



ISSUE 11 - OCTOBER 2024

Above: Up slope above Mizer's Ruin, Cedar Point Biological Station, June, 2023. Photo by John P. DeLong. Below right: A long-horned bee visiting a blanket flower. photo by Desiree Rousseau.

CEDAR POINT TIMES

The Newsletter of Cedar Point Biological Station (CPBS)
School of Biological Sciences
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

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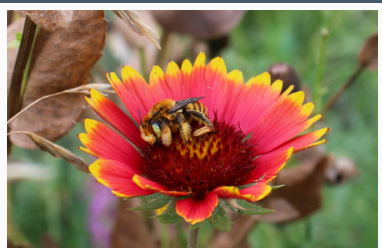
The 50th summer session of Cedar Point has come and gone.

We had great turnout this year, with class enrollment up, multiple high school camps, and large research teams roaming the site. This includes the third annual Labor Day weekend visit of students from LPS's science focused program. We got up to good fun looking at spiders, insects, birds, and rocks, getting out on the lake in the canoes, and of course, the traditional atlatl throwing contest (see below), led by the School of Global Integrative Studies' Sophia Perdikaris. No weekend visit would be complete with a campfire and smores. What a great way to wrap up a half-century of top-notch experiential learning.

Thanks to all those who attended and made possible our 50th anniversary alumni weekend (see page 3). We are already prepping for our second half-century of operations. To help this one be as amazing as our first, please consider contributing during our upcoming funding appeal. See you out there!--John P. DeLong



Teachers and students practice the atlatl at Cedar Point, under the guidance of Sophia Perdikaris, on right. September 7, 2024. Photo by John P. DeLong.





Desiree Rousseau finds her way at Cedar Point

You wouldn't guess it to talk with her, but Desiree Rousseau only recently got into bugs.

The timing was perfect. In the spring of 2024, I received a general call for folks to participate in the North American Insect Monitoring program, one that was documenting the concerning declines in insects across the continent. After a quick note to Louise Lynch O'Brien in UNL's Entomology Department, who hooked Desiree on the idea, we pulled her into Cedar Point Works to stay at the station and sample a malaise trap (see photo above) several times over the summer.

Desiree initially thought she would be a biochemistry major, but an activity during the First Husker Seminar – a program for first generation students – hooked her on insects. Quickly pivoting into the Entomology major, Desiree rapidly embraced the science of bugs. But just as fast as her interest peaked, family health crises made staying focused a challenge. With sagging grades, Desiree lost her scholarship and considered dropping out, her first year in college looking like a roller coaster ride back home.

Seeking outdoor opportunities, Desiree signed up for LIFE 121 at Cedar Point. Unsure if she could attend with her scholarship status, Cedar Point funding – donated by Cedar Point alumni and supporters – made it possible for Desiree to take a course and to remain at the station for the summer. And it just so happened we needed a bug person.

Not only did Desiree conduct the insect monitoring, she also took over collections from our insect suction trap (part of another monitoring network), expanded and cleaned up our insect collections, and led insect sampling activities for high school student visitors. One of her most exciting additions to the collection was a ghost tiger beetle (see right), found along the beach at Lake Mac. You could hardly believe that this started only a year ago. "Before, I would have walked past it," says Desiree about bugs, but now, insects are central to her focus as a student.

Desiree is back on campus now, looking forward to a second summer at Cedar Point. And we just happen to need a bug person!

Top: Malaise trap installed near the entrance to Alligator Canyon. Photo by Desiree Rousseau.



Middle right: Desiree Rousseau at Cedar Point. September 7, 2024. Photo by John P. DeLong. Bottom right: A ghost tiger beetle (*Ellipsoptera lepida*) collected by Desiree Rousseau at Lake McConaughy. Photo by John P. DeLong.



50th summer alumni reunion

This past August, some 75 people arrived at Cedar Point to celebrate our 50th summer of operations. Attendees ranged from this year's students all the way back to the very first summer in 1975.

Most folks were there to see friends and take a literal walk down memory lane. Some walked after Jon Garbisch, on hikes up the canyon, some walked after Jason Griffith, on tours of our new design-build cabins, and some walked after Allison Johnson to see birds. Others trekked around on their own wherever they wanted.

The traditional tie-dyeing was performed.

We ventured to Ogallala for a nice happy hour at the old library brewery.

Some ventured all the way to Crescent Lake for the spectacular sandhills scenery and a chance to see owls (and they succeeded!).

And as was our hope, nearly everyone got to spend time with friends, family, and colleagues and just take in the magic of Cedar Point and Lake Ogallala.

Many noted how much the station has changed and yet is just like it always was. We hope folks see that the station has the same vibe as always, but with improvements through time made by the continual effort of the station staff. Why, Jon Garbisch even found a copy of the original camp dinner bell that was lost during the Gainesforth construction and reinstalled it near its former spot (above).

The event reminded me just how special Cedar Point is. This little corner of Earth has inspired thousands of people and brought them closer to nature. As successful as the Cedar Point model of engaged field classes and student research has been, if anything, we need that more than ever now. For many, education is becoming virtual, not connected to the Earth at all. Although there are valid reasons to pursue an online model, we are all of the Earth, and everything we think we know can be traced back to the natural world upon which we depend. I personally hope we can hold fast to a grounded, place-based model of inspired education, for those who come after us.

We plan to have additional alumni events every couple of years or so, and if you can't make those, please stop in some time and see us. You can always just request a stay at our [lodging request page](#) and just make your own retreat. Or pop in on your way past Ogallala as well. We'll be here, hopefully another 50 years.

Top: Sunrise behind the new old camp bell. Photo by John P. DeLong. First below: Cora Meiklejohn learning piano with Jenny Gilbert. Second below: Afternoon gathering at Second Chapter in Ogallala, NE. Third below: Campers gather around for an update from the director. Event photos by Kristi Montooth.



CPBS classes are scheduled for 2025, see them at <https://cedarpoint.unl.edu/course-list>.



LIFE 121 instructor Dan Metz shows off a mean atlatl throw at Cedar Point. Photos by John P. DeLong.



About the Station

Cedar Point Biological Station is a site for research and experiential learning located along the banks of Lake Ogallala in western Nebraska. CPBS is surrounded by a wide range of habitats, ponds and lakes, and landscape features such as box canyons, making it an ideal place to learn about and interact with nature. CPBS is operated by the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. The station provides unparalleled experiential learning in the high plains through a wide range of courses and partnerships with the School of Natural Resources; the School of Art, Art History, and Design; the College of Architecture; the Department of Hospitality, Tourism, and Restaurant Management; and the School of Global Integrative Studies at UNL.

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Art @ Cedar Point

Dana Fritz, two-time artist-in-resident at Cedar Point and UNL Hixon-Lied Professor of Art (see her [website here](#)), is working on photographs of the area (see left) for an upcoming hand-made book. Says Dana: “During my first artist residency at CPBS in 2019, the dark, cool, and wet microclimate inside the canyons contrasting the bright, hot, and dry grasslands above them left a strong impression on me. My interest in returning to CPBS for an artist residency was to focus on how elevation change reveals the radical differences between the diverse biomes in such a small area. While in Butterfly Canyon, I became very interested in the privileged view of the exposed roots from inside the canyon, a view rarely seen of the grasses, forbs, and eastern red cedar tree roots. But as I was photographing in the canyon, a little bit of the Brule clay wall fell down behind some of the roots and I could not stop thinking about how this canyon is alive and changing all the time, sometimes perceptibly, sometimes not. This experience made me reconsider how I had been thinking of geologic time as an abstraction, not something related to my experiential time scale. It also made me think about the land’s animacy and how rocks can be dynamic forces.”

Cedar Point Works is supported by grants and donations. If you would like to support experiential learning at CPBS, please consider donating to one of our student-oriented funds.