

Press Release

November 1, 2012

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society is pleased to announce the acceptance of a generous gift of land from Mrs. Joanne Styles. The nearly 50 acres of land located at the headwaters of Silver Creek two miles south of the town of Leaf River will be maintained as a bird sanctuary and will be used to educate people of all ages about nature. The donation is a rare natural community that is important to birds using the Rock River valley during migrations. The wooded portion of the property includes many oak and hickory trees. Silver Creek, a spring fed stream that runs through the property provides habitat to a variety of aquatic creatures.

Mrs. Styles and her first husband, Hascy Tarbox, purchased the land in 1942 because of their love for nature. She donated the land to Northwest Illinois Audubon Society because she wanted the land to be available for the next generation to enjoy. Northwest Illinois Audubon Society has placed the land in a Conservation Easement with the Natural Land Institute which will preserve and protect the property as a natural area.

Mrs. Styles was referred to Northwest Illinois Audubon Society by Jerry Paulson, Executive Director of the Natural Land Institute. The Natural Land Institute works with individuals and organizations to preserve natural areas for people, plants and animals. Keith Blackmore from the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society worked with Jerry to facilitate the donation.

Mrs. Styles was an elementary school teacher in Leaf River for many years and shared her love of nature with numerous elementary students by inviting the students to come to the property on the last day of school. She is now 95 years old and remains passionate about conserving land for generations to appreciate. Northwest Illinois Audubon is honored to receive the generous gift that can be used to cultivate an appreciation for the numerous plants and animals that live in this delightful piece of property.