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GRNA Volunteers,

Fall is in full swing here in the natural area. The foliage transformation was a bit delayed this year, but it seems we've recently reached the peak, with vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows lighting up the landscapes around Northern Michigan. At GRNA, the poison sumac is glowing scarlet along the boardwalks, and soon, the tamaracks out by the dock will turn their autumnal warm, golden hue. During this colorful season and into the beginning of winter, there are several ways to get involved at GRNA, from event planning to general office help. Check out the upcoming volunteer opportunities below, and if you don't see something for you, don't hesitate to reach out.

Emily Burke

Conservation & Education Specialist

emily@grassriver.org

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

WILD TURKEY TROT 5K COURSE GUIDES AND TIMERS

Sat, November 13 from 10:30 am - 12:30 pm-ish

For our Wild Turkey Trot 5k, which starts at 11:00 am, we need volunteers to assist with snacks, timers, and course guides. We will need 1-2 volunteers stationed at the start/finish line, and 3-6 course guides stationed solo or in pairs (if you want a buddy) along the route to guide runners and walkers on key turns of the course. And if you would like to bring a snack for runners and volunteers at the end of the race to enjoy around the campfire, we are looking for muffins, cookies, fruit, granola bars, etc. Please



email James at james@grassriver.org if you can help!

HOLIDAY CRAFTS FOR FAMILIES

Sat, December 11 from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm and during the weeks leading up to the event

GRNA is bringing back its beloved Holiday Crafts event,



and we're looking for volunteers to help with set-up, clean-up, and/or assisting with logistics and craft tables on the day of the event. There will be kid-friendly nature-themed crafts, wreath-making for adults, and refreshments. This event is planned by our Events Committee, and we also welcome new volunteers to join the planning process for the event if they desire. Please email emily@grassriver.org if you want to lend a hand.



GENERAL OFFICE HELP

Ongoing

As the year comes to a close and the GRNA Administrative Offices at the Antrim County Building in Bellaire move further down the hall, we're looking for a few folks to help with assorted office tasks. This work may include paper filing, letter stuffing, document scanning, and similar tasks. Email Emily at emily@grassriver.org if you're interested in helping out.

FRONT DESK DOCENT

Ongoing

GRNA is in need of a few volunteer docents to help us cover the front desk of the Grass River Center. This position involves opening and closing the Center, greeting visitors and answering questions, performing simple point of sale transactions from our gift shop, and light housekeeping duties to keep the Center looking tidy. If you have excellent customer service skills, are knowledgeable about Grass River or are willing to learn, and want to give back to GRNA in a meaningful way, contact James at james@grassriver.org. Training will be provided. In November and December, the Center is open Thursday through Sunday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, and from January through April, it's open on Saturdays and Sundays.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT RE-CAP

Thanks to all of you who came out to celebrate everything we've accomplished together this year at our October 6th Volunteer Appreciation Event at the Blue Pelican! It was a fantastic evening filled with delicious food, great conversation, and fun team-building activities, thanks to Lisa Thauvette of TiltThink Improv. If you missed it, take a look at these photos that captured the feeling of the evening.



HUNTING SEASON REMINDER

While hunting is never allowed at GRNA inside the Education Zone, it is allowed year-round in

some form outside the Education Zone, and fall marks the season when the most hunters are likely to be out in the natural area. We want to remind everyone to stay safe when hiking on trails outside the Education Zone this fall - including the Rail Trail and Algonquin Loop - and when volunteering in off-trail areas. Wear orange, avoid dawn and dusk outings, and review the following chart to see which types of hunting are permitted when at GRNA. Please use extra caution during deer rifle season during the second half of November.

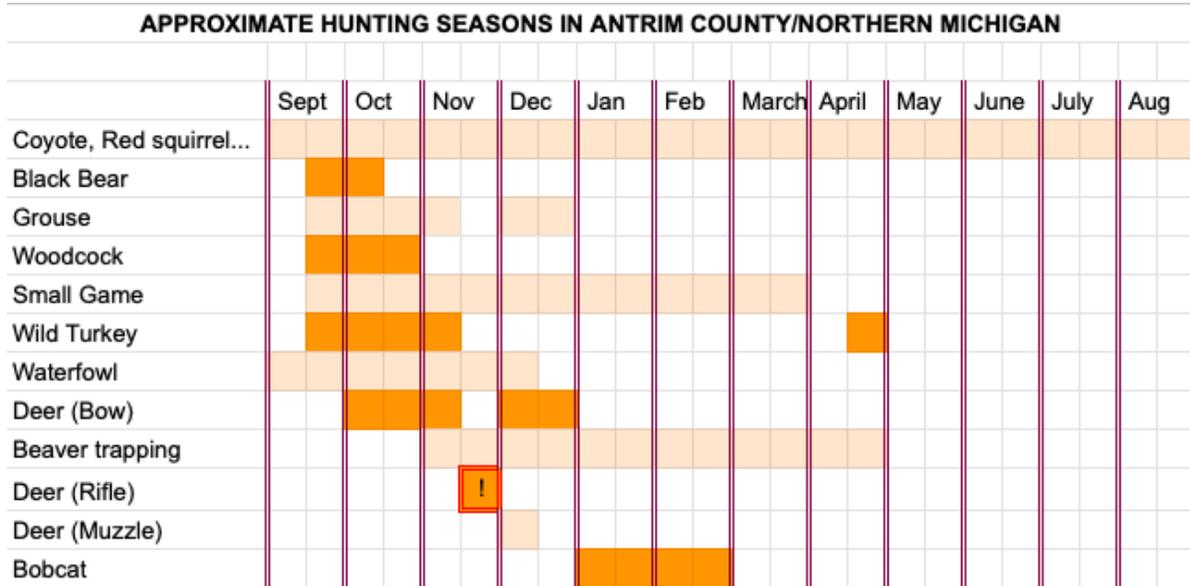


PHOTO CONTEST COMING SOON

We will soon be accepting submissions for the 2021 GRNA Photo Contest! Any photos taken within GRNA or on the Grass River itself are eligible. More details to follow on our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).



2020 submission by Chris DeLange

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: PHIL JARVI

For this month's volunteer spotlight, we're featuring Phil Jarvi, who has been volunteering at GRNA since May 2005 - that's more than 16 years! Phil's work at GRNA runs the gamut, from co-leading our summer weekly wildflower walks with Julie Hurd to covering the front desk, monitoring butterflies along a transect on the Rail Trail, and regularly getting his hands dirty in the native plant gardens and on other stewardship projects. A longtime volunteer with a wealth of natural history knowledge and a fierce advocate for the connection between nature and mental health, we caught up with Phil to hear about his experiences at GRNA over the years:

What inspires you to volunteer for GRNA?

Primarily, the opportunities to enjoy the different natural communities and sharing them with visitors. Also, all the nature lovers with whom I get to work.

What's the neatest thing you've learned since you started volunteering with GRNA?

I'd have to say the numerous species of orchids present!

What do you wish other people knew about GRNA?

It's amazing how relaxing it is to walk the trails. It's a significant form of therapy, whether you need it or not.

When you aren't volunteering, what do you spend time doing?

Mostly house and yard work, as well as walking in other nature preserves and occasionally camping.

Any fun facts about you that you want to tell us about?

I learned a few things about ocean creatures when I was stationed in Puerto Rico. The one that always comes to mind is that if you step on a sea urchin, don't bother trying to remove the spines. It can't be done; they will fester out in due time.



Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-two years because of the generous support of people who value our mission "to manage the Grass River Natural Area, conserve and protect its watershed, and provide opportunities that increase knowledge, appreciation, and community-wide stewardship of the natural environment".

If you believe in our mission and want to help us fulfill it for many years to come, please click on the Donate button below. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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