

# LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE E-NEWSLETTER

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## To Everything Intern, Turn, Turn

by Adam Gundlach

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve is fortunate again to share the Prairie Partners intern crew with Dane County's Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Natural Heritage Land Trust's Westport Drumlin, and Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary. The [Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve](#) continue their generous support by sponsoring the 2014 interns in the Preserve.

After wheeling and dealing during the last round of the 2014 intern draft, the Prairie Partners picked up two UW-Platteville undergrads, Charles Sickles and Michelle Atkinson, to round out the otherwise UW-Madison dominated line up of Kat Prince, Tori Fuller, Lauren Bradshaw, and Maddie Van Cleve. The group represents a range of environmental interests and experience levels, from undergrad biology majors to grad students studying various aspects of ecology. The crew shares a curiosity and desire to seek knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

The crew has shown a great work ethic. Laboring in the field day after day starts to wear on a person, but the crew is plowing headlong into the (cooling?) dog days of summer with a positive attitude. Wry humor, inquisitive observation, and the occasional berry patch help break up the monotony of the daily routine.

From the outset, improving plant ID skills has been a common goal of the crew members. The Prairie Partners internship introduces the interns to a variety of plant communities between the different natural areas—from dry drumlin prairies to shaded woodland shorelines. Whether an experienced botanist or novice green thumb, all on the crew have improved their ID skills considerably since day one.

In collaboration with the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, the work days have been punctuated

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by a series of presentations and discussions on topics pertinent to ecological restoration, cultural history, geology, limnology, bird monitoring and more. Aboard the Center for Limnology's *Limnos* research vessel, the crew was treated to a view of the Preserve from Lake Mendota's perspective, while observing and discussing issues affecting our lakes.

Similarly, a summer spent on the Prairie Partners crew provides the interns an opportunity to view ecological principles and restoration techniques from different perspectives, hone their observation skills, and discuss observations with colleagues around them.



Interns collect prairie seed in Biocore Prairie. Photo by Adam Gundlach.

## Student Engagement Grants Awarded

by Bryn Scriver

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee awarded three grants this spring made possible by the *Academic Endowment Fund* of the Preserve, established by former faculty members, Robert M. Goodman and Henry Hart. The maximum individual award was \$1,000. The winning proposals were selected based on the degree of student engagement; scientific, educational or applied value; efficient use of funds; use of or contribution to the Preserve digital library; and potential to serve as pilot data for external funding.

Undergraduate student Emma Geiduschek, with co-advisors Janet Batzli (Biocore Program) and Ellen Damschen (Department of Zoology), was awarded funding to collect baseline vegetation data in Biocore Prairie for a longitudinal study on how climate change may be affecting plant communities—specifically how varying levels of winter precipitation and snow depth influences plant species presence, distribution, and abundance. Emma's data will become part of a newly created frost tolerance database. Her work will involve Biocore Program summer interns.

David Drake, Extension Wildlife Specialist and Associate Professor of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, secured funding to expand a spring 2014 study of coyote and red fox to document their home ranges and activity patterns on campus and monitor interactions between the coyote, fox and humans. Students in the Wildlife Damage Management and Wildlife Management Techniques classes and the Wildlife Society's UW-Madison student chapter will help capture and collar the coyotes and fox learning how to set and check traps, and handle radio collared trapped animals.

Professors Jonathan Pauli and Scott Lutz from the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology were awarded funding to study the mechanisms behind the success of the eastern gray squirrel in urban environments. Students enrolled in Forest and Wildlife Ecology 561 will participate in the research, observing a variety of valuable wildlife techniques. Pauli plans to unite efforts with Drake's coyote and fox monitoring.

In all the awards have the potential to engage over 125 UW-Madison undergraduate students in the 2014-2015 academic year.

Any student, faculty or staff member at UW-Madison may apply for a Lakeshore Nature Preserve Student Engagement Grant. A request for proposals will go out again in 2015. To find out more about the grants contact Bryn Scriver, Preserve Outreach Specialist at [bscriver@fpm.wisc.edu](mailto:bscriver@fpm.wisc.edu).



**Student researchers collect vegetation data in Biocore Prairie.**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve permanently protects the undeveloped lands along the shore of Lake Mendota where members of the campus community have long experienced the intellectual and aesthetic benefits of interacting with the natural world.

The Preserve shelters biologically significant plant and animal communities for teaching, research, outreach and environmentally sensitive use, and safeguards beloved cultural landscapes.

The Preserve is as essential to the university as its lecture halls, laboratories, and playing fields. It contributes to a powerful sense of place and fosters an ethic of stewardship to promote mutually beneficial relationships between humans and the rest of nature.

--the Mission Statement of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve



## A Fond Farewell to a Preserve Fixture

On May 1<sup>st</sup> we said goodbye to Cathie Bruner, the Preserve Field Manager, who retired after 17 years of service to the university. Cathie joined the UW in April 1997 as the first field manager for the Preserve which was then part of the UW Arboretum. When announcing Cathie's retirement Gary Brown, Preserve Director, said, "We will truly miss her endless rolodex of contacts across the campus community and for her consistent fun and spirited enthusiasm for making the Lakeshore Nature Preserve the best it can be for everyone to enjoy." According to Gisela Kutzbach, past President of the Friends of the Preserve, Cathie's "enthusiasm for making things work, her ability to bring people together, her infectious love for the Preserve, her boundless energy and dedication will all be missed."

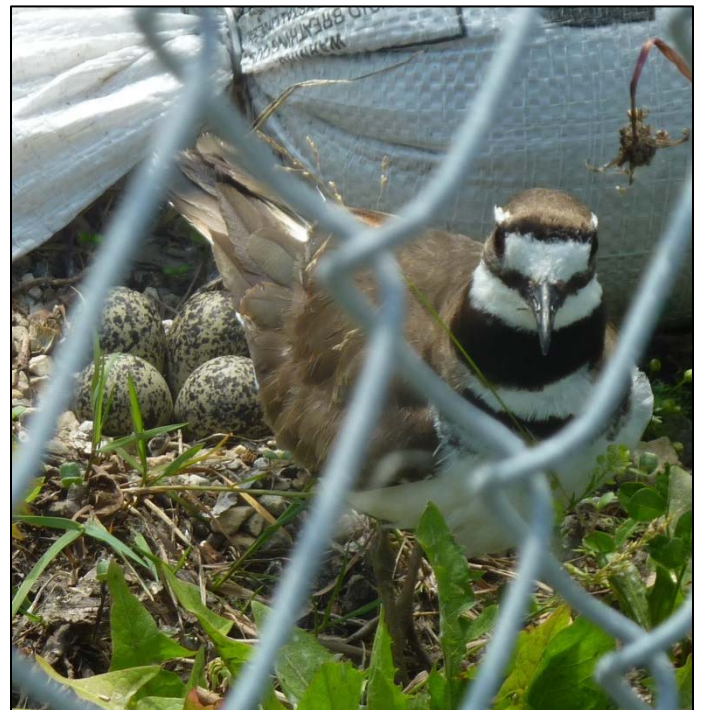


Field Manager, Cathie Bruner retired May 1.  
Photo by Amber Converse.

## You can help with the Preserve Breeding Bird Study!

Preserve volunteer, Roma Lenehan, is still looking for breeding bird data for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Breeding Bird and Habitat Study. The goal of the project is to identify and estimate numbers of bird species in the Preserve and confirm the breeding of each species.

How can you help? Make observations of breeding birds until August 1, 2014. Record the following information: dates of occurrence, location, and if possible, breeding activity such as presence of pair, gathering nest material, or carrying food. Send your observations to Roma Lenehan ([rlenehan@charter.net](mailto:rlenehan@charter.net) or 238-5406).



Killdeer with eggs on nest in former lot 60 overflow area, now stormwater treatment area. Photo by Bryn Scriver.

## Preserve Summer Drop-in Volunteer Events

- Sat. July 26, 9am-Noon, meet at Picnic Point lot 129
- Sat. Aug. 9, 9am-Noon, meet at Picnic Point lot 129
- Sat. Aug. 23, 9am-Noon, meet at Picnic Point lot 129

For fall semester volunteer dates visit our calendar at  
<http://lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu/calendar/index.htm>

## Free Family-Friendly Nature Recreation and Education!

In addition to their regular field trip offerings the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve are collaborating with the Madison Audubon Society to offer free monthly bird and nature walks. Mark your calendar for the fourth Sunday of every month from 1:30-3:00pm to participate in this fun event! Meet at the Eagle Heights Community Garden entrance, 3016 Lake Mendota Drive just off University Bay Drive near Picnic Point.

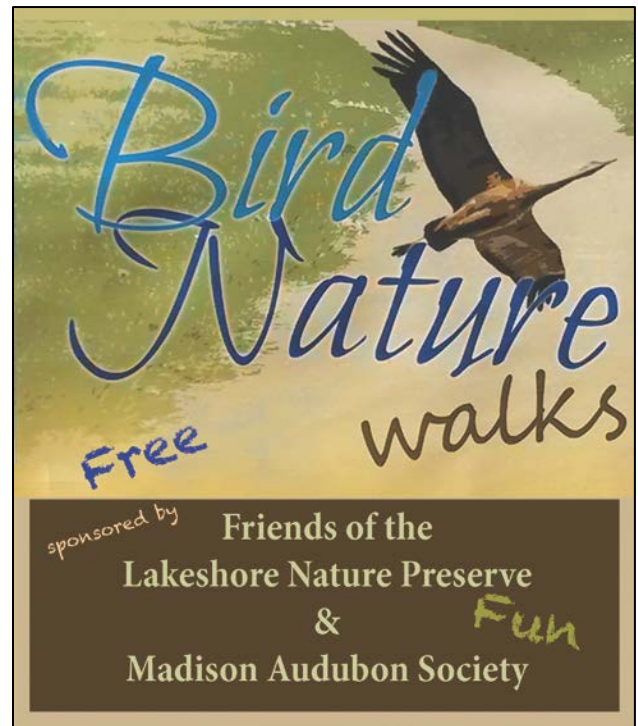
### **Sunday July 27, 1:30-3pm – Baby Bird Bonanza at UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve**

Learn about nesting sites and the parenting behavior of Red-tailed Hawks, Eastern Bluebirds, Baltimore Orioles, Great Horned Owls, Sandhill Cranes and other birds that make their summer home in this incredible landscape.

### **Sunday Aug 24, 1:30-3pm – Birds Butterflies and Blossoms!**

Enjoy Biocore Prairie in full bloom! We will walk the prairie paths looking for baby birds and butterflies and stroll to a scenic Lake Mendota overlook.

*Remember to wear weather appropriate clothing, shoes and insect deterrents and bring a water bottle. Please leave your dog(s) at home for this event. Walks are rain or shine but may be cancelled if inclement weather.*



## Students for the Preserve

By Olivia Sanderfoot

The Students for the Preserve is a new student group at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, founded during the 2013-2014 academic year. Our goal is to foster student appreciation for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and build a community that is not only passionate about the environment, but recognizes the value of sustainable landscapes built at the interface of urban and natural settings. Our mission is to protect and care for the UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve and to discuss global efforts to preserve green space, with a focus on ecological restoration in the state of Wisconsin. Our objectives include restoration, awareness of worldwide conservation efforts with an emphasis on local projects, and, above all, student appreciation for the Preserve and all the opportunities it provides for research, outreach, and recreation.

This upcoming academic year, we plan to join *Party on the Path 2014*, take part in many volunteer days, and spread the word about the Lakeshore Nature Preserve by working closely with the Sustainability Council—the student arm of the Office for Sustainability. We're also excited to start work on a Willow Creek wetland planting project funded by a grant from the Associated Students of Madison Green Fund! Stay tuned for more information or check out our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.



## Five Questions with a Volunteer

Peng Lui

Graduate Student, Computer Science

Expected graduation date Fall 2018



**Peng works in the Class of 1918 Marsh.**

**Photo by Bryn Scriver.**

### 1. Why do you volunteer?

For fun, to work outside, and to get exercise after studying hard! I like to work alongside local Americans and get to know more about Madison. I also feel good about contributing to protecting the natural environment.

### 2. What do you do when you're not volunteering?

I am studying or working on my research on wireless networking and distributed computing. To relax I like to take walks or go to the gym.

### 3. Why do you choose to donate your time to the Lakeshore Nature Preserve?

There are several reasons: 1) It's convenient to where I live; 2) I like the environment—the trees, flowers, grasses and lake; 3) It's flexible—most of the volunteer opportunities are on the weekend, and since they are drop-in I can decide the day of the event to go based on how much research or school work I have to do; 4) The volunteer coordinator is friendly and easy to get along with.

### 4. What keeps you coming back?

I keep having good experiences.

### 5. You are an international student. Where are you from and what do you like best about UW-Madison?

I am from Qianjiang, Hubei Province in the central part of China. I like the natural environment in Madison and on campus. It's a good place to live and study.

## West Campus Stormwater Project Update

Phase two of the West Campus Stormwater Project is nearing completion. The formerly underused and unsightly asphalt overflow parking area north of lot 60 is now a meandering pond. The once soggy ditches between University Bay Drive and Lakeshore Path now infiltrate water. The project was designed to capture nutrient rich sediment from stormwater before it reaches the lake.

Through the spring and early summer, contractors seeded all areas with a diverse mix of mesic and wet prairie species, planted a wide variety of trees and shrubs, and plugged hundreds of emergent aquatic plants into the pond. Last week they finished fencing off the plantings to deter geese from feeding on the new plantings. The contractors from Applied Ecological Services were also quick to respond to a request to raise the construction fences to allow migrating turtles to gain access to the new pond. We look forward to seeing what other wildlife find their way to the new habitat over time.



**Contractors unloading plants before installation in the University Bay Drive ditches. Photo by Bryn Scriver.**

## Why Did the Turtle Cross the Road?

By Adam Gundlach

If you pass along the east side of University Bay Drive, where it bisects University Bay and the Class of 1918 Marsh, you may have noticed a white sandwich board sign along the roadside indicating “Turtle Crossing.” Smaller permanent signs displaying the same message are affixed to the road signs along the drive. The signs are a reminder to drivers that they are not the only species commuting in this corridor.

From late-spring through mid-summer, turtles can be found crossing to and from University Bay into the Class of 1918 Marsh. Whether migrating in search of suitable nesting grounds or suitable mates, the journey leads these turtles on a quest across a gauntlet of increasing danger, from pedestrian path, to bike path, to roadway and routine bus route. Sadly, there are always casualties.

The most common turtle species encountered are the painted turtle ([Chrysemys picta](#)) and snapping turtle ([Chelydra serpentina](#)), but an occasional Blanding's turtle ([Emydoidea blandingii](#)) or musk turtle ([Sternotherus odoratus](#)) sighting cannot be ruled out along the marshes and shorelines of the Preserve – the Blanding's turtle is listed as a state species of special concern by the Wisconsin DNR. Spiny softshell turtles ([Apalone spinifera](#)) also inhabit shorelines and shallows along the Preserve's border, and are commonly seen excavating nests along the gravel paths that border Willow Creek.

A second migration across the busy University Bay Drive corridor may occur in late summer as hatchlings emerge from the nest. However, depending on the species and timing of the season, some hatchlings remain in the nest until the following spring before emerging in search of nearby water. Whether you are on foot, pedaling a bike, or steering a car, be sure to keep an eye out for our reptile neighbors during their annual travels.



Signs alert motorists to turtles on the road.  
Photo by Bryn Scriver.



A painted turtle makes a mad dash across the Lakeshore path.



This softshell turtle was photographed laying eggs along the banks of Willow Creek. Photo by Bryn Scriver.



## Friends of the Preserve Special Events

In April the Friends descended on East Bill's Woods for a garlic mustard "pledge and pull" fundraising event. In two hours volunteers pulled 5 full bags of small garlic mustard plants and raised over \$1,600 through the pledges of members for the continued care and stewardship of the Preserve! Members also brought yummy treats to share for a post-pull break including garlic mustard quiche.

In May the Friends showed up again 'en force' to plant more than 700 native plant plugs along the main trail at Frautschi Point. The plants were purchased with money donated in memory of long-time Friends member and Preserve volunteer Harriet Riley. This was the second year of planting in memory of Harriet. As you walk the trail this summer look for flowering Joe pye weed, wood mint, bellflower, and zig zag goldenrod.

In June, the Friends, along with some first-time Preserve volunteers—a visiting family from Taiwan, planted and weeded in the Heritage Oak project area. The restoration of this area, initiated in 2011, was made possible by a \$13,000 donation from the Friends. Those funds covered the removal of buckthorn, honeysuckle and undesirable trees which were interfering with the large open grown oak and seeding and planting of savanna species in the previously bare groundlayer.

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Photos of Frautschi planting event by Gisela Kutzbach.  
To see more photos of the Friends planting event go to the [Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve website](http://www.fpm.wisc.edu/friends).