

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Summer 2010 E-newsletter

By Adam Gundlach and Bryn Scriver

Volunteer Opportunities in the Preserve

The Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and Preserve staff would like to invite you to come out and help restore East Bill's Woods.

When:

Sat. Aug. 28th, 1:30-3:30PM

Mon. Aug. 30th, 9AM-Noon

Sun. Sept. 19th, 9AM-Noon

Mon. Sept. 20th, 9AM-Noon

Where: Meet at the Entrance to Picnic Point (Next to Lot 129)

What: In August we'll be repairing erosion on the Lakeshore Path, and in September we'll be removing invasive species.

Why: Because it's fun; it's good exercise; you get to spend time outdoors and meet new people!

Check the Volunteer page for more information.



East Bill's Woods Restoration Continues

After the Bill's Woods project area was cleared of invasive shrubs early this spring by Quercus Land Stewardship Services, the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve continued management as the growing season emerged from its winter slumber. Throughout the spring and early summer volunteers have been busy pulling out seedlings of buckthorn and honeysuckle, as well as replanting many native species of shrubs and wildflowers. With a healthy seedbank of unwanted plants waiting to emerge, vigilance in the coming years will be needed to keep weeds in check until the native plant community becomes established, and the system is flushed of the majority of invasive propagules.



Willow Creek Woods Earth Day Planting

Though Earth Day is celebrated year-round at the Preserve, this past April the annual celebration was marked with a multi-day planting event at Willow Creek Woods. A variety of native grasses and wildflowers were planted in the western section of the restoration with the help of staff, students and community volunteers. This area was cleared of buckthorn and honeysuckle three years ago. With this spring's addition of hundreds of native plant plugs, the oak savanna understory will be brimming with color and humming with biotic activity in the years to come.



UW Employees Give their Time to the Preserve

On Friday May 21st a dozen UW-Madison employees and their family members volunteered in the Preserve as part of the UW Furlough Service Day. The unpaid furlough day is one of 16 required of state employees during the 2009-11 budget cycle. Because Preserve staff was also furloughed, dedicated Volunteer Steward Glenda Denniston stepped in to supervise. The hard working group planted over 100 small trees and shrubs plus at least 100 small plants that were grown in the UW greenhouse by Denniston. The plants were given homes in East Bill's Woods and near the Picnic Point Entrance in the University Bay restoration area. We are thrilled (but not surprised) that so

Read more about the [UW Furlough Service Day](#).



4H Invasive Species Seminar



On Tuesday June 22, Preserve staff hosted two sessions of 4-H students to a two-hour seminar on invasive species. After an introduction on the basics of invasion biology, proper identification of a couple common invasive shrubs, and tools used to control such invasives, the students were set loose (with some guidance on proper ID) to pull and cut a variety of invasive shrubs in the woodland strip to the east of the Bill's Woods project area (opposite side of service road). The main targets for removal were buckthorn, honeysuckle, and Japanese tree lilac. The Japanese tree lilac, while not listed as invasive by the state, is acting like an invasive species in this site. It is spreading from the parent trees planted at the Picnic Point Gate some seventy plus years ago. Several large piles of brush were removed from the area, and the students' energy and enthusiasm were greatly appreciated.

Prairie Partners' Interns Put Down Roots for the Summer

The Preserve has another great crop of Prairie Partners' interns this year, courtesy of the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Five organizations comprise the Prairie Partners – The Prairie Enthusiasts (at its Mounds View site), Pleasant Valley Conservancy State Natural Areas (which also includes some work at Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie State Natural Area), Pheasant Branch Conservancy (Middleton), UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve, and the Goose Pond Sanctuary of the Madison Audubon Society.

The five interns work as a team, and spend one day at each of the five sites each week. On their first day in the Preserve, the interns helped plant a truckload of native trees and shrubs in the Lot 34 woodland, shoreline, and basin project areas. The trees included many balled-and-burlapped oaks, hickories, and hawthorns, as well as container-grown ironwoods, hazelnuts, and sumac, to name a few. Look for the interns on Thursdays through mid-August, assisting staff with various projects around the Preserve.



Tent Colony Woods Gully Erosion Project

With moist summer air comes intense summer rains, and these rains can wreak havoc on exposed slopes, especially when combined with impervious surfaces at the peak of the watershed. So is the case in Tent Colony Woods, where a culvert running below Lake Mendota Drive spews stormwater runoff from the road and Eagle Heights down the steep wooded slope into Lake Mendota. With the understory devoid of vegetation from years of dominance by buckthorn, honeysuckle and other woody species, the runoff has deeply scoured the hill in recent years, forming a sizable gully in the loose exposed soil.

Recent work by Preserve staff, along with help from the Prairie Partner's interns, removed undesirable trees and shrubs to allow more sunlight into the area surrounding the gully. The area has been seeded with a diversity of grasses and a smattering of forbs, and then bandaged with erosion matting. As the grasses establish themselves, they will help hold soil in place. Within the gully itself, large rocks, stones, gravel, and sand have been added, creating pools and short runs down the gully's length. The experimental approach will attempt to recreate a rocky "dry-run" often found naturally on wooded hillsides, and avoid intensive mechanical management of the gully.

