

Snapshot Wisconsin Volunteer-based Wildlife Monitoring in the Preserve

By Vivek Malleshappa, Natural Resources Technician/Educator, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Lakeshore Nature Preserve has been a sanctuary for me since I started my master's degree in Environmental Science at UW-Madison. Living 'next door' in Eagle Heights Apartments, whenever I needed a break from schoolwork, I hopped out to the Preserve with my binoculars. Watching a downy woodpecker chip away at a tree was enough to unwind. I still live here with my wife and we are grateful for the easy access to a natural area as beautiful as the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. I wanted to volunteer for the Preserve and decided to host a trail camera with Snapshot Wisconsin, where I work. Before I talk about all the cool wildlife we are seeing from the trail camera, I want to introduce you to Snapshot Wisconsin.

Snapshot Wisconsin is a volunteer-based trail camera project managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Volunteers across the state of Wisconsin participate in the project by hosting a trail camera on their private land or public lands to collect data, which is used in wildlife management decision support.

I have been operating the camera at the Lakeshore Nature Preserve since December 2018 and it has already captured some amazing pictures. From commonly seen raccoons and opossums, to the somewhat secretive red fox and the less common deer, there is a variety of wildlife passing by the camera.

While deriving wildlife population insights from this one camera is difficult, at a minimum it tells us about what species occupy this landscape. And, all the cameras across the state of Wisconsin together are helping us paint a picture of wildlife presence

and populations. To find out more about the statewide project and possibly get involved, at the [Snapshot Wisconsin website](http://SnapshotWisconsin.org).

I look forward to seeing many more interesting pictures from the camera at the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Here are some of my favorites so far and I hope you like them as much as I do.



From the Director..

By Gary Brown, PLA, FASLA



As summer really begins to heat up here on campus, we look forward to the cooling temperatures of the fall semester and students returning to enliven the campus once again. We also look forward to working with our many stakeholders in completing our draft Strategic Plan that will guide long-term decision making in the management of the Preserve over the next 10+

years. The university is fortunate to have the assistance of the Office of Strategic Consulting right here on campus to guide us through this planning process. Both Lori Scroggs and Mari Ann Ames-Menager have brought their excellent facilitation skills and the background of prior strategic planning efforts with the UW Arboretum and other campus units to assure we have a collaborative and fruitful discussion. Please watch our Preserve website for further

activities and ways to provide input into the strategic planning process.

I'm also happy to report that the Preserve continues to receive funding support through Facilities Planning & Management, including potential support for an additional full-time staff person to assist in field land management activities. We hope to have that person on-board later this fall.

It always amazes me in the many various ways we can all support the Preserve in its long term goals and continue to be the largest outdoor classroom and research laboratory, right here on campus. From volunteer work parties, native planting sessions, prairie plant seed gathering, and invasive species removals, we all can do our part to extend the legacy of this amazing place.

AmeriCorps NCCC Cedar 3 Crew Makes an Impact in Preserve

By Adam Gundlach, Preserve Field Projects Coordinator

In early June, the Preserve hosted an AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) crew for two weeks. AmeriCorps is a federal network of national service programs that foster civic engagement and address community needs.

Approximately 75,000 Americans from all corners of the country participate in AmeriCorps each year, helping communities recover from natural disasters, build affordable housing, support environmental sustainability efforts, and fulfill other community needs.



The initial step in the NCCC crew's arrival at the Preserve started months prior, during a multi-tiered application process. The UW Arboretum served as lead sponsor, with Schumacher Farm Park (Dane County), Community Action Coalition, and the Preserve collaborating as partner organizations in the application.

From their home base in Vinton, Iowa, the Cedar 3 NCCC crew drove east in their red 15-passenger van and

arrived at the UW Arboretum in early May, where they worked for several weeks before moving north to the Preserve. The crew came equipped with much of the personal protective equipment (PPE) required for field work. Additional on-the-job training and PPE was provided for each task and tool issued.

A main project focus in the Preserve was continuing invasive brush removal in the western portion of Bill's Woods. In 2017, a prior AmeriCorps NCCC crew began brush removal efforts in this 5-acre sub-unit bounded by University Bay Drive on the south, Lake Mendota Drive on the west and the bike path to Eagle Heights Apartments along the north and east. The 2019 NCCC crew embraced the physical labor demanded of the intensive brush removal work. After nearly a week toiling in dense thickets of buckthorn and honeysuckle, the NCCC crew was able to celebrate opening up more than an acre of land for restoration of native diversity.

A second project focus was trail work in Eagle Heights Woods, including installation of a series of water bars along the north-south path up from Shady Lane. The water bars are the first phase in an effort to mitigate erosion of the path farther down-slope. The crew also helped carve a new path corridor, which will replace the existing, highly eroded segment at

the intersection of the Shady Lane and south slope trail segments.



On top of their demanding work schedule, AmeriCorps NCCC crews are expected to serve their community through additional volunteering. To fulfill some of these requirements, the crew spent a Sunday morning removing Canada thistle along the Lakeshore Path. The crew worked steadily and with good spirits while keeping an eye on threatening rain clouds.

Learn more about the AmeriCorps in this Isthmus article [Working-class heroes](#).



Forming Connections Using Sweet Potatoes

By Savannah Holt, Student Engagement Grant Awardee

This past spring, I was in a gardening seminar when I was tasked with either designing a garden or writing a grant proposal. Despite not having the experience or desire to create a research project, I hoped to use my marketing background to focus on community outreach within the community and to find a way to connect Eagle Heights Community gardeners, UW students, and others who use the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

Around this time, I also learned of a research project that Malachi Persche (Soil Science B.S. '18) was starting with the GreenHouse Learning Community regarding growing sweet potatoes in containers. Never having grown sweet potatoes, or any other root vegetable for that matter, I was intimidated to start a project where I did not feel qualified to help. However, with the deadline for the grant approaching and knowing that food can have incredible powers to bring people together, *Forming Connections Using Sweet Potatoes* was born.

The journey started with growing hundreds of sweet potato slips in greenhouses around campus. I grew my share in Leopold Hall's rooftop greenhouse. From there, our team set up informational booths at the Eagle Heights Community Gardens warm and cold season crop sales, where we were able to connect with a diverse group of gardeners. At the cold season crop sale, we were almost overwhelmed (in a good way) with the amount of interest in our project, and although the warm season crop sale's poor weather limited the number of gardeners who

attended, we were already planning our next big event. On June 2nd, we hosted a bucket building day where we helped over fifty Eagle Heights gardeners create their own buckets for growing sweet potatoes. UW Housing generously donated five-gallon buckets that gardeners drilled holes into so that the buckets could drain. Then with wheelbarrows full of soil and leaf mulch, we helped the gardeners fill their buckets before adding fertilizer and topping off the buckets with more soil. Finally, participants were given their choice of purple or orange (Beauregard) sweet potatoes. Most put two slips per bucket in hopes that at least one would flourish.



Participants build their own sweet potato growing containers at Eagle Heights Community Gardens.

Malachi continues research on how various mixtures of leaf mulch and soil

affects the growth of sweet potatoes, as well as multiple methods for vole deterrents, including buckets. I am currently brainstorming ideas to increase people's awareness about our project and the Lakeshore Nature Preserve as a whole. In the fall, I plan to host a Harvest Festival for the GreenHouse Learning Community so that new students can be exposed to the Preserve at the beginning of the school year.

Special thanks to the Lakeshore Nature Preserve for funding this Student Engagement Grant project—we are excited to share our results.

If you have any questions regarding this project please contact Savannah at sholt3@wisc.edu.

Prairie Partners Interns 2019

By Adam Gundlach, Preserve Field Projects Coordinator

In late May, the Prairie Partners intern crew landed in the Preserve for a summer of hard-earned learning. The Prairie Partners is a program coordinated by the Madison Audubon Society, in partnership with Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy, Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy, and Groundswell Conservancy. The crew works 1 day a week in each of the partner locations. The 2019 crew is made up of four Badgers (UW-Madison students or recent graduates) and one Pointer (current UW-Stevens Point student). They come with a variety of interests, but all crew members share a passion for the ecosystems they find themselves immersed in each day on the job.

To date, the crew has worked to remove garlic mustard from the base of Picnic Point, performed vegetation surveys in Eagle Heights and Bill's Woods, hauled brush, pulled-cut-and-dug a multitude of weedy species, performed targeted herbicide applications, and begun invasive brush removal on the south slope of Bill's Woods.

The tedium of manual labor has been punctuated by site tours and discussions on a variety of topics relating to ecology, cultural history, and land management. More educational enrichment offerings are still to come, including a Lake Mendota tour of the Preserve.



The 2019 Prairie Partners interns (Rachel, Dane, Margaret, Tucker, and Calla) take a break from surveying vegetation in Bill's Woods.

Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Summer Field Trips—2019

July

21 Native Pollinators in the Preserve (Sun, 9:00–11:00 a.m.). Join us in searching for bees and other pollinators while learning about their diversity, behaviors, and importance. Meet at the entrance to Picnic Point. Leader: Susan Carpenter (886-7504, susan.carpenter@wisc.edu).

28 Bird and Nature Outing (Sun, 1:30–3:00 p.m.). See box.

August

10 Bird Banding in the Preserve (Sat, 7:00–10:00 a.m.). Join Jackie Sandberg, Wildlife Rehabilitation Training Coordinator for the Dane County Humane Society, to learn about bird banding, how banding helps expand our knowledge of birds, and our efforts towards conservation. Stop by any time during the listed hours. From Lot 129, walk up to Biocore Prairie. Leader: Jackie Sandberg (838-0413, jsandberg@giveshelter.org).

18 Food for Thought (Sun, 1:30–3:00 p.m.) Join ethnobotanist Eve Emshwiller in a search for edible and other useful plants in the Preserve. You will learn about the evolution and the conservation of a diversity of plants and their wild relatives. Meet at the entrance to Picnic Point. Leader: Eve Emshwiller (890-1170, emshwiller@wisc.edu).

25 Bird and Nature Outing (Sun, 1:30–3:00 p.m.). See box.

Bird and Nature Outings

Free, family friendly walks! Bring your binoculars and camera and explore the varied ecosystems and wildlife of the Preserve every 4th Sunday of the month from 1:30-3:00 p.m. Meet at UW parking lot 129 (2004 University Bay Drive) at the entrance to Picnic Point. Sponsored by the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

Meet our New Seasonal Staff

By Bryn Scriver, Preserve Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator

Jeff Schneider is our new Invasive Species Specialist hired to lead the invasive plant monitoring and control project for the 2019 growing season. Jeff also leads our weekly Badger Volunteer team, supervising eight UW students every Friday morning in ecological restoration and invasive species control activities. Jeff has a degrees from UW-Madison in Communication Arts and Environmental Studies. Before coming to the Preserve he worked as an Environmental Steward in AmeriCorps at a land trust in coastal Maine. He's looking forward to learning the similarities and differences between the large rural preserves he worked at in Maine and the urban Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Jeff's favorite part of the job so far has been keeping a close eye on the endless cycle of small changes that occur in nature as the seasons progress. According to Jeff, "Once you start looking (and getting paid to notice!) you can't help but wonder at the sudden unfurling of new prairie flowers, the growing number of frogs and Sandhill cranes, the slow daily transformation of the forest floor from the brown of early spring to the bright green of June."



Jacy Swiggum joined the Preserve staff as a Natural Areas Assistant. Her duties include caring for the Picnic Point fire circles, stocking firewood, and controlling invasive plants. Jacy is a Junior studying horticulture at UW-Madison. She says she has learned to identify many plants she was not familiar with before. She has also learned how to use brush cutters and other land management tools, including becoming a certified herbicide applicator. Jacy says, "I have enjoyed becoming more familiar with all of the great natural areas within the Preserve...I want people to know that the Preserve has so much to offer and is an amazing place to step away from classes or work and that, when respected, a natural area like this can provide an amazing place to relax and learn!"



If you see Jeff or Jacy working in the Preserve, feel free to give them a friendly wave and thank them for their good work!

Tracking Tree Growth in the Preserve

By Monika Shea, Ph.D. Candidate and Lecturer, Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology

If you have been walking around the Lakeshore Nature Preserve this summer, you may have noticed something new: metal bands wrapped around tree trunks at about chest height. These are known as dendrometer bands. The bands are fixed to a small device with a ruler and a spring that allows the band to expand as the tree grows. The device does not harm trees in any way. Students and instructors from Dr. Phil Townsend's Forest Ecology class will visit the trees with dendrometer bands throughout the year for the next several years and record the readings on the rulers, which allows us to precisely measure tree growth. There are currently twenty-one dendrometer bands on trees scattered across the Preserve.

Why measure tree growth? It may seem obvious that trees grow wider and taller every year. What isn't so obvious—and what makes tree growth so interesting—is that it varies a lot. If you look closely at the rings on a tree trunk after it is cut, you will notice that some rings are wide while others are narrow. This variability in ring width, a reflection of tree growth, is largely due to differences in climate and light conditions from year to year. Tree growth can also vary between different trees in the same forest site, depending on tree species, age, and height.

Scientists track tree growth for many reasons. For example, it can help us gain a better understanding of how different tree species grow if they are in full sunlight or in the shade of other trees. It can also help us understand if and how tree growth will change as the climate changes and how trees respond to different types of disturbance such as wildfire or windstorms. Collecting data about tree growth can also help scientists calculate the amount of carbon that is absorbed in different types of forests, which informs scientific climate models.

For the Forest Ecology class, this is part of a larger, long-term monitoring project tracking the carbon cycle as well as changes in forest structure and species composition over time. There are six permanent plots in the Lakeshore



The UW Forest Ecology class will use dendrometers to measure tree growth in the Preserve as part of a long term monitoring project.

Nature Preserve with two additional plots in the UW Arboretum. Each plot has four trees with dendrometer bands, representing the range of tree species and sizes found at each site. In addition to dendrometer readings, students collect data on tree and understory species composition, tree diameter and height, understory light conditions, and foliar production. The goal is to use the dendrometer readings of growth from individual trees to scale up to the forest, so that we can quantify the carbon balance of the Preserve's forests from year to year.

The Forest Ecology plots (including the dendrometer bands) are just one of many research projects going on in the Preserve in a given year. As a prior student in the class and now the lead Graduate Student Teaching Assistant, I am grateful for the opportunity to do quality, hands-on Forest Ecology work right on campus. So, if you happen to see a dendrometer band while out in the wooded areas of the Preserve, please don't touch it. However I hope that it reminds you of the many research and learning opportunities that we are lucky to have at the UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve.

Volunteer at the Preserve!

Volunteers from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve came together in May to plant nearly 650 native herbaceous plants and bare root shrubs in Frautschi Point Woods.

You, too, can get involved in caring for the Preserve through ecological restoration and facilities maintenance activities by joining one of our remaining summer drop-in volunteer events:

- Sat July 27/ 9AM to Noon/ Picnic Point entrance (2004 University Bay Dr)
- Sat Aug 10/ 9AM to Noon/ Frautschi Point lot (2662 Lake Mendota Dr)

For a full list of events visit the [Preserve events calendar](#).

For more information contact the Preserve Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, bryn.scriver@wisc.edu.



Volunteers Explore the Poetry of Mary Oliver and three Campus Nature Areas

By Bryn Scriver, Preserve Volunteer and Outreach Specialist

The UW Arboretum recently organized a series of writing workshops for volunteers of the Arboretum, Allen Centennial Gardens, and the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. The series, *Mary Oliver and the Fine Art of Mindfulness in Nature*, was led by Arboretum volunteer Troy Hess with assistance from Arboretum staff. Participants visited all three sites for inspiration, then wrote poetry and prose using themes of observation, celebration, gratitude, and imagination. We share two poems from the workshops below, and we will share more in future newsletters.

Can You Multi-task?, by Joanne Riecke

singing while flying
the way of a bird

or singing while defending
another way of a bird

or singing and singing
for fun?

Sun, Draft #5, by Maya Cole

Sun rays dance,
give us light, color and warmth
while silently passing the days.

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Parking Changes

By Laura Wyatt, Preserve Program Manager

Parking near the Lakeshore Nature Preserve's Picnic Point is getting a makeover! Lot 130 will be closed until early September.

The redesigned Lot 130 will be paved and restructured to allow a greater vehicle capacity. It will also include a bio-swale that all runoff will flow into for filtering prior to moving to the lake. Trees that were removed during construction (mostly ash) will be replaced. When Lot 130 is complete, Lot 129 which regularly floods will be taken out of service and restored with native plants.

While Lot 130 is closed, Lot 129 and the east end of Lot 60 (801 Walnut Street) are open for visitor parking. Payment is required for those parking Mon. through Fri. between 7 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (The Preserve is open 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day.) Pay stations are located in Lot 129 and in the Lot 60 boat dock area—display your receipt on your vehicle's dashboard.

Those who park in Lot 60 can use the Howard M. Temin Lakeshore Path to travel to Picnic Point.

Note: Route 80 eastbound stop #2281 (U Bay & Picnic Point – Eastbound) will be closed for the duration of the Lot 130 project. Use stop #2048 (Lake Mendota & U Bay) or stop #2050 (U Bay & Lot 76) instead. The westbound stop #2938 near Lot 129 will be open.

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To support the Lakeshore Nature Preserve's ongoing mission
of teaching, research, and land stewardship, make a donation today.

Visit supportuw.org/giveto/lakeshore

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the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, please find us on
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