**August 10<sup>th</sup>** will have us up early in the morning to catch a glimpse of the birds that call the Franklin Creek home. For this adventure **meet at the Mill Springs Day Use parking lot.** —**Register by August 8**

Osteology is the study of bones. On **August 24<sup>th</sup>** join FCCA staff in learning more about bones. Bones can tell us a lot about an animal's life, such as what they ate, who might eat them, and sometimes we can even tell what caused them to die. For this program we will **meet at the Grist Mill.**—**Register by August 22**

## Evenings at the Mill

In April we celebrated pollinators with a workshop and painting class led by Dan and Gretchen Fitzpatrick. Those that attended got to make and take home a few pollinator themed items as well as taste the delicious pollinator ice cream made by using liquid nitrogen.

Last June we held our first trivia night, and we liked it so much we decided to host another! This year the theme was “pollinators and winged critters”. Jeff Schlesinger and Susan Kleiman came up with a variety of questions including those related to photographs or songs, questions about how many miles a bird travels in its lifetime, and many more! Thank you to those that came out for both events!

Our next Evening at the Mill will be on **Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>** from **4—6 p.m.** There will be live music performed by **Jim Kanas** and dinner provided during the program. **For ticket prices and reservations please call the mill at (815)456-2718.**



# Franklin Creek Conservation Association

## Hello!

My name is Connor Ross, and I am lucky enough to be the new summer intern at Franklin Creek. This is the first time I have held such a position, and I am looking forward to this opportunity.



\*In this photo Connor is removing Dame's Rocket, an invasive species.\*

I'm an Illinois native, having grown up in Grand Detour. Through a combination of watching documentaries (such as *The Crocodile Hunter*), exploring our local natural areas, growing up with way too many pets, and reading any book I could find, I developed a love for nature, history, and paleontology. I started at Aurora University in Fall 2017, so I am about to enter my junior year. I'm currently a History major, with minors in Museum Studies and Biology, so my formal studies cater well to this position.

As formerly mentioned, this is my first such internship, but I know the natural area well, along with our local history and ecology, as well as methods of both natural and historical conservation. I am very passionate about what I know, and I'm eager to share this knowledge through this internship, whether that be through personal tours, social media, or educational programming. I am very excited to be working with the Franklin Creek Conservation Association and furthering my studies, and learning even more about our natural areas and their history.



## Chautauqua!!!

This year's Chautauqua will be held on September 29 from 10 a.m.—5:30 p.m. The bird of the year is the Bald Eagle which means that there will be a LIVE Eagle presentation! Kim Sigafus will be telling stories, teaching us about Native American Culture through song and dance, and helping us craft our very own talking feathers. Kim is an internationally published award-winning Ojibwa author and speaker, and co-owner of McIver Publishing. Make sure you mark the calendar and join us for this year's Chautauqua! For the most up-to-date information follow us on Facebook.



## 2019 Chautauqua

The Forest, the Trees, and the Autumn Leaves

**Save the Date**  
**Sunday September 29**

**\*FREE ADMISSION\***

**All ages welcome**

**10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.**



## Donate Today

Help us protect, restore, and maintain the natural areas we all love so much...

Checks made out to FCCA can be mailed or dropped off at the Mill during Mill Hours:

1893 Twist Road, Franklin Grove, IL 61031

Or scan:



1847 gristmill



### 20 years at the Gristmill

In the 1970s, what is now Franklin Creek State Natural Area was under threat by the proposed construction of an asphalt plant. Concerned locals, looking to preserve the area which their families had settled over a century ago, bought and donated plots of land in order to block the asphalt plant and create a nature preserve. The Franklin Grove Creek and Preservation Committee, now known as the Franklin Creek Conservation Association (FCCA), was established in 1981, and the

FCSNA was dedicated the next year.

The original gristmill in Franklin Grove was the largest in Lee County and a center of the community for the pioneers that lived here. It was built in 1847 and stood until the 1930s when it was razed. The FCCA decided it was time to rebuild the lost icon. The reconstructed mill was built entirely on volunteer labor, in much the same fashion the original mill would've been constructed in the 1800s. Construction lasted eight years, with the restored mill officially opening on September 25, 1999.

The dimensions of the mill are within a foot of the original plan, and the location of the building is within twelve feet of the original mill. To this day, we are the only fully water powered grist mill in Illinois!

Help us celebrate 20 years of milling! Stop by sometime this season and check out this handsome building, wander through exhibits about the mill, woodlands, and bison and purchase some organic, stone-ground corn meal.

Franklin Creek Conservation Association  
1893 Twist Road  
Franklin Grove, IL 61031-9315  
(815)456-2718



Franklin Creek Conservation Association exists for the care of the natural areas of Franklin Creek for current and future generations by striving to: preserve, restore, and maintain those areas; involve individuals and organizations in our common purpose and activity and build knowledge and appreciation of the natural area and our cultural heritage. Donations of time and money to help us achieve our goals are appreciated!

#### Education Program Events

##### **Playing in the Prairie**

July 11th 5pm-8pm

##### **Closer to the Creek**

August 8th 5pm-8pm

**(\$5/child)**

**If you are interested in attending FCCA programs please  
RSVP by calling the mill at (815) 456-2718 or emailing  
[engage@franklincreekconservation.org](mailto:engage@franklincreekconservation.org)**