

## **BLUEBIRDS AT LAPHAM PEAK, 2018**

Cool rainy weather early in the spring delayed Bluebird nesting statewide. Tree swallows arrived and competed for the nestboxes. Consequently Bluebird fledging was a little down, with 77 Bluebirds produced from 27 boxes. 43 mosquito-eating Tree Swallows also fledged. Sandy Street, Karen DeBoer, and Mike Fort provided the regular monitoring and reporting necessary for successfully managing the four Bluebird trails at the park.



## **Invasive Species Projects Annual Report 2017/2018**

Holly Schmaling

The Buckthorn Busters, led by Holly Schmaling, John Hillmer, and Jack Abler have done their best to carry on Mike Fort's legacy working on invasive species and habitat restoration in the park. Work this year has focused on the woodlands, specifically off the trails leading south from Homestead Hollow. Work has also been done on the west side at the spring and by the pond in the SE corner of the west side. Activities included cutting buckthorn and other woody invasives and burning the piles, pulling garlic mustard and Japanese Hedge Parsley. Buckthorn resprouts have been sprayed by Holly and contractor Chris Mann.

From this time last year, we have had approximately 30 volunteers (not including the St. John's workday) work 1,240 hours and burn 99 brush piles.

I have written a NEEF grant that would fund two workdays of planting native shrubs, plants and seeds in May of 2019 on a site near the tower that had previously been cleared of buckthorn. I have a commitment from Tanya Reynen of Lake Country Fire & Rescue/Lake Country Training Center for her students to help with this project if the grant is awarded.

John Hillmer and Louise Borzynski have also been working on grants and to date have been awarded \$2,000.00 (two separate grants at \$1,000.00 each), with two more grants in the works.

We have not done any work on the prairie per se. Jack, John and I, along with Mike Fort and Jay Abts, are exploring how to continue work over there, specifically burns, again working in concert with Chris Mann of Kettle Moraine Land Stewards for his input and possibly contract burning. John Hillmer is currently writing a grant for funds to be used for burning segments of the prairie. I am also looking to recruit another volunteer who is knowledgeable in prairie restoration to help us plan going forward. I have contacted many individuals and am in touch with some members of The Prairie Enthusiasts, a group in SE Wisconsin who might bear fruit with a volunteer willing to take on some prairie management with us.