



## The Ebersole Center is Being **INVADED!**

By Lisa Gallinari

The Ebersole Center is being invaded by aliens...plants that is. An "alien plant" is one that is introduced into a plant community where it was not previously found. An alien plant becomes an "invasive species" when it vigorously displaces a naturally occurring species in an ecosystem. Invasive species become so successful in a new environment because they find favorable environmental conditions and a lack of natural predators, disease, or competition that would help control their population. The Center is fighting many invasive species, but there are three that are of special concern.



**Garlic Mustard** (*Alliaria petiolata*) poses a severe threat to native forest wildflowers and plants by completely displacing them. A single Garlic Mustard plant can produce thousands of seeds each year that will scatter throughout the forest. These seeds can remain in the soil for a number of years and so the containment of Garlic Mustard is a continual process. The most practical control of Garlic Mustard is to remove the

entire plant before it goes to seed, in other words, "weeding it out." This was done in the Center's Beech-Maple forest this past summer.



**Glossy Buckthorn** (*Rhamnus frangula*) is a large non-native woody shrub that was introduced as an ornamental plant from Eurasia. It was at one time thought to be "good" for wildlife due to its abundance of berries, however, it soon became a "wolf in sheep's clothing," gobbling up the landscape. Glossy Buckthorn typically invades wetlands, yet has a wide habitat tolerance, rapid growth and extensive root systems. It produces large

amounts of flowers and fruits and the seeds are widely dispersed by birds. Once the plants become established, they aggressively invade natural areas and form thick patches that displace native species, which in turn diminishes diversity in the ecosystem. There are many ways to control the spread of Glossy Buckthorn, but one of the most successful is to cut it down in fall or winter and apply an herbicide to the stumps. This process was used this fall to remove some of the abundant growth found in the Center's fen and wetland areas, however much more remains to be done!



**Spotted Knapweed** (*Centurea maculosa*) is an aggressive plant species that rapidly invades pastures, rangeland and prairies. It was introduced in North America from Eastern Europe as contaminant in crop seed. This plant is a mass seed producer, producing up to 1000 seeds per plant! The seed remains viable for several years so the infestation can continue, thus requiring constant monitoring. It can

be controlled with the use of herbicides or by hand weeding if the infestation isn't too extensive. The plant was sighted on the Center's prairie this past summer and was removed. The area will be monitored to prevent its return.



Leonard Lipinski and Cheri Jacobs team up to clear Glossy Buckthorn. Photo courtesy of Michael Kost.

### Help Fight Invasive Plants!

The Ebersole Center hosted its first "Stewardship Day" on Saturday, October 15th as a way of helping the Center maintain and protect its valuable natural assets and communities. Twelve people participated in the removal of invasive species that have encroached on the very unique fen that is located along the eastern and southern shores of Jackson Lake. Over the years this area has become overgrown with numerous shrubs and trees but is now most threatened by Glossy Buckthorn and Red Maples. If left alone, these invasive and dominate species will subdue the characteristic fen species of sphagnum moss, pitcher plants, sundew, orchids and many other plants that have given the fen its uniqueness. Participants in our first Stewardship Day included: Mike Kost, ecologist with the Michigan Natural Features Inventory Program and Ebersole Foundation Board Member; Jason Cherry; Leonard Lipinski and Cheri Jacobs, also Foundation Board Members; Jason (Center Naturalist) and Janine Byler; Brandon and Amy Seitz and John and Sharon Schimmel.

Our next Stewardship Day is scheduled for Saturday, November 12th. If you are interested in helping with this very important project to assist the Center, we can use many more volunteers. Please call the Center at (517) 325-6348 to let us know of your interest.





## Ebersole Center in the Classroom

This winter the Ebersole Center will be debuting it's new Outreach Program. Center staff will visit your classroom and cover topics from adaptations, soils, and science, to teambuilding. Programs are geared toward all grade levels and tied into the Michigan Curriculum Framework. These programs can also be used as a pre/post session to your Ebersole visit. Presentations are limited to groups of 35 or less and program prices may vary based on location and group size.

### Outreach Program topics that will be offered are:

- Animal Adaptations (featuring live animals)
- Soil Composition
- Composting
- Animal Ecology (featuring live animals)
- Food Chains
- Plant Life
- Teambuilding for Students or Adults

All topics are designed to fit your classroom needs. If you are interested in a topic that is not listed, please let us know; we may be able to accommodate your special request.

If you would like more information or would like to schedule an Outreach Program, please contact the Center at (517) 325-6348.



Photos courtesy of Jason Byler

## Teambuilding Course Improvements

Center naturalists, Tom Stone and Jason Byler, spent much of this summer doing a "makeover" of the Center's teambuilding course. The course is designed to promote "teambuilding" through the completion of a series of initiatives or "challenges" that require group teamwork in order to solve them. Several of the current initiatives were eliminated but eight new ones were added making the course even better than before. In addition, a new guide has been written to make the course safer and more "user friendly." Teachers and visitors to the Center should consider including a teambuilding component in their next visit. We think you'll like the improvements. The naturalists also developed a set of team building initiatives designed for the classroom setting. These will be available as part of the Center's Outreach Program. A team-building "facilitators" workshop has been planned for Saturday, April 1, 2006. Anyone interested in attending the workshop or scheduling a classroom teambuilding session should contact the Ebersole Center Office at (517) 325-6348.

## Annual Open House: Saturday, April 29, 2006

We're shaking things up a bit and moving the Annual Open House to spring! A Spring Open House will allow visitors the opportunity to see the Center wake up from its winter slumber with all the color of spring wildflowers and the music of our singing frogs. There will be canoeing, fishing, archery and interpretive hikes. Hayrides, facility tours, and games for the kids will also be available. Watch for details in the spring issue of EarthBeat and on the back of the Lansing School District's March and April school lunch menus. Hope to see you this spring!



Photo courtesy of Jason Byler

## Summer and Fall Ebersole Visitors

The Center had a very busy summer schedule filled with high school marching bands and football camps. The groups that joined us this summer were; Decatur High School Marching Band, Hastings High School Marching Band, Okemos High School Football Camp, Everett High School Marching Band and Eastern High School Marching Band.

This fall we are filled with school groups and weekend programs. The groups joining us are; Lowell Cherry Creek Elementary School, the National Turkey Federation's Women in the Outdoors of Wayland, South Godwin of Grand Rapids, Beekman Center from Lansing School District, St. Thomas School of East Lansing, Immaculate Heart of Mary School of Lansing, Holt High School, Dewitt Junior High, Eaton Rapids Northwestern Elementary School and Creative Memories Scrapbooking from Lansing.





## Gifts to the Foundation

In August the Foundation made its second land payment of \$116,000. Many thanks to all of you who supported our efforts this past year and special thanks to the Dart Foundation for making this possible. Approximately \$60,000 is still needed for our August 2006 payment. In addition, Foundation operating dollars are also needed to support our new Executive Director position. Please give generously by using the enclosed contribution envelope and remember that all contributions are federally tax deductible. Checks should be made payable to the Ebersole Foundation and mailed to the Center at 3400 Second St., Wayland, MI 49348.

## Ebersole grandfriendimus • Leonard Lipinski

Our Foundation's honored and rare species for this issue of EarthBeat is board member Leonard Lipinski. Leonard has worked as a geologist for the Michigan Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality for 28 years. He and his wife Sue have two sons, both of whom graduated from the Lansing School District. Leonard visited the Ebersole Center for the first time seventeen years ago as a parent-chaperone for his oldest son's class at North Elementary School. Over the years he volunteered many more times and when asked why, he says, "I think Ebersole is a great place. Children spend too much time indoors watching TV and playing video game these days. I think it is important that children have an opportunity to get outside and see nature. This is especially important for children in an urban setting. Ebersole provides a fantastic opportunity for that."

Leonard was recognized for his dedication to the Ebersole Center by being asked to serve on the Ebersole Advisory Committee by Lansing Board of Education. He has expanded his support by also serving on the Ebersole Foundation where he currently holds the position of Vice-Chair and Chair of the Banquet/Auction Committee. We are extremely thankful for Leonard's commitment to the Ebersole Center, the Ebersole Foundation and honor his devotion to our community and the Lansing School District.



## Vernon D. Ebersole Foundation Contracts to Hire First Director

The Vernon D. Ebersole Foundation recently contracted with JCS Non-Profit Solutions to hire John C. Schimmel as Executive Director. He began his assignment in October 2005. Since the Foundation's inception in 2003, John has volunteered his services as Chairperson of the Ebersole Board of Trustees.

Mr. Schimmel's love for the environment and the Ebersole Center has spanned his entire career with the Lansing School District. While at the district he served as the Ebersole Center's, naturalist, site coordinator, and director. In 2001 the Lansing Board of Education recognized his dedication by naming the Center's prairie in his name. It is indeed an honor to have him serve as the first Executive Director of the Foundation. We all wish him well as he breaks new ground for the Foundation.

## Give Your Heart to Ebersole

### "50s Style"

#### Hey Daddy-Os and Hot Mamas!

Save the date of Saturday, February 4, 2006 to attend another awesome auction and banquet! The planning committee has made a number of changes that should make it bigger, better and more bodacious than last year. As the title suggests, we have a theme for this year's event...the "frotlicking fifties." We've also added dancing after the auction to the sounds of the "Oldies but Goodies Band". So even if you have fuzzy memories of the fifties, we think you're going to love this year's new and improved version of the "Give Your Heart to Ebersole" evening that will give us a chance to support the Ebersole Center and have fun doing it. We are also still looking for auction items and sponsorships, so if you would like to help us out, please contact John Schimmel at (517) 881-8883. Watch for more details as we approach the holidays but mark your calendar now!



## TidBits

### Dates Are Still Available


Camping dates are still available for any group looking for a Winter or Spring program. The Center also has many weekend dates available for church groups, adult groups, family reunions, and any other event you might be interested in hosting. School groups that book in the months of January or February will receive a 15% discount off the base student price. Contact the Center at (517) 325-6348 for more information and available dates.

### EarthBeat Online

In an effort to save money and conserve paper, the Ebersole Center will be offering EarthBeat through email. If you would like to receive your edition of EarthBeat at your email address, please contact the Center at [earthbeat@ebersolecenter.com](mailto:earthbeat@ebersolecenter.com) and we will add you to our list.

### No Courier Service to the Center

The Center does not receive courier service. If you have materials that need to get to the Center they should be mailed to: Ebersole Center, 3400 2nd St., Wayland, MI 49348. Thank you for taking the time to mail important time sensitive documents directly to us!

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