

Winter Welcome

Welcome to winter in the dunes. Snowflakes are gracefully drifting across the sand being propelled into a variety of shapes by the brisk northerly winds. The lakeshore is encased in ice sculptures. These icy mountains look inviting but are highly dangerous.

Most birds have headed south, although many still spend winter in the dunes. The State Park's Nature Center offers an excellent opportunity for winter bird watching. For those who are adventurous and want to experience winter, the National Lakeshore will offer walks every weekend afternoon at 1:30 p.m.



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Producing Maple Syrup

by Angel Gochee-Goins

Maple syrup is a sweetener made from the sap of maple trees, particularly the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) due to its high sugar content in the sap. Quebec in Canada makes about 75% of the world's maple syrup while Vermont is the biggest U.S. producer. However maple syrup can be produced wherever the correct weather conditions occur.

Traditionally, maple syrup was harvested by tapping a maple tree through the bark into the wood xylem and allowing the sap to run into a bucket. The sap is collected daily and boiled down to reduce its water content. Continued boiling will convert the maple syrup to maple sugar.

Freezing nights and warm days are needed in order for the sap to flow. The temperature change from above to below freezing will cause water uptake by the tree from the soil. The water will be drawn up by the maple trees into the stems and branches. Trees are not tapped until they have a diameter of at least 10 inches.

Pure maple syrup is the preferred topping for pancakes, waffles and French toast in North America. Maple syrup can also be used as a sweetener for applesauce, baked beans, cakes, pies, breads, and candied sweet potatoes.

Naomi Chellberg Studebaker and her family began tapping the 200 sugar maple trees at Chellberg farm in the 1930s. They produced 55 gallons of syrup per year and sold it for under \$10 per gallon. Most of the syrup was sold at the farm, and there was no need for advertising, word of mouth brought in enough customers.

- continued on page 2 -

Maple Sugar Time Festival

March 1, 2, 8 and 9, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Chellberg Farm Area at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

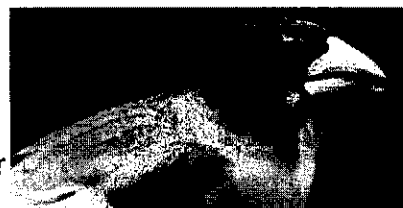
Observe the evolution of maple sugaring through the ages from ancient American Indian methods, to iron kettles, to a 1930s commercial operation. Savor the taste of pure maple syrup on pancakes for a small fee.

Mark Your Calendars
Native Plant Sale on Saturday, April 5

State Park Activities

Saturday and Sunday, December 8 and 9 - Duneland Winter Birding Days!

Join the Indiana Dunes State Park Naturalist for a fun look at the birds of Indiana Dunes. On Saturday at 2pm, join Wild Birds Unlimited Chief Naturalist, John Schaust, as he demonstrates wild bird banding. We'll set up the mist nets and catch birds for up close views! On Sunday at 2pm, meet hawks, eagles, owls and more as the Hardy Lake Reservoir Raptor Rehab center brings in their live birds of prey. \$2.00 per person fee. Program takes place at the Nature Center Auditorium.



Evening Grosbeak seen at Dunes Nature Center Feeders this fall.
Photo taken by Michael Topp.

Saturday, December 15 - Indiana Dunes Christmas Bird Count

Annual all-day citizen science event for serious birders. Pre-register at 219-926-1390. Day begins at Nature Center at 7am. Chili lunch offered around noon with the countdown at 4:30pm.

Monday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Shopping Stroll

New tradition at Dunes State Park. You have got your shopping done, now join us for a fresh air stroll through the winter dunes forests at 10:00 a.m. We will explore the winter life and beauty of the dunes. Meet at Nature Center.

Saturday, January 19 - Indiana Dunes Geo cache Adventure: Chili Dump and Slide

The Indiana State Park's first geocache event of the year will run from noon until 5:00 p.m. Join other geocachers and GPS enthusiasts for a fun day of sledding, competitions, and a chili pitch-in. More info at www.geocaching.com or by calling the Nature Center at 219-926-1390.

Saturday, February 2 - Dunes Photography Contest Workshop

Join DNR photographer Richard Fields for free mini-workshop which will look at techniques for getting that great dunes shot. The Winter Photography Contest will run though the entire month of February, with winners being selected by park visitors in March. Mini-workshop takes place at the Nature Center at 2:00 p.m. Call 219-926-1390 for more information.

Stop by the Nature Center and visit their "Nature's Angels" tree. Help make the State Park's wishes come true this holiday season. The birds, animals and the habitats of the Indiana Dunes will thank you.

~ continued from page 1 ~

The sugar shack at the Chellberg Farm sustained damage during the severe storms this past summer and is currently undergoing extensive restoration. Approximately 25% of the block wall and 70% of the roof will need to be replaced. The national lakeshore hopes to have repairs completed in time for Maple Sugar Time 2008. However, with all construction it is weather dependent. The main hold-up will be the block repairs.

The work is being overseen by Maintenance with assistance from Resource Management. The lakeshore's maintenance guys are trying to "authenticate" a mortar mix that will look as close to the original as possible.

The Bailly Main House was also damaged in the storms, however the repairs are complete and turned out quite nice. Maintenance milled the siding in the shop to match the existing siding.



Walking Over The Snow

by Angel Gochee-Goins



Snowshoes are footwear designed specifically for walking over the snow. Snowshoes work by distributing the weight of a person over a much larger area so that the person's foot does not sink completely into the snow, a quality known as "flotation".

Traditional snowshoes have a hardwood frame with rawhide lacings. Some modern snowshoes are similar, but most are now made of light metal. The toe area of the snowshoe is usually raised for maneuverability. Snowshoes must not accumulate snow, hence the latticework construction. Snowshoes require bindings to attach them to feet.

Today, snowshoes are mainly used for recreational purposes by those who like to continue hiking in the wintertime. In the past, they were essential tools for fur traders, trappers and anyone whose life or living depended on the ability to get around in areas of deep and frequent snowfall. Nearly every northern Native American tribe developed its own particular shape of snowshoe. French voyageurs perfected the use of snowshoes in the early 1600s. In fact, the superior snowshoeing skills of the French almost turned the French and Indian Wars in their favor. However, the British were quick learners. The Oxford English Dictionary reports the use of the term snowshoes as early as 1674.

Interested in trying your hand at snowshoeing or should I say interested in strapping on a pair, then hope for snow and attend a "Snowshoe Walk" at the national lakeshore. Join a ranger and explore the winter forest on snowshoes every Saturday at 1:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. during January and February. A limited number of snowshoes are available. If not enough snow, a nature hike will be offered. Call the visitor center (219-926-7561 extension 225) in advance for snow conditions.

New Superintendent at Lakeshore

by Zella Olson

Constantine (Costa) J. Dillon has been named as the new Superintendent of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Prior to coming to the dunes, Costa was the Superintendent of the Albright Training Center at Grand Canyon National Park, Superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore in New York, and Superintendent at Homestead National Monument in Nebraska.

Dillon began his NPS career as a volunteer at Cabrillo National Monument, CA, and went on to work as a ranger at Independence National Historical Park, PA, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, NM, Gettysburg National Military Park, PA, Eisenhower National Historic Site, PA, and Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, AZ. He served as both a district ranger and later as the Chief of Interpretation at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, CA.

A lengthy NPS career has co-existed with his career in feature film production. He created the concept and wrote the original motion picture *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* (NAI Entertainment, 1978). Among his other films as author/actor are: *Return of the Killer Tomatoes* (New World Pictures, 1988), *Killer Tomatoes Strike Back* (20th Century Fox, 1990), *Killer Tomatoes Eat France* (20th Century Fox, 1992), and *Sour Grapes* (TMS Pictures, 1986).

The Friends welcome Costa and his family to the area and look forward to working with him as we continue to provide financial and volunteer support to the national lakeshore.



FRIENDS OF *Indiana Dunes*

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Our mission is to enhance and foster understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the Indiana Dunes through financial and volunteer support of the state and national parks.

Join the Friends

Friends of Indiana Dunes are just that, individuals who care about the Indiana Dunes. The State Park and the National Lakeshore are priceless natural resources in the midst of the heartland's largest metropolitan area. The Friends sponsor various events during the year to benefit these parks.



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Friends of Indiana Dunes

P.O. Box 166
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Regular Member:

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- Senior Citizen \$15
- Business/Corporate \$100

Sustaining Member:

- Individual/Family \$40
- Business/Corporate \$250

Additional Contribution:

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