

from the point in the Magic Hedge where the present Ohio buckeye tree is located. The other ran north-south from the west end of the east-west barracks. Immediately adjacent to the west end of the barracks ran the cyclone security fence. Picnicers, hikers, swimmers, and others could look into the barracks windows. Blinds were installed, and for further screening the Army, in 1959, planted 26 Tartarian honeysuckle bushes along the west end of the barracks. These sun-loving, fast growing, non-native shrubs covered the barracks windows in about six years. A 1964 aerial photograph of the site shows this row of honeysuckle bushes covering about half of the barracks windows. It is this row of honeysuckle bushes that still forms the basic features of what we today call The Magic Hedge. These bushes had to contend with the vagaries of harsh winters, droughty summers, thoughtless people creating tryst sites, poop-trails, and other vandalisms, and, finally, what will probably get them, the honeysuckle aphids, evidence of which can be seen today in these shrubs, now 41 years old.

Through the 1950s and 1960s Nike technology improved constantly. A group of second-generation Nike missiles, known as Nike Ajax, appeared, then Nike Hercules. By this time the inter-continental ballistic missiles had become technologically advanced enough that short range Nike sites were no longer necessary. Their phasing out became effective in 1968 and, by 1970, the Nike missile site at Montrose Point was cleared away. Left behind were the water and sewer system pipes (all the manhole covers are still in place), portions of the cyclone fence (now buried in the blowing sands), much of the concrete bases of the buildings (now buried by sand), and some of the paved service and parking areas. But, most importantly to birders, left behind were the trees, now nearly 35 years old, and that row of 26 Tartarian honeysuckle bushes.

The Magic Hedge and Birders

Once the Nike site was removed from Montrose, the Park District returned the area to picnic use and began mowing the grass regularly. Trees and major shrub areas that survived the Nike period were allowed to stand. Birders began to find Montrose Point, especially the row of honeysuckles, a good spot to bird. Among the first were Jeff Sanders, C.T. Clark, Larry Balch, Richard Biss, Steve and Mike Mlodinow, Homer Eshbaugh, and several others. On a particularly good migration day in 1975, several birders stood and watched in amazement as wave after wave of warblers passed along the row of honeysuckles. Eshbaugh, especially entranced, announced to all the others, "Look, those birds are passing through this hedge like

magic!" The name stuck. The Magic Hedge was born, and within several years that row of Tartarian honeysuckle bushes became a regular stop in early morning for many birders, especially during migration. But vandalism, winter kill, drought, and insect pests took a toll. Fewer bushes, fewer leaves, fewer branches appeared each year.

In fall 1985, Doug Anderson, then the President of the Chicago Audubon Society, asked me to contact the Chicago Park District and determine if the Magic Hedge could be enhanced. My telephone call, following a letter, was to Chicago Park District General Superintendent Ed Kelly, who supported our goals, provided me with his blessings and staff contacts, and indicated it would demonstrate a real concern on our part if we were willing to provide some funding to help with expenses. At the next CAS meeting, the Board decided to begin a special fund-raising drive, soliciting through inserts in the *Compass*, called The Magic Hedge Fund. Over \$7,000 eventually came in, but the first payment made for new plantings in the Magic Hedge was \$5,000. On receipt, Kelly put the Park District's staff in action in the spring of 1986.

Revitalizing The Magic Hedge

When Ed Kelly approved the Montrose planting plan for the Magic Hedge, he assigned it to Ed Uhlir, then working in the landscaping division, and now head of developing the Millennium Park project. Uhlir assigned the design work to landscape architect Tom Creech who prepared all the planting plans and specifications. Between the spring of 1986 and the spring of 1992 new plantings appeared at Montrose from donations submitted from the fund-raising drive inaugurated by the Chicago Audubon Society in 1985. The Tartarian honeysuckles were joined by 44 blackhaw, 6 nannyberry, 23 serviceberries, 62 chokeberries, and 8 other bird-friendly plant species, including 49 fragrant sumac bushes, now predominant on the east side of The Magic Hedge. The Park District didn't plant honeysuckles because of the aphid infestation leaving nursery trades short of supply. Workers also planted 46 shrubs in the Clump and 13 in the Clump Annex. Shortly after all this work by Uhlir and Creech the Chicago Park District began the eventual elimination of its landscaping division in favor of privatization and even sold its operating nursery.

Not all the Park District plantings did well in The Magic Hedge. Pretty quickly the red-osier and golden twig dogwoods went to the maker. It was in that section that a number of years ago a Japanese family planted a small tree in honor of their grandmother. They told me it was a plum tree, an old Japanese tradition. That tree bore fruit this summer, but it was not