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Michigan State University’s W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary Receives Interpretive Project Grant from the National Association for Interpretation - Region 4

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Region 4 recently announced its Interpretive Project Grant Award Winners, and is pleased to report W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary is among the 2014 recipients.

The Interpretive Project Grants (IPG) program is designed to provide a source of funding for small projects by Association members within the Great Lakes region including Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Ontario. Projects may include exhibitry, signage, programs, or other ideas that enhance visitors’ interpretive experience. Applications are submitted annually, and reviewed by the IPG Committee consisting of members of NAI Region 4 who guide the grant process and make recommendations to the Region 4 Board of Directors.

Kellogg Bird Sanctuary’s project – *Kellogg Bird Sanctuary Pollinator Garden* – will update the existing Pollinator Garden and bring more diverse, native plants to supplemental garden areas including a water garden, xeriscape garden and rain garden. According to grant applicants Kara Haas and Kimberly Ginn of the Sanctuary, “the educational goal of this garden exhibit is to communicate the importance of native Michigan plants and the birds, bees and butterflies that pollinate them.”

IPG funds from NAI Region 4 will add financial support for the project, helping to purchase the new native plants for the collection. Funds will also help fabricate an interpretive sign showcasing native bees as pollinators by highlighting the ‘bee condominium’ that invites solitary bees including mason bees and leafcutter bees to nest along the garden path.

“It is always interesting and enlightening for the Committee to see all of the wonderful projects underway in Region 4 - we have very passionate and creative members in our region,” said Jennifer McDowell, Chair of the Interpretive Project Grants Committee. “Congratulations to the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary for emphasizing the importance of native plants and their delicate role in the ecosystem. Engaging visitors about the value of these plants as native caterpillar host plants, or unique food sources to migrating birds creates a connection that will likely encourage planting native species to create wildlife sanctuaries in their own backyards.”

Applicants receiving funding this year along with Michigan State University’s W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary include West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation (MI) and Grass River Natural Area (MI).

The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to advancing the profession of heritage interpretation, currently serving about 5,000 members in the United States, Canada, and over thirty other nations. Individual members include those who work at parks, museums, nature centers, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, historical and cultural sites, commercial tour companies, and theme parks. Commercial and institutional members include those who provide services to the heritage interpretation industry.

The Association is divided into ten geographical regions to help members network with others who work near them through periodical newsletters and activities. Region 4, the Great Lakes Region, includes Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario.

NAI’s Mission is to inspire leadership and excellence to advance heritage interpretation as a profession.
