

HAWTHORN WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE BROCHURE

PREPARED BY

THE VILLAGE OF
HAWTHORN WOODS





RURAL PAST SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Hawthorn Woods is dedicated to honoring the environmental heritage of our area and staying “rural by design.” With a proud agricultural history, the village maintains its connections to the natural world and its life cycles. Village Hall is in a former dairy barn. The village is surrounded by fields of corn and soybeans. Access to open space, easy movement of animal species through residential areas, and preservation of the night sky are some of the ways in which the days of decades or centuries past are honored.

Ours is a community that has a unique dedication to the role of stewards of the environment and leaders among governments. Its pride is in the residents and staff members that take each accomplishment and carry it forward to the next task. Its results are the economic, social, and environmental effects felt every day paid forward by decades of those who came before. In this brochure, we hope you are able to take time to explore all that we continue to do in the name of preserving our past and sustaining our future.



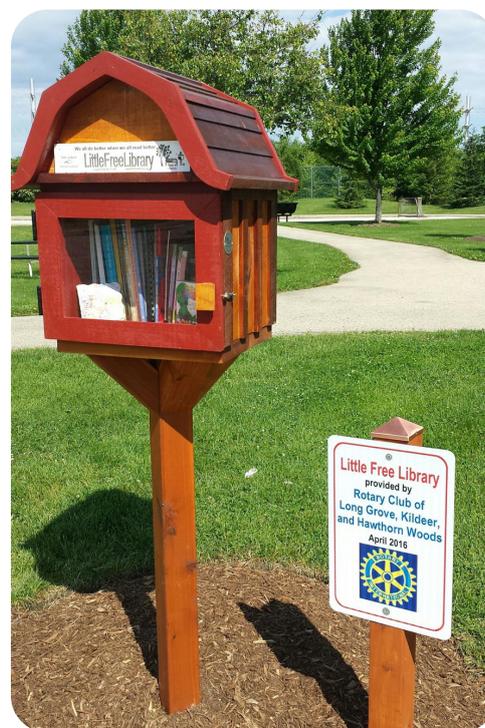
YOUTH EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

We have a vibrant outdoor education emphasis in our park programming featuring care and integration of our natural world with the interests of today's youth.

Both youth groups of the Girl Scouts of America and Indian Princesses have participated in planting tree stands in four different parks to provide shade and protection to local playgrounds and create a future beautiful Oak trail.

Volunteers from the local Indian Princess group of girls and their dads spend quality time together with adventures and fun activities. Our Indian Princess girls and their dads have participated in painting bird houses to be placed at their own homes to provide shelter for many of our species of birds in town.

This group approached the Village of Hawthorn Woods with an idea to plant new trees in one of our 18 municipal parks. What started as a modest seedling area soon grew to become an oak grove.



“We have a commonality of purpose in this town, and we collectively choose to live in harmony with the natural world around us.”

– Pamela O. Newton, Chief Operating Officer, Village of Hawthorn Woods

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The best way for residents to support the environmentally conscious mission of our community is to learn and research steps we can take in our homes and on our properties. With enough effort from residents, we can significantly affect the availability of habitat for local endangered species, keep our precious wetlands healthy, and keep our urban tree plantings vibrant.

Initiatives in Action

If every resident or neighborhood association planted milkweed and other pollinator friendly species on their property, we could provide habitat for the species that thrive in Hawthorn Woods.



A close-up photograph of several tall, slender stems of purple loosestrife and teasel. The stems are covered in small, vibrant purple flowers that are densely packed along the upper portion of the stems. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue sky. The text 'PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE AND TEASEL' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE AND TEASEL

Dense stands of purple loosestrife and teasel aggressively crowd out native vegetation, thereby threatening the life cycle of native waterfowl, amphibians, flowers, and other wetland species in Hawthorn Woods.

Purple loosestrife and teasel are some of the most “unwanted” invasive plants impacting wetland environments. In fact, invasive plants are the second greatest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss.

Purple loosestrife is a wetland perennial, and is considered extremely noxious. Teasel is a biennial plant whose first-year rosettes are large before blooming the next year, spreading thousands of seeds. Purple loosestrife and teasel are found in wet areas at low to mid-elevation levels, growing in ditches, irrigation canals, marshes, streams, wetland shorelines, and shallow ponds.

Initiatives in Action

In order to help Hawthorn Woods protect our resources, let’s take action to clear Buckthorn, Purple Loosestrife, and Teasel from our neighborhoods, parks and woodlands.



MONARCH BUTTERFLIES, WATERFOWL, AND MIGRATORY SPECIES

Nearly 200 species of songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, marsh birds, and shorebirds migrate across the Great Lakes. On this journey they rely heavily on nearshore habitat as refuge. Waystations, such as our local wetlands, are places for these birds to rest, refuel, and seek shelter during this dangerous part of their lives.

As with birds, the Great Lakes area wetlands and coasts are critically important migratory corridors for many species that include bats and butterflies. Monarch Butterflies are one species that take a 3000 biannual voyage to Central America and back each year and are in need of habitat protection to reproduce and feed along the way.

Initiatives in Action

The Village of Hawthorn Woods has taken action in its own parks and conservation areas to provide habitat and waystations for these species. Residents can help protect these pollinators by growing native pollinator-friendly plants in gardens at their own homes.



WETLAND PROTECTION

Illinois has lost over 90% of its original wetland acreage. Wetland types in Illinois include bogs, fens, marshes, seeps, springs, and shallow ponds. Destruction of wetlands can lead to serious consequences.

Wetlands provide spaces for excess floodwater to be stored and slowly released. They provide critical habitat for species found nowhere else. Wetlands also filter water, able to uptake some pollutants like toxic chemicals and heavy metals.

We can avoid the consequences of lost wetlands by maintaining the valuable acres we have and restoring wetlands where possible with native species plantings, invasive species removal, and protecting them from pollutants.

Initiatives in Action

By restoring and preserving the wetlands in Hawthorn Woods, we can ensure the survival of this vital resource. Residents can do their part by using nontoxic and phosphate free household cleaning products and reducing household waste. By working together we can improve wetland water quality.



VOLCANO MULCHING

Mulching, when done correctly, can offer widespread benefits to trees. Mulch is beneficial because it mimics a natural process and creates a layer of organic material under the tree. The mulch helps insulate the ground around the tree, retains moisture, and enriches the soil. The problem is that volcano mulching takes these benefits and reverses them, and causes damage to the tree.

“Volcano Mulching” causes problems with the root systems of the tree. The extra moisture from the mulch may cause the roots to grow into the mulch layer, rather than down into the soil below the tree. This can cause the roots to actually strangle the tree and kill the tree. Alternatively, mulch volcanoes may turn “sour.” This creates conditions created by thick layers of mulch that becomes highly acidic, and smells sour. This acidic mulch burns the tree’s bark and causes stress to the tree.

Initiatives in Action

The Village of Hawthorn Woods encourages all residents to mulch their trees into a bowl shape, ensuring the mulch is away from the trunk. This best management practice will extend the life of your tree and keep Hawthorn Woods as a model Tree City USA community in Illinois.



OUR INITIATIVES IN ACTION

a. Air Quality Monitoring with Argonne laboratories (MMC)

Air quality monitoring involves considering pollutants quantity, location, and persistence in our area. For so much detail, the village has partnered with Argonne National Laboratories to do our quality assessments. The most useful data is collected frequently enough to be effective in shaping policies and making predictions.

b. Audubon International Designated Community

The Audubon designation expands beyond creating habitats for birds that sustain the species diversity. Rather this designation works toward environmental efforts that impact both flora and fauna in a given community. Hawthorn Woods is in process and is working on ordinance revision and meeting and documenting hundreds of environmental criteria in order to earn this prestigious designation.

c. Battery Recycling Program

Partnered with the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO), the village has provided opportunity for recycling rechargeable and long life non-rechargeable batteries. Putting these batteries in your residential recycling bins is not advised and should be brought to electronic or household chemical waste collection sites or to village hall.

d. Citizen Environmental Volunteer Days

Clearing creek beds, removing Buckthorn, planting donated trees and distributing monarch friendly wildflower seeds are just a few of the services conducted by our dedicated community participants. Scout troupes and civic organizations are common volunteers at many of our sites.

e. Composting Yard Waste

The Village of Hawthorn Woods has an established yard waste pickup program with Waste Management. The yard waste service collects grass clippings, leaves, tree limbs and other yard waste materials and takes them to facilities where they can be used to create renewable energy or compost.

f. Controlled Wetland Burns

Prescribed burns in wetlands remove thatch, control woody plants, and expose soil for native seeds. Lake County's unique ecology provides access to lots of wetlands that require stewardship actions such as invasive species removal and controlled burn activities to promote species diversification.

g. Developed Village Tree Nursery

A three-and-a-half-acre parcel of property has been purchased to become Meadowlark Park and Arboretum, serving an area of town without a public park. Over 30 species of trees will be planted along a new tree walk path accessible for all mobility standards. Our tree nursery located in Public Works serves as the nursery for park planters.

h. Eagle Scout Environmental Projects

Since we have opened the Brierwoods Preserve and launched our stewardship campaign, we have received volunteer and in-kind donations from local Eagle Scout Projects creating a living nursery, creating bird and butterfly houses for wetlands and prairies, and clearing buckthorn.

i. Electronic Waste Collections

Electronic items such as televisions, monitors, computers and printers are some of the most common items that are no longer allowed in the regular trash collections and are required to be recycled at an electronic waste collection site. This protects our air and water from hazardous chemicals leeching from electrical waste in landfills.

j. Environmental Spring Cleanup Day

Each spring, the office partners with Waste Management for a special pick up day cleanup of larger volumes of trash.

k. Fallen Tree Repurposing

Due to flooding and storm events in the village, several heritage trees around were lost or fallen. Rather than lose out on this important resource to our heritage, we repurposed their design into natural planters to be repurposed and displayed by local businesses and municipal buildings.

l. Food Scrap Recycling Program

The Village of Hawthorn Woods has a voluntary model food scrap program at no cost to residents. During the eight-month yard waste collection period, food scraps can be mixed in with the yard waste being collected.

m. Hazardous Waste Collection

The Solid Waste Agency of Lake County's Household Chemical Waste collection program diverts a variety of chemical products found in a household that have toxic or hazardous characteristics from the municipal waste stream by sending it to IEPA approved recycling and reuse facilities. The HCW program is a hybrid program consisting of year-round public drop-off events at the Gurnee facility and mobile collection events at various locations throughout Lake County.

n. Integrated Pest Management

Integrated Pest Management takes the function of ecosystems into account in order to control pests that may threaten an area. Pesticides are used only after monitors determine a need and the treatments target the immediate threat. The materials used are applied in a manner that avoids risks to human, beneficial organisms, and environmental health. The village has licensed applicators and inspectors that use this technique throughout the community.

o. Leave No Child Left Inside

We successfully have taught our children to protect and care for our trees, our wetlands, and live harmoniously with our wildlife. Getting the experience of getting one's hands dirty planting trees, painting birdhouses, or participating in environmental classes is one of our most important tools against issues of modernity like obesity or the overexposure to electrical entertainment.

p. Dark Sky Designation

The Village of Hawthorn Woods encapsulates an exceptional commitment to preserving the night sky as a natural resource and as a benefit for human health. Hawthorn Woods works to be an environmental leader in preserving wildlife habitats and to preserve our migratory patterns as a Great Lakes flyway zone. The village has recently revised the municipal lighting ordinance to reflect the principles and shared values of the International Dark Sky Association of "using the amount of light you need, when you need it."

q. Member of Greenest Region Sustainability Group (Chicago consortium of 100 greenest cities)

The Greenest Region Compact (GRC) promotes sustainability in Chicago communities across the region with an emphasis on building strong and vibrant communities. These consensus goals guide municipal action, support mayors in their role as environmental leaders, and foster collaboration that will have positive impacts of sustainability on our region.

r. Public Education Program & Transparency Efforts

Giving opportunities for our citizens to learn about our natural environment is a part of every initiative undertaken by the community. Public knowledge and involvement have increased community participation and vitality.

s. Rain Barrels and Native Plant Sale

Using rain barrels, backyard composting, and planting native species are all sustainable and environmentally sound practices. Rain barrels reuse stormwater from rooftops and divert water from storm drains, decreasing the impact of runoff to streams and minimizing sewer overflows during heavy rainfall. This resource is available for purchase at annual events with the Forest Preserve District of Lake County along with sales of native plants and seeds for residential use.

t. Recycling of Plastics, Glass, Metal, and Paper

Recycling of plastics, glass, metal, and paper is made easy for residents of the village through pick up locations at each residence and a public education initiative in coordination with the Solid Waste District of Lake County (SWALCO). Here are their quick tips about recycling these materials:

- Plastic Bottles & Containers

- o Recycle plastics like empty bottles, jars, jugs, and tubs by their shapes.
- o Chasing arrows don't necessarily indicate recyclability.
- o Caps are now recyclable, but you must put them back on empty containers before tossing in the bin.

- Food & Beverage Cans

- o Recycle all empty tin, aluminum, and steel cans.
- o Empty aerosol cans can also be recycled.
- o If the can has a plastic lid, you should remove it.

- Paper

- o Paper, newspaper, and magazines are good to recycle.
- o Soiled and wet paper should be placed in the trash.

- Flattened Cardboard & Paperboard

- o Flatten and recycle all cardboard and paperboard.
- o Break down and flatten cardboard boxes to make room for more materials to fit in your recycling.

u. Salinity Control

Hawthorn Woods is able to significantly decrease the amount of salt that is deposited onto our roads and therefore our waterways and homes through a prevention method known as "Anti-icing". Using a mixture of brine and beet juice salt solution for de-icing can lower the melting point even further than normal salting of roads. The method used by the village results in a 50% reduction of salt over a season.



v. Sol Smart Solar Silver Level Designation

Along with a solar energy ordinance, this designation encourages residents to promote renewable energy resources that advance solar technology, save energy costs, and conserve natural resources. By meeting these criteria, the village can advance use of local renewable energy resources and promote sustainable building design and management practices.

w. Threatened Species

Both design and preservation efforts within Hawthorn Woods provide crucial habitat to threatened species like monarch butterflies and other insects and birds that migrate along the Great Lakes Flyway every year. Brierwoods Preserve in particular contains a large 7-acre wetland and a pristine 4.5-acre woodland that is undergoing enhancement efforts for plant and animal residents, as well as human visitors.

x. Tree City USA

In a very real sense, our woods and forests are part of our heritage and identity. Our ordinances, community forestry program, and celebration of Arbor Day make us one of the proud communities recognized as a Tree City. Our land is our link to the past, our planning efforts in the present, and a promise to future generations.

y. Urban Forestry

We understand that our urban forest canopy provides a variety of functions that promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents. The Village of Hawthorn Woods allows no fences to isolate parcels of land by property owners and our wooded areas flow into one another as large groves of tree canopy and open space. Dedication to this initiative goes beyond our Tree City USA designation.

z. Golf Course Reusable Watering

Recycled water is what flows onto the golf turf throughout the village. Waste Water is treated and repurposed as non-potable water to water the Hawthorn Woods Country Club golf course. This water source is less expensive than others, allows turf to absorb excess nutrients, and doesn't draw on drinkable water during drought cycles.

aa. Prescription Drug Collection Box

At the police station at village hall, collection boxes are available for extra prescription drugs from residents. This eliminates medical waste and the toxic chemicals contained within it from waste streams or waterways.

bb. Hawthorn Woods Monarch Waystation Community

A notable project to restore the natural landscape and introduce a pollinator garden and Certified Monarch Waystation was recently completed at Brierwoods Preserve. Sustainable habitat restoration and planting of pollinator-friendly native plants were the primary objectives of the project, and it is a remarkable success.

cc. Sustainability Plan of Hawthorn Woods

Passage of the Sustainability Plan of Hawthorn Woods creates a 10-year list of goals and strategies for maintaining and establishing sustainable principles in Hawthorn Woods. The goals and strategies are divided into the three sectors of sustainability: Environment, Economy, and Society. The plan is available to read on the village website.

dd. Sustainability Committee of Hawthorn Woods

The establishment of a sustainability committee is a method for a group of Hawthorn Woods residents to work on sustainable initiatives for the village.

ee. Sustainability Webpage

On the village website there is a page dedicated to demonstrating the ongoing and future opportunities for initiatives. There is also a list of resources for information about affiliate organizations and educational fact sheets on a variety of topics.

ff. Tree Seedling Giveaway

The ability to give away dozens of tree seedlings for free for residents is a method to encourage a more robust urban canopy. Multiple species are made available for residents to be able to plant multiple trees on their properties.

gg. America in Bloom Awards

Hawthorn Woods has been recognized for its achievement in environmental efforts, community leadership, ecological stewardship, and more through the America in Bloom Organization.

hh. Bulb Planting

Donations from Hawthorn Gardens of hundreds of bulbs were planted across the village by both staff and volunteers for the beautification of community signage and islands.

ii. Bee City USA Designation

In May 2020 Hawthorn Woods was designated as a Bee City USA with dedications to promote pollinators through education, habitat restoration, and public events.