

Laudato Si' Project

Newsletter

Restoring Our Natural Connection



***Mission:* To restore humanity's connection to the natural world through education, stewardship and recreation**



Summer 2018

Ending Summer, Beginning the Season of Creation

Summer is always a wonderful time to renew, relax and spend time with family. It also offers so many opportunities to connect with nature and contemplate God's wonder.

The Season of Creation begins on September 1st, with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. This ecumenical celebration focuses our call as Christians to steward what we have been blessed with and witness to our faith through our daily actions. The season ends with the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4th.

The Season of Creation is not only a time for intentional prayer and reflection but also action and service.



**JOIN CHRISTIANS AROUND THE GLOBE
AS WE PRAY AND TAKE ACTION
FOR OUR COMMON HOME**

Many churches and organizations, like Laudato Si' Project, plan events that connect people with their faith, the environment around them and assist them in ways that they can be a steward of our Common Home. Blessings to you and your family!

-Joe Meyer, Executive Director

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Stewardship for Pollinators

One of the ways we can care for our common home is through good stewardship of the land we own, big or small. For many of us, this means careful planning of our yard to reduce the amount of lawn (and all the time/money we put into it) and create better habitat for animals of all sizes. As one of the top botanists in Wisconsin has said “if we want animal diversity we need plant diversity!”

Laudato Si’ Project’s stewardship in this regard takes several forms: classroom programs on prairie ecology, wildflower walks, school, parish and landowner butterfly gardens, and consulting people on land management decisions.

We are excited to announce that we will be partnering with Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (OWLT) to plant nearly 7 acres of pollinator habitat on the Schoofs Preserve. OWLT was awarded a habitat improvement grant from the DNR and work will begin this fall. This will be in addition to the Schoofs Legacy Butterfly Garden that was planted there in May (see our May Newsletter).



Eagle Scout Projects



Joshua Dreger, part of Troop 115 at St. Boniface Parish, completed his Eagle Scout project in August with the help of Laudato Si' Project. He planted an educational butterfly garden at St. James Catholic Parish in Menomonee Falls.

Joshua's project is highlighting 8 different native wildflowers that are important for butterflies and other pollinators. His planting includes; purple coneflower, smooth penstemon, hoary vervain, golden alexanders, prairie blazing star, showy goldenrod, pale purple coneflower and sky blue aster. Each species planting was mulched and has an educational sign describing that species and its value to wildlife. Congrats to Joshua!

Lake Country Clean Water Festival

In Mid-June, Laudato Si Project was invited to take part in the Lake Country Clean Water Festival at Lakefront Park in Pewaukee. Over a dozen organizations were in the education tent all promoting ways to keep our waters clean and healthy, both for our use and for wildlife. Several hundred people came to explore the fun activities, all in the name of clean water.

Other groups in the education tent included Tall Pines Conservancy (land and water protection), WI DNR (invasive species), Reelin' in the Future (fishing), Walleyes for Tomorrow (fish stocking and habitat) and many more. Thanks to LSP volunteer Patrick Donohue for helping us that day.



Connecting with Summer Wildlife



Summer creates so many opportunities to get people connected with amazing Wisconsin wildlife. Whether it's fishing, catching turtles, or netting insects, it is always great to see the faces of children and adults with these critters in hand.

We ran a wildlife monitoring program for a group of families from the Milwaukee Area. We set out various live traps used in wildlife monitoring to see what we could catch on the Schoofs Preserve. In our small mammal traps we caught meadow voles, white-footed mice, and a masked shrew (pictured below). We also set out the turtle monitoring nets which yielded some nice painted turtles and an angry snapping turtle. Lastly, we checked under "snake boards" finding garter and red-bellied snakes.

Not only is seeing and holding these creatures an amazing experience but taking part in citizen science research like this help us keep track of populations and ensure these species stay on our landscapes in the future.



Catholic Heart Work Camp



Catholic Heart Workcamp Milwaukee approached Laudato Si Project to explore ways that their volunteers could better care for our common home. For those of you unfamiliar with Catholic Heart, they put on service projects throughout the country to serve the needs of the Church and communities to instill an ethic of service through Christian discipleship. With over 14,000 youth taking part nationwide, what a powerful impact and witness that is!

Their group came from various places in the Midwest and were led by their youth ministers or priests. They worked with us and Waukesha County Parks to do trail work, invasive species removal, and building maintenance. These college age students were on fire with their faith and we were privileged to have worked with them over the 2 days.



Living *Laudato Si'* Everyday

LSP Board of Directors

Nate Lasnoski *Chairman*

Ryan Grusenski *Secretary*

Andy Schoofs *Treasurer*

Matt Vogel

Quentin Maxwell

During this Season of Creation, take time to reflect on how God has blessed you and your families. It is from a place of gratitude, knowing that our lives are a gift, that we can then move toward care for others and our common home.

This perspective on life is transformative and prioritizes your trust in God as number one and allows God to work in your life to bring the Gospel message to life. This is living *Laudato Si'*.

Upcoming Events

****Check out our Facebook page for up to date information*

September

Sat., Sept 1 Season of Creation begins

Sat., Sept 8 9am-3pm LSP booth and “nature discovery zone” at St. Gabriel Flea Market, Hubertus

Sat., Sept 15 10am-12pm Monarch butterfly tagging and other insects program at Schoofs Preserve 5423 Shannon Road Hartford

October

Thurs., Oct 6 Feast of St. Francis of Assisi- patron saint of ecology. End of Season of Creation

Sat., Oct. 6 9am-1pm Stewardship work day at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve 4970 Country Club Road Port Washington

By The Numbers: Summer Care for Our Common Home

Education

Laudato Si' Project has conducted **11 hours** of presentations, interpretive hikes and educational tours.

Stewardship

Laudato Si' Project has contributed **173 volunteer hours** in stewardship projects to better the ecological value of our world's outdoor places.

Recreation

Laudato Si' Project has sponsored **3 hours** of recreational outings to visit, explore and learn about our natural world.

Laudato Si' Project is a 501(c)3 tax deductible organization that depends on membership and donations to continue its vital mission. Thank You!