



3.31.10

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Welcome Center Hours 8 am-4:30 pm (Mon-Fri)

30239 South State Route 53

Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-6370

<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp>

Midewin Meadowlark Messenger April 2010

Here's what the bird is bringin'

Click title or scroll through

- ☆ [Calendar of Volunteer Workdays and Events for April-May](#)
- ☆ [A Few Signs of Spring at Midewin](#)
- ☆ [Visitor Survey: Alternative Transportation Planning](#)
- ☆ [Heritage Program Orientation](#)
- ☆ [Training for Butterfly Monitors](#)
- ☆ [Bird Monitors Needed: Learn as you go](#)
- ☆ [Lecture Series Descriptions](#)
- ☆ [Unsubscribe](#)
- ☆ [Earth Day Flyer: Last Page](#)

Please note that the Welcome Center will be open on Saturdays (8-4:30pm) starting on April 17



Caution Recreationists: Turkey hunting season is from April 12 through May 13. We highly recommend wearing blaze orange and visitors must stay on the trails and roads.

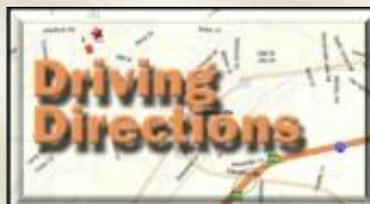
☆ Calendar of Volunteer Workdays/ Events for April-May

Date and Day	Time	Meeting Location	Activities
8 April 2010 Thursday	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Heritage Program Orientation: Learn about ongoing and upcoming Heritage projects and how you can be involved. Click here for details
10 April 2010 Saturday	9:00am - 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Moving dormant prairie plants back to the shade houses.
12 April 2010 Monday	9:30am - Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Mighty Acorn Training Workshop
15 April 2010 Thursday	7:00pm – 8:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series #7: Preservation of Historic Cemeteries <i>presented by Dawn Cobb, IL Historic Preservation Agency & Hal Hassen, IL DNR</i> Description Below

24 April 2010 Saturday	9:00am - 2:30pm	To Be Announced, Please call and ask	Earth Day: Garlic Mustard Removal <i>Large groups welcome!</i>
29 April 2010 Thursday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series #8: Climate Change <i>presented by Renee Thakali, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie</i>
29 April 2010 Thursday	8:00am - 12:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Control
1 May 2010 Saturday	9:00am - 3:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Heritage Workday: Invasive removal at the Moses Morgan farmstead.
8 May 2010 Saturday	9:00am - 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Restoration Workday: Planting Planting plugs at River Road Seed Beds
8 May 2010 Saturday	10:00am - 1:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Beginner Monitoring Training
11 May 2010 Tuesday	6:00pm - 8:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Tour Guide/Interpreter Training: Whether you are a veteran of the tour program or someone new, this event is relevant to you.
12 May 2010 Wednesday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Breeding Bird Monitoring Training: <i>New and beginner bird monitors welcome</i>
13 May 2010 Thursday	8:00am - 12:30pm	Midewin To be Announced	Restoration Workday: Wild Seed Marking
13 May 2010 Thursday	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series #9: Fire Ecology on the Prairie <i>Presented by Roger C. Anderson, Ecologist Illinois State University</i>
15 May 2010 Saturday	10:00am - 1:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Intermediate Monitoring Training
22 May 2010 Saturday	9:00am - 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Restoration Workday: Planting Planting plugs at River Road Seed Beds
22 May 2010 Saturday	10:00am - 12:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Field Training (All monitors)

For more information about the workshops or events listed or to RSVP contact Allison Hedden, Volunteer Coordinator at 815-423-2149 or ahedden@fs.fed.us.

Knowing how many volunteers will attend a workday allows Midewin staff to better organize the workday, and we can inform you of any changes. Workdays may be cancelled if extreme weather occurs (again, please call ahead). If you plan on staying for the entire workday, please bring your lunch. As always, Midewin will provide tools, safety gear, and water for volunteers. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperones (for educational groups). Volunteer groups are welcome to join our workdays; many hands make for light work. Please do not bring dogs or other pets to workdays.



☆ A Few Signs of Spring at Midewin

A Woodcock in the wetland restoration at the headquarters

Red wing blackbirds

Kill deer

Turkey Vultures are back

Leopard Frogs calling

Chorus Frogs calling

Turtles sunbathing

Salamanders out and about

Spring Beauties in bloom

Blood Root in bloom

Hepaticas in bloom

False Mermaids germinating

Bluebells buds

Toothwort flower buds appearing

Prairie Willows flowering



☆ Midewin's Alternative Transportation Analysis: Please Help

Please take the time to share your thoughts.

The Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is currently working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) on an alternative transportation analysis for our site to assess potential alternatives for people to use when traveling to Midewin. This basically refers to any transportation option other than personal vehicle.

We are asking for YOUR assistance in answering an *anonymous* short survey that will help the project team to understand current visitation patterns to Midewin and transportation use.

If you could **please complete the survey** (see following link) by **April 9, 2010**. Your responses will be VERY helpful to the team's analysis. It shouldn't take more than 5 to 7 minutes of your time!

Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/midewintransportation>

☆ Heritage Program Orientation

By Gemma Guenther, Assistant Volunteer Coordinator & Bridget Roth, Archaeologist, MNTP

Evidence of human activity on the Midewin Prairie spans 10,000 years. American Indians, Civil War combatants, agriculturalists, the federal government and its employees have stories to tell through the remains of day to day life. Over the past year, many people have asked us how they can help preserve this cultural history. I am excited to present the new heritage volunteer program, which offers many opportunities for those with different interests, skills and availabilities.

We are kicking off 2010 with an orientation open to the public. Midewin will host the Heritage Program Orientation on **Thursday, April 8, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm in the Welcome Center**. Topics include upcoming workdays (normally one Saturday per month from 9-3) during which we will remove invasive brush from the Moses Morgan and Rogers farmsteads, photograph and document bunkerglyphs in the 811 bunker field, and clean an old arsenal warehouse. (Additional workdays may be added.)

For those who desire a more independent schedule, there are a few options to choose from. The Oral History project, in which volunteers record and transcribe the stories of arsenal workers and farm families, is being relaunched. We hope to gather these interviews and eventually make them accessible to the public.

Additional independent research opportunities include sorting and cataloging Midewin's existing artifacts and digitizing photos.

No commitment is implied by attending the orientation, so please feel free to come with any questions you may have! If you would like to join us, or cannot make the orientation but are interested in the program, please RSVP to Allison Hedden, Volunteer Coordinator at 815.423.2149 or ahedden@fs.fed.us. Thank you and hope to see you there!

☆ Training for Butterfly Monitors



Midewin has another great opportunity for citizen scientists who want to learn more about butterflies and monitor their populations. By tracking trends over the years Midewin can better evaluate our restoration management practices. Butterflies are the second largest group of pollinators following Bees. Without them, some species of plants are in grave danger and at the same time, the largest threat to butterflies is loss of their habitat.

Midewin needs beginner and experienced monitors. New monitors are encouraged to attend the beginners training workshop lead by Ed Doty of the [Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network \(IBMN\)](#). The training workshop dates are listed in the [Calendar of Events above on May 8, May 15 and May 22](#). The volunteer may make their own schedule as long they complete the following requirements. The volunteer must conduct at least 6 site visits between June 1 and August 7, with four of them occurring before July 20. A site visit may take 1-2 hours. Most routes require the volunteer to walk through tall vegetation on rough terrain. Midewin strongly desires volunteer monitors to continue for multiple seasons in order to refine their skills and collect consistent accurate data. We invite you to join Midewin's butterfly monitoring team and contribute to this valuable program. For more information or to register, please contact Allison at 815.423.2149 or ahedden@fs.fed.us. Hope to hear from you soon!

☆ Bird Monitors Needed: Learn as you go.

We are on year 2 for the volunteer bird monitoring program at Midewin. This is a pretty relaxed monitoring program mainly designed for volunteers to experience ownership and independence in their area, practice identification, and just add to the pairs of eyes we have on bird populations.

Training for this program will be held on Wednesday, May 12 from 7pm-8pm. We will help you choose a site and you can design the route. Choose 3-4 days to go out to your site and document all the birds you hear and see from May 15-June 30.

If you cannot make it to the bird training, we will make other arrangements to prepare you for this program. Again, monitors do not need to be able to identify all the birds by sight or sound on the datasheet. This is the ultimate opportunity to learn as you go.

Because Midewin is a prairie under construction, it is fascinating to see improvements in habitat and the wildlife that uses it year to year. If this program interests you, please call Allison Hedden at 815.423.2149 for more details.

☆ Lecture Series Descriptions

The U.S. Forest Service will offer FREE public lectures January through May featuring the natural and cultural history of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and northeastern Illinois.

Presenters include Midewin staff, faculty from area universities, and individual experts.

Thursday, April 15, 7:00p-8:00p

Preservation of Historic Cemeteries

Presenter: Dawn Cobb, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency & Hal Hassen, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Cemeteries are places with specific above ground visual and material features including graves, grave markers, landscaping, fences, and a recognizable spatial arrangement. The placement and arrangement of these items reflect specific choices and provides insight into how people structured and ordered their social and physical landscape. Because cemeteries are dynamic they also reflect changing cultural and social values. Understanding these visual characteristics and their changes through time provides a deeper meaning of what is represented in burial grounds and cemeteries. This knowledge, and respecting the laws that protect them, will ensure their preservation for the future.

Midewin has a variety of volunteer opportunities year round, come and find one that fits your style or feel free to offer your own hobby:

Environmental Education
Mighty Acorn Instructor
Welcome Center Host
Interpreter/Ambassador

Trail maintenance
Construction
Woodworking
Prairie planting
Seed cleaning
Seed harvest

Ecological Monitoring
Cemetery maintenance
Invasive control
Research
Landscaping
Office Assistant
Art/Design
Photography
Editing documents
Oral History Recorder
And more...

To unsubscribe to this newsletter please contact Allison Hedden at 815.423.2149 or use this link. I will also welcome any articles you would like to submit.

<mailto:ahedden@fs.fed.us?subject=unsubscribe me please>



Earth Day Celebration on April 24, 2010

Please join us from 9:00-2:30p

Meet at Midewin Headquarters' at 9am

Give a wildflower a chance to grow!

Help us control the thugs

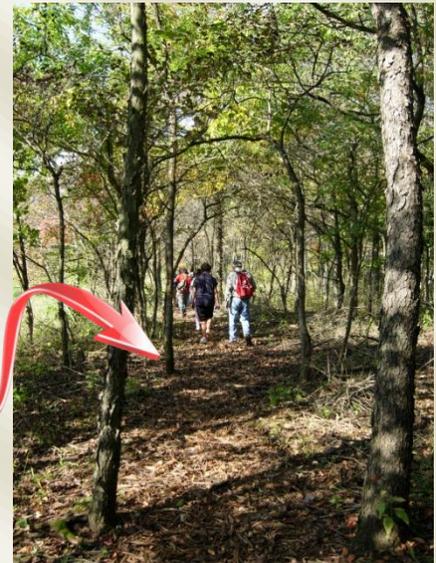
We will travel to Midewin's Bluebell Woods and remove garlic mustard and other such invasive species.

RSVP to Allison Hedden at 815.423.2149

Infestation



**We can make a
Difference**



Garlic Mustard, *Alliaria petiolata* is an invasive species that is taking over many woodland areas. This plant dominates the woodland floor and suppresses valuable native wildflowers within years. Garlic Mustard not only threatens native plants but all other wildlife that depends on those plants for survival. This plant produces large amounts of seed that allows the weed to spread rapidly. If that is not bad enough, it releases toxins into the soil that inhibit other plants from growing.

With your help, we can slow down the Garlic Mustard invasion by eliminating individuals before they set seed. Please help us rip out as much of this weed as possible.

We will supply tools, gloves, and water. Wear layers and field shoes/boots. Bring a lunch, grab a friend and help native wildflowers flourish again.