



Region 3, District 5
PO Box 610, Paris, IL 61944

Phone: 217-465-4181
Fax: 217-465-5732
E-mail: Stephanie.Dobbs@illinois.gov

- Farmland rest area (I-74)
- Funks Grove rest area (I-55)
- Illini Prairie rest area (I-57)
- Salt Kettle rest area (I-74)

All photographs and articles by
Stephanie unless otherwise noted.



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Illinois Department of Transportation

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Driving Zero Fatalities to a Reality

At the Illinois Department of Transportation, safety is our number one priority and we stand committed to reducing the number of fatalities to zero on Illinois roadways.

Please help us by driving defensively, buckling up, putting down your cell phone, slowing down in work zones, wearing the proper gear while motorcycling, and designating a sober

driver if you have been drinking. Driving Zero Fatalities to a Reality is our message. Every life counts. With your help, we will ensure we are doing everything we can to save lives.

2014 Illinois Roadway Fatalities to Date

468

Lost & Found

Any lost and found items you may find should be brought to the attention of your supervisor immediately. Items should be sealed in an envelope. On the outside of the envelope, write a brief description of what is inside, when and where the item was found, the date, who found it and any other important information. Once the information is complete the envelope should be placed in the lost and found bin in the office to be picked up by Lee or Stephanie.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY *(continued from p. 3)*

- Monarchs can and have crossed the Atlantic Ocean. They are becoming more common in Bermuda & Spain due to increased use of milkweed as an ornamental plant. They're also found in Australia, The Hawaiian Islands, Bolivia & Peru. (But North America is the only place in the world where they migrate north to south and back north each year).
- The "Viceroy" Butterfly looks very much like the Monarch.
- Although the larvae eat only milkweed, adult monarchs feed on nectar plants (in addition to milkweed), such as: asters, red clover, lilac, goldenrod, alfalfa, wild carrot, teasel, thistles, tall ironweed and joe-pye weed.
- The 200 Square mile "Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve" in Mexico became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008.

Why not plant some milkweed if you can. And keep an eye out for monarchs, especially expect to see more

of them this September when they migrate through central Illinois on their way to Mexico.

There is much information online about Monarchs, but to name a couple of websites, I recommend: Go to: Xerces.org for info about "Project Milkweed" and other efforts to restore lost habitat, and Monarch-watch.org for more good information.

Thanks for reading, Lee



We Honored

Private First Class Aaron Toppen
United States Army
Hometown: Mokena, Illinois
June 22 to June 24, 2014

Senator Alan Dixon
Sunrise to Sunset
Monday, July 14, 2014

RAZR D5

D5 REST AREA ZONE REPORT • IDOT DISTRICT 5

August 2014 • Volume 1, Issue 8

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Special Points of Interest

District 5 Headquarters
(217) 465-4181
Stephanie
(217) 251-6036
Lee
(217) 206-0185
Stephanie or Lee Fax
(217) 643-7121



The Bald Cypress

The Bald Cypress tree, scientific name *Taxodium distichum* is an Illinois native tree that can be found growing at many of our Illinois rest areas throughout the state. Other names include: baldcypress, cypress, white-cypress, Gulf-cypress and red-cypress. The bald cypress is a deciduous conifer. This means it looks like an evergreen tree in the summer but it loses its leaves in the fall just like a maple or linden tree. The "bald" reference in the name has two histories, one is because it looks evergreen but sheds its leaves and the second is because it typically sheds its leaves in early fall, leaving it looking "bald" while other trees still have leaves. In our area most trees turn a cinnamon or red-brown color in the fall and I frequently receive calls from concerned citizens wondering why the trees are dead. Bald cypress is a member of the Redwood family of trees and can reach heights of 70 feet or more in ideal growing conditions.

Bald cypress are slow growing, long lived trees often reaching 100's of years in age. The leaves are flat and feathery looking with blades, similar to an evergreen, spreading around the twig. The trees produce fruit that look like cones, often visible hanging on the trees in late summer through winter. Many bald cypress will form "cypress knees" that are actually roots that protrude above the ground, sometimes several feet. Many resources indicate that knees will only form on trees found in wet



conditions, however, our trees in the planting beds at Illini Prairie and the trees in the tree rings at Salt Kettle all have formed small knees.

A common misconception is that bald cypress have to be planted in wet areas or swamps or they only grow in wet areas or swamps. These trees do grow exceptionally well in wet areas where other trees typically do not but they also grow in dry areas and can do well as street trees or in large planters although the roots and knees can become a problem. Bald cypress wood is prized for its

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The Bald Cypress

(continued from p. 1)

resistance to decay and is valuable as timber for building construction and is used for boat building, doors, garden boxes, fence posts and cabinetry. It is also a popular wood mulch. It is useful in erosion control and prevention and works as an effective means to slow water flow during flood conditions. In addition to using it for shelter, wildlife also feed on the seeds produced in the cones. The bald cypress is the state tree of Louisiana.



Heat Exhaustion and Dehydration



So far this summer we haven't seen too much of Illinois' typical high heat and humidity that is our typical conditions for summer. Overall we have had reasonable weather, sometimes even below our usual high temperatures, but don't let the mild weather fool you! When working outside, even in reasonable weather, make sure you keep hydrated, wear sunscreen and keep an eye on each other to make sure no one over-does it in the heat.

This would be a good time for supervisors to review your company policies with all workers, especially those involved with lawn care and outside work, focusing on heat exhaustion, heat stroke and dehydration symptoms and how to give aid should a problem arise. The National Weather Service will issue heat warnings when conditions occur that warrant the warning. Even if no warning has been issued, it is a good idea for supervisors to check on outside employees regularly and

be sure they have adequate water or drinks available.

Typical symptoms of heat exhaustion include: dizziness, muscle cramps, nausea, headache, confusion, fatigue, pale skin, rapid heartbeat and even fainting. Persons suffering from heat exhaustion should immediately be moved to a cool place, preferably air-conditioned. Also drink plenty of fluids (avoid caffeine) and remove any extra or unnecessary clothing.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has an online publication titled "Heat Bulletin" in their A-Z Health Topics list that can be found on their website at <http://www.idph.state.il.us/a-zlist.htm>. If your company does not have information on heat exhaustion or dehydration, this is a good resource that covers these topics as well as more serious heat related issues and offers suggestions regarding treatment, symptoms and prevention.

THE AMAZING MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Monarchs and Milkweed – "I can't live without you"

Yes, it's true... Monarchs can't live without milkweed. Because it's the only food that baby caterpillars can eat, without it it's over for them. So, this is a problem because there just isn't as much milkweed around as there used to be. But more about that later. There are other reasons why the Monarch population is declining, big time, such as: weather extremes; loss of trees where they hibernate in winter; and predators.

In brief, Monarchs prefer mild weather, which is why they migrate southward in the fall. But colder than normal fall and springtime temperatures can kill them as will temperatures above 95 degrees that dry out and kill the eggs. (Freezing temperatures in late spring can also affect milkweed growth). And unfortunately, over 90% of the trees where the butterflies overwinter in Mexico have been cut down since 1996. Then there are the predators, like birds and mice, who eat at least 10% of the hibernating monarchs. Ok, now back to milkweed. As if the monarchs didn't have enough to deal with, their alarming population decrease has been linked to the decrease in, yes, milkweed! The use of herbicides to selectively eliminate common milkweed that previously grew between rows of crops like corn and soybeans has resulted in the loss of 120 -150 million acres of habitat/food source across the Mid-west.

Fortunately, milkweed is still growing on many Illinois State right of ways, and in the prairie portions of our District 5 rest areas and other restored roadside prairies. And now, as more people understand the importance of

milkweed they are planting it in their gardens, yards, and apartment patios and balconies. It can be grown by seed in the spring after all frost danger has passed, from cuttings, or plants bought online or at garden centers.

Milkweeds are perennial so they will return each year, and prefer sunny places. Monarchs can hang around a home garden with milkweed and other flowers for nectar. There are over 20 varieties of milkweed, with the Common milkweed, Swamp milkweed, and Butterfly weed being most native to Illinois.

Since this is my last article about the Monarch this year, I thought it would be fun to list some interesting (I hope) facts about them. Here we go:

- The monarch is our Illinois State Insect.
- Like all insects, it has 6 legs, but it mostly uses the 4 hindlegs, as it carries the 2 front legs against its body.
- Their tiny eggs are creamy white and later turn pale yellow. The 2 inch caterpillars are banded with yellow, black and white stripes. The chrysalis is blue-green with a band of black & gold.
- Male monarchs take in moisture & minerals from damp soil and wet gravel, a behavior known as "mud-puddling". Adult butterflies are also attracted to the sweet juice of bananas, oranges and watermelon.
- Butterflies & moths belong to the species "Lepidoptera". Those who study them are called Lepidopterists.

