Volunteers make a difference!

You can help preserve rare savanna species by volunteering with the Baldwin/White Cloud Ranger District! Participate in conducting Karner blue butterfly surveys and/or help plant native nectar species on the Huron-Manistee National Forests, one of the few places where this federally endangered species exists in Michigan!

Savannas in Michigan? Yes! Savannas are a unique natural community, which include oak openings, oak barrens, oak-pine barrens, and pine barrens. Savanna communities have declined over the past century due to reforestation, fire control, and the process of natural succession. Many plants and animals depend on these communities and have also declined, including the Karner blue butterfly. In an effort to recover Karner blue butterfly populations, the Huron-Manistee National Forests plan to restore and maintain 20,300 acres of savanna over the next 50 years. We cannot reach our goals without the help of volunteers!
In 2006, we did not have the help of volunteers and were only able to monitor 298 acres of Karner blue butterfly habitat. Thanks to the help of volunteers we now monitor an average of 896 acres per year! In addition, volunteers have helped improve over 65 acres of savanna habitat!

We are currently looking for volunteers to assist with surveys between mid-June and mid-August and to help plant native nectar species in September. Interested parties can volunteer during week days, a few days, or a week or more. Limited housing and reimbursement for mileage may be available upon request.

Our efforts would not be possible without your help!

For those interested in obtaining work experience, paid internships also are available. Between mid-May and mid-August, interns will help conduct surveys for a variety of endangered, threatened, and sensitive fish and wildlife species and assist with habitat improvement projects. Interns also have the opportunity to conduct independent research projects.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in the 2014 field season, please contact Dr. Heather Keough, District Wildlife Biologist, at (231) 745-4631 ext. 3111 or hkeough@fs.fed.us.