

sanctuary

A Newsletter of The Ridges Sanctuary



Sustainability

The mission of the Ridges Sanctuary is to protect the Sanctuary and inspire stewardship of natural areas through programs of education, outreach and research.



Photo by Paul Burron

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CONTACT US

The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc.

PO Box 152 8270 Hwy. 57
Baileys Harbor, WI 54202

Office: (920) 839-2802
Nature Center: (920) 839-1101
Fax: (920) 839-2234
info@ridgessanctuary.org
www.RidgesSanctuary.org

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From the Rangelight

Sustaining Lasting Connections

I've spent many hours walking The Ridges' trails, observing the changes from one season to the next. The Sanctuary is truly a place where one can find peace while observing the natural wonders of nature. As I've said before, it's a sanctuary for the unique flora and fauna that inhabit the ridges and swales as well as a sanctuary for us all.

Every Spring,

Sandhill Cranes bugle overhead as they come back from their wintering grounds; Dwarf Lake Iris blanket the forest floor in deep blue.

Every Summer,

Hine's emerald dragonflies soar up and down the swales; from one week to the next the colors and designs of nature change as new flora and fauna appear.

Every Fall,

The autumn fragrance of the Sanctuary is incredible as the leaves fall and cold winds blow off the lake.

Every Winter,

The evergreens etched with fresh white snow create a wonderland – quiet and peaceful.

Jens Jensen stated in a 1941 letter, "...the Sanctuary is lasting, it belongs to the future, to the future of unborn generations of unaccountable ages." These personal connections/observations I've made I'm sure are similar to what Jens Jensen and many others have experienced over the past seventy years. We have

truly made the Sanctuary "lasting", an achievement we all should be proud of. It is a success story in many ways for Wisconsin conservation history and the reason why we need to wisely plan our future so many more generations can have the same connections.

"...the Sanctuary is lasting, it belongs to the future, to the future of unborn generations of unaccountable ages."

Jens Jensen (1941)

One of my good friends, Roger Kuhns, and I have sat around the Range Light kitchen table, many times, having a cup of coffee while talking about future challenges, the meaning behind the Sanctuary, and what "lasting" (Or what we say today – sustainable) means to our organization. Based on our conversations, I have asked Roger to share his thoughts in this newsletter, so you as members understand how we will continue to plan our future, thoughtfully, through the **three pillars of sustainability – environment, community and economics**. Our decisions today will define our future, to truly make it "lasting", for many generations to come.

If you have thoughts or comments about The Ridges' future, I'd love to hear them. Stop by for a cup of coffee and let's talk.

Steve Leonard
Executive Director
steve@ridgessanctuary.org



Emma, Inez e³ Olivia "working the trails" at The Ridges (circa 1948)

Quick Notes

DCIST – Maintaining the Peninsula's Biodiversity

With outreach a major part of The Ridges' mission, we were excited to take on the role of the Door County Invasive Species Team coordinator this season! Stewardship Coordinator **Marne Kaeske** took the reins of this project, working with Federal, State, and local land managers and the public to identify, monitor and control non-native and aggressive plants throughout the Door peninsula. We have a dynamic and sensitive ecosystem to protect, with almost 300 miles of shoreline, five State Parks, and a large acreage of State Natural Areas. DCIST is always looking to gain support through volunteer efforts and to teach land owners the best management practices for weed control. Stay current with DCIST events and opportunities by requesting email updates at: <http://ridgessanctuary.org/dcist-invasive-species/> - go to the bottom-left of the page to sign up.

Investigating Water Quality

The Ridges Sanctuary's stream monitors successfully completed their second season of data collection. With new volunteers at Stony Creek and Hibbards Creek, the study now covers nine streams monitored by 16 volunteers. Some monitors advanced to the use of more technical equipment utilizing the State's Level 2 program. Great job to those stewards invested in investigating the county's surface water quality!

Fish & Wildlife Grant

You may have seen the beautiful plumes of phragmites along the road, but this aggressive invader is choking out native wetland plants all over Door County. The Ridges Sanctuary received a grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Service to tackle the phragmites explosion on Pickerel pond. Volunteers have spent many hours bundling and spraying while slogging around in boggy conditions. The good news is that the areas treated in past years are responding to the treatment.

More is Better

Watch for a series of staff sponsored cookouts at the Upper Range Light next summer. In order to connect with more of our membership, all members are invited to stop in and chat with the staff and enjoy a burger and the fixins. Instead of one annual picnic, we will have five monthly cookouts!

A Bent for Nature

The third class of Wisconsin Naturalists has just 'graduated'. In the three years since it was begun the popular offering has sent over 40 new stewards out to do volunteer work in education, interpretation, and land stewardship.

Land Acquisitions

Thanks to the WDNR Stewardship Fund and a US Fish & Wildlife Coastal grant, The Ridges Sanctuary has recently preserved 45 more acres to help protect the watershed that drains the ridges and swales. More to come in the next flyer.

Can't Say it Enough!

Have we said this before? Thank you to all our marvelous volunteers. When you see all the programs generated from The Ridges, know that we could NOT do it without the generosity of our volunteers. From mailings to weed pulling to serving wine and greeting visitors, you are there when we need you. Thank you.

Memories of The Ridges

The Ridges Memory Project is seeking your submissions for a special collection of personal memories we are putting together in honor of our 75th anniversary coming up in 2012. A few sentences or detailed paragraphs are all welcome, as we want to hear your favorite memory, to know how this special place has touched you, or lessons you have learned from time spent at The Sanctuary. All names of persons who submit memories or photos will be entered in a drawing for one of the published books! (we're giving away 10!) Deadline for submissions is June 1, 2011.

A cherished memory of the Ridges is of the annual pilgrimage to Evergreen Ridge [Wintergreen Trail?] to see the trailing arbutus. My daughter and I would kneel down to enjoy the delicate fragrance of this special plant.

– Emily Hickey

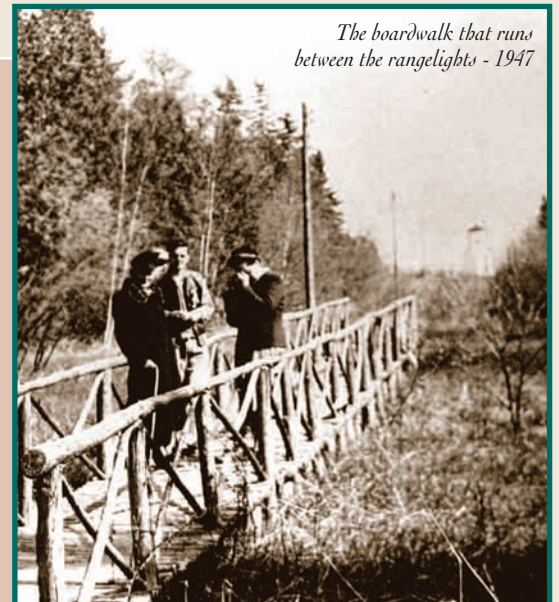
Help us get a complete 'history of memories' of The Ridges Sanctuary. We are looking for simple stories, remembrances, and reflections about your experiences and feelings related to The Ridges Sanctuary. It can be in the form of a poem, a story, an anecdote, or a drawing that shows your connection to this beautiful place.

Calling all Families!

The planning process for the future direction of The Ridges depends on the voices of the members and future members. We want to hear your ideas. If you can find some time to be a part of a focus group, please call Karen at The Ridges (920) 839-2802. We are especially looking for families, parents, grandparents, and children to give an hour or two to help with the planning process.

Ridges Ride Video link

Those of you who are nostalgic for the balmy days of last June at The Ridges, check out this video of the Ride for Nature. Included are some very nostalgia-inducing clips of the Sanctuary. www.vimeo.com/16557469



The boardwalk that runs between the ranglights - 1947

You don't have to be a writer (we can help with any finishing touches you feel are needed), you need only take the time to reflect, and then share what you remember, value, and hope to preserve about The Ridges. Did you work in the nature store? On the grounds? Volunteer for special events? Whether it was decades ago, or just this year, we need your contributions to complete the Memories Project.

Remember, it is the everyday experiences and connections we have made with this special place that we are trying to capture.

Electronic submissions are best but we will certainly welcome any other format. Contact Cathleen Haskins at 262-949-4617, or cathleenhaskins@yahoo.com or The Ridges Sanctuary at 920-839-2802, or info@ridgessanctuary.org.

Practicing Sustainability for The Ridges

by Dr. Roger Kubns

One finds peace and often solitude while walking the many trails throughout The Ridges Sanctuary. It is a place that feels timeless and untouched by the busy world around the Sanctuary's edges. The dream of the founders was to protect it forever so all might experience its nature – to have a sustainable Sanctuary.

How can we as leaders and members of the Sanctuary and the community around it assure its sustainability? What do we mean by sustainability? One definition is: *Meeting the needs of the present generation while improving the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

It is not hard to see the sense in adopting this definition to the Sanctuary's planning and future protection. But this definition does not tell us how to practice sustainability or what it really means in the context of our community.

There are three fundamental pillars of sustainability which are needed to guide The Ridges Sanctuary's actions in the future: Environment, Community, and Economy.

The Environment

The Ridges Sanctuary is exactly that – a precious sanctuary. It tells the geological story of Lake Michigan and provides refuge for an incredible diversity of flora and fauna: Ram's Head orchids, Showy Lady-slipper orchids, Hine's Emerald dragonflies, Trailing arbutus, Dwarf Lake iris, Four-toed salamanders ...and the list goes on.

The environment of The Ridges Sanctuary is not just the held property, but the larger ecosystem within which it sits. The Ridges is committed to the sustainability of the area within its borders and to the environment of all the lands which are impacted by its actions.

The Community

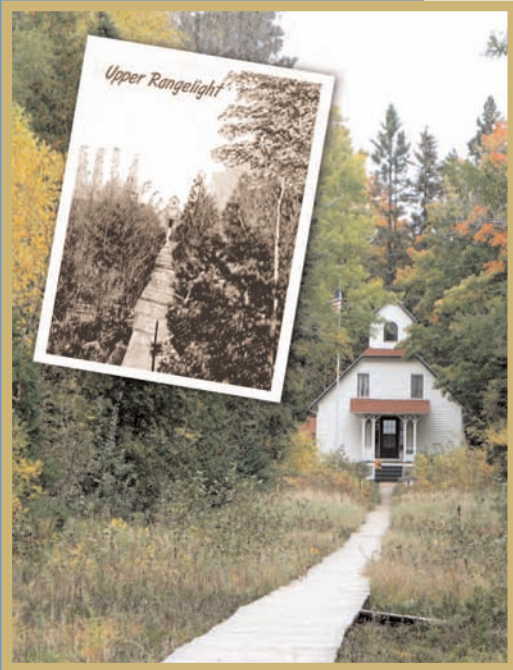
As stewards of this natural diversity, it is imperative that The Ridges Sanctuary reach out to educate the community and seek proactive, protective measures – along its edges, in its watershed, through its groundwater, and through habitat diversity and connective corridors.

It is clear that sustainability principles must be our guide to reducing impacts on the Sanctuary. This is why The Ridges Sanctuary has:

- Focused on a watershed management plan to protect water quality impacting the swales
- Acquired adjacent lands to protect wetlands and surrounding landscapes
- Become the coordinator of the Door County Invasive Species Team to work with landowners on invasive species beyond our borders
- Expanded our education programs, onsite and throughout the county, to connect children to the natural world and encourage adults to act as land stewards

The Ridges Sanctuary will reach out to our members, Door County residents, businesses, visitors, environmental organizations, and others as we plan our future.

As our programs expand, we will have a larger community of members, supporters, and neighbors to draw upon to help protect the Sanctuary.



Three fundamental pillars of sustainability: Environment, Community, and Economy.

The Economy

Wise land stewardship must include long-term economic planning to minimize budgetary limitations that may impact the organization. This means that operations, maintenance and future expansion into a new interpretive center must demonstrate economically sustainable solutions. The community and visitors will look to the Sanctuary as an example of how to apply such solutions and how to do so in a financially realistic way.

The Sanctuary should not only draw upon sustainability to guide its internal budget but should also realize it can have a positive influence beyond its borders with the local economy.

Thus, we find that the definition of sustainability needs to include our active pursuit of *environmental protection* while *enriching our community* and doing so in an *economically positive way*. This view of sustainability calls upon nature as its example; nature becomes our guide as we mimic her ways by balancing all those forces that can impact in a positive or negative way, the Sanctuary's well being.

Until we define sustainability - by setting measurable outcomes based on The Ridges' environment, community and economy - we won't know if we are achieving our ultimate goal of protecting the Sanctuary. I offer this working definition of sustainability to measure our success: *The application of quantifiable practices that include economic, social and environmental metrics that measure reductions in energy and resources use, and aggressive improvement of environment and communities while working toward a zero net total impact.* This will mean that we are improving

all three principles of sustainability, also known as the triple bottom line: **Environment, Community, and Economy.**

I seek a partnership with The Ridges organization and all of its members; to create a sustainable model that will protect this very special place we all treasure – to set sustainability goals and principles today so the Sanctuary can be appreciated for many generations to come. Only then will we truly protect the Sanctuary.

Your input is encouraged as we define sustainability and what it means for The Ridges Sanctuary.

Please contact Steve Leonard, Executive Director, at 920-839-2802, steve@ridgessanctuary.org or Dr. Roger Kuhns at 215-300-9628, roger_kuhns_monologues@yahoo.com



photo by Len Villano



Dr. Roger Kuhns is a geologist and environmental scientist with over 30 years experience in natural resources, land use, geology, economics, and communication. He has worked nationally and internationally on all types of resource projects, from his home in Connecticut or his cottage in Jacksonport, Door County.

Sustainability = *Engaging Families with Nature*

For almost 75 years, the Ridges Sanctuary has been connecting people of all ages to nature and helping them to understand the importance of natural areas. With a better understanding of our dependence on the environment, we hope that these people will grow to love, and eventually work to conserve and protect, the natural world.

Connecting children to nature would seem to be an easy goal to accomplish. After all, kids seem to have an affinity for the outdoors and all the wonders they can discover there. (In fact, biologist E.O. Wilson has suggested that all humans have an innate attraction to natural things - a theory he calls "biophilia.") However, today's children seem to be farther removed from the natural world than any previous generation. Fewer families live in rural areas where exposure to nature is an everyday occurrence. Lured by television, video games, and the internet, children (and adults) tend to find recreational opportunities indoors rather than outdoors. Highly structured activities, like play dates, music lessons, and soccer practice, fill our children's daily schedules, leaving little time for free play and exploration. And there are certainly safety issues to be considered - most parents shudder at the idea of their kids roaming through the neighborhood unsupervised for much of their free time, yet a generation ago this was a common occurrence.

It's becoming very clear that today we have to work harder to create that connection between nature and children. So how do we connect the next generation to the natural world, in hopes that they will someday become dedicated stewards of our natural treasures?

The Ridges believes that involving parents, or other influential adults, is the key to engaging kids with nature. So, instead of dropping our children off at the nature center for an hour or two of nature programming (one more structured activity to fit into the

schedule!), we as parents should explore and learn **with** our children.

Helping parents and grandparents feel more at ease while exploring the outdoors is one of the main goals of the *No Family Left Inside* (a cooperative program with the Baileys Harbor McArdle Library and the Northern Door Y) program which has been underway at The Ridges for about a year. We have been offering activities designed to help families forge a connection to nature by exploring, investigating, and learning together. Families have searched for geocaches hidden in the Sanctuary, listened to frog songs and other signs of spring, and captured and tagged monarch butterflies. They've wandered through the woods by moonlight and taken digital photographs to complete a scavenger hunt.

As we discuss the idea of sustainability, working to engage families in nature makes perfect sense. Our membership base is the lifeblood of the organization - without new members, we will be unable to sustain the work of the Ridges. We know that many of our current members experienced The Ridges as children and continue that connection in adulthood. So, if we can create meaningful connections between the next generation of potential members and the Sanctuary, we are really cultivating the next generation of stewards for the organization.

So grab a kid or two and join us - many more opportunities lie ahead! *No Family Left Inside* programs will be offered once a month from January through May, and more frequently during the summer months (see a list of some upcoming events on the next page).

"In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught."

Baba Dioum, Senegalese environmentalist

Fly Amanita mushroom



Nature Notes

☼ Rainfall this past summer was the highest recorded since our weather station was set up nine years ago. From May 1 through September 30, we had 20.7 inches of rain - almost four inches higher than average. Temperatures during the period were average. Plants were flowering about two weeks ahead of schedule throughout the season.

☼ Rain and mild temperatures created good conditions for mushroom growth all summer. We identified Honey Mushrooms, Apricot Jelly Fungi, Fly Amanitas and many Puffballs.

☼ Many visitors were excited to observe a pair of Sandhill Cranes nesting just off the observation platform on Winter Wren swale. They were on the nest from April 15 to about May 15 when the eggs finally hatched. We're hopeful that the adults will return to nest again next spring.

☼ Our summer naturalist, Aubrey Maccoux, took a rather unusual job after leaving the Ridges: acting as a "crane mama" to young Whooping Cranes at the Necedah Wildlife Refuge. Dressed in a white crane costume, she and her co-workers would lead the young cranes

out each day for a few hours of foraging and flight practice. Aubrey reported that the birds have been released in the company of older cranes, from whom they will learn the migration route to Florida's Gulf Coast.

☼ Dark-eyed Juncos were first seen in The Ridges on September 15. Can winter be far behind?

☼ A few Dwarf Lake Iris, apparently confused by a spell of warm weather, were blooming in mid-October.

Kids' Activity Page



Be Creative this Winter and Snow Paint!

By Marge Trocki

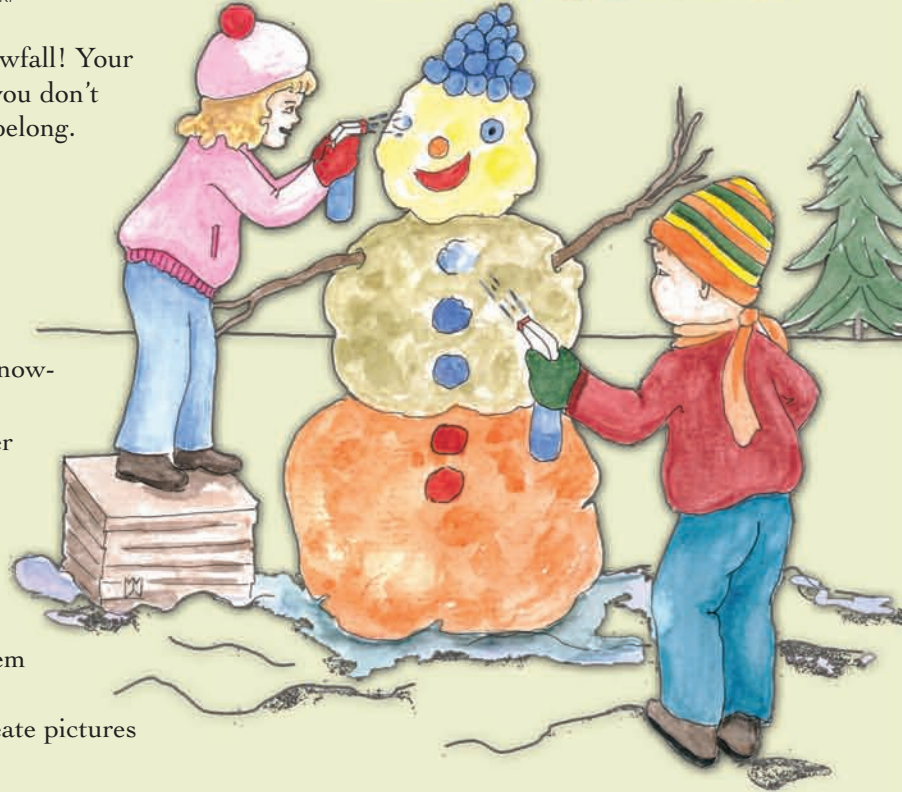
Bring out the artist in you after the next decent snowfall! Your "canvas" can be as big as your yard. And, better yet, you don't have to worry about splashing paint where it doesn't belong.

You will need:

- Snow
- Cold water
- Spray bottles
- Food coloring

Here's what you do:

1. After a good snowfall, pat down a portion of your snow-covered yard to use as the "canvas" for your artwork.
2. Fill several spray bottles with cold water. Cold water will not melt the snow as fast as warm water. Add a few drops of food coloring in each bottle. Yellow, red, and blue are good basic colors to start with, since they can be mixed to make other colors.
3. Wear old clothes since food coloring does not always wash out of clothing. Rubber dishwashing gloves can also be worn over winter gloves to keep them from being stained.
4. Spray the colored paint on the "snow canvas" to create pictures or designs in the snow.



More ways to use your snow "paint".

- Make a maze for all your friends to try and follow. It can be as big or as small as you would like.
- Try your hand at tic-tac-toe. You and your opponent can use different color "paints" for the x's and o's.
- Make a snowman and add a whole new look by painting each section a different color. Can't find a carrot for the nose, or buttons for the coat? Just paint them on!

The possibilities are endless when it comes to snow painting.
Bundle up and have some snow painting fun this winter!

No Family Left Inside Events

These programs are part of the *No Family Left Inside* series, and are designed for parents and children to learn and explore together. Pre-registration is required, call 839-2802 or the Northern Door YMCA 868-3660.

January 15 at 10 AM – Family Snowshoe Hike

Explore the winter woods on easy to maneuver showshoes. (Some snowshoes available – call to reserve) \$10/Family

February 19 at 10 AM – GeoCaching

Join us for a high-tech treasure hunt using GPS technology. We'll start with the basics of geocaching, then go on a search for caches hidden at The Ridges. \$10/Family

March 19 at 10 AM – Build a Bluebird House

A bluebird house can help you attract these beautiful birds to your yard. We'll learn about bluebird ecology and construct a simple house to take home. \$15/Family

April 16 at 10 AM – Signs of Spring

Will Spring ever come? Hike the Ridges and look for the signs - they are all around, if you know what to look for! \$10/Family

May 14 at 6 PM – Frog Walk

Frogs are very noisy in the spring, trying to attract the perfect mate. We can HEAR them, but can we FIND them? Join us as we learn about and try to locate these elusive singers. \$10/Family

Address Service Requested

Sanctuary - Fall 2010; Volume 37, No. 2

Thank You!

Businesses in Door County recognize the importance of The Ridges Sanctuary as a destination point for visitors and a valuable asset to the community. They have shown their support with business memberships and "In Kind" donations.

Thank You to All of Them!

Associated Bank
Baileys Harbor Cornerstone
— Pub & Restaurant
Baileys Harbor
Yacht Club Resort
Baylake Bank
Bayshore Outfitters
Beachfront Inn
Blacksmith Inn
CobraHead (Cambridge, WI)
Country View Farms
Coyote Roadhouse
Door County Coffee and Tea
Door County
Ice Cream Factory
Door County Nature and Travel
Door County Property Owners
Door County Trolley

Door County YMCA
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EcoDoor
Ecology Sports
Econo Foods
Espresso Lane
Fish Creek Kite Company
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Flanigan Distributing
Glidden Lodge Beach Resort
Going Garbage & Recycling
Great Lakes Yacht Services
Great Northern Construction
Harbor Fish Market & Grille
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Hickey Brothers Fisheries
Homestead Suites
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*Bold = Business Membership