

The BogHaunter

the newsletter of the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog

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Winter 2011-12

OCTOBER OWL PROWL

Thirty adventurous people were treated to a fun filled night at the Friends' sponsored Owl Prowl on Oct. 21st. We walked only a short distance before hike leader Tom Uttech tried calling in Wisconsin's smallest owl. Within minutes the weak tremolo of a single Saw-whet was heard about 100 yards away.

Its faint call was coming closer and closer until suddenly two Barred Owls flew in, landing only a few feet from the road. They, too, had heard the Saw-whet Owl and came in for a possible late night snack. The Saw-whet disappeared while the Barred Owls' "Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all?" calls echoed back and forth just over our heads. They entertained us for over 5 minutes while co-leaders, John O'Donnell and Carl Schwartz, scanned surrounding trees for their silhouettes.

As soon as they zeroed in on the owls' location, John and Carl turned their spot lights on the pair. The Barred Owls continued to hoot even while being in the limelight. Eventually the larger Barred Owl, presumably the female, flew off leaving its bewildered partner behind. He called for his mate for a short time before he, too, vanished into the woods. When the birds were out of sight the group broke its silence and exploded with questions about the experience. Their first question being "did we stage this performance?"

With time to spare, the group moved south to the Field Station's boardwalk. Winds had calmed and clouds cleared revealing a beautiful moon. This time our guides played screech owl calls. After numerous repetitions, a faint reply came from a distance but the songster never ventured any closer. Before calling it a night, the leaders attempted to call our state's largest owl. Although the Great Horned Owl didn't return their

calls, bill snapping and moving branches clued us in to its presence. Four species of owls in two hours – not bad for one night! "Prowlers" who weren't quite ready for bed were invited to follow Tom Uttech home to try to call in a Long-eared Owl in his neighborhood. A few "night owls" took him up on the offer.

See the Calendar for information about the next Owl Prowl.

Mary Holleback

WHO COOKS FOR YOU?

The Barred Owls that had a starring role at the Owl Prowl are permanent residents in the swamps that ring the Cedarburg Bog. The large expanses of swamp that they need are in increasingly short supply. They are secretive birds, but their loud "Who cooks for you" call and raucous short conversations betray their presence from as far as a mile away. Barred Owls prefer to retreat when they are disturbed, but when "called" by owl-prowlers, they may fly in silently to check out the scene before fading back into the swamp.



Photo by Seth Cutright

These are large birds - 17 to 24 inches tall with a wingspread of 40 to 50 inches. Under all the feathers is a body that weighs less than two pounds. Barred owls' eyes are brown, unusual in owls, and they have a dark ring around their face. Their slit-like ears are concealed by feathers, and because the right ear is higher than the left, the owl can calculate the location of its prey

based on the different angles the sound comes from. Barred Owls have rounded heads, without the feather tufts that give the Great Horned Owl its name. The "barred" part of their name comes from the dark horizontal stripes on the head and throat, but they are also called Black-eyed Owl, Rain Owl, Swamp Owl, Laughing Owl, Eight Hooter, and Round Headed Owl.

The list of animals on a Barred Owl's menu is a long one. They hunt from perches and take rodents and other small mammals, snakes, insects, and birds (they're not agile enough to take birds on the wing so they catch roosting birds). Barred owls also wade into the water for fish, frogs, turtles, salamanders, and crayfish, and an owl that has been eating lots of crayfish may have pinkish feathers on its belly. Several times a day a Barred Owl will spit up an "owl pellet" – a one to two inch bundle of indigestible hair and bones. They typically hunt at dusk and dawn, but they may be seen in the late afternoon when they have young to feed. Hawks, raccoons, Great Horned Owls, house cats, and cars are mortality factors for Barred Owls.

Barred Owls often begin their courtship calls in late winter and lay two or three eggs by early spring. They nest in big trees, using cavities, nest boxes, or old nests built by a hawk, crow, squirrel or raccoon. They reuse a nest for a few years. Eggs are incubated for 28 days, and the young are ready to leave the nest in about five weeks, though they hang around with the parent birds for much of the summer.

Friends of the Cedarburg Bog

Supporting stewardship and appreciation of the Cedarburg Bog through land management, preservation, research and education.

BOGFRIENDS IS UP

The Friends of the Cedarburg Bog has a new face to present to the public on the World Wide Web. Now when you go to www.bogfriends.org you can see in an instant why the Bog is considered to be one of the most biologically interesting wetlands in southern Wisconsin. And why, singled out by Aldo Leopold, it became in 1952 just the second site designated a State Natural Area.



The Friends of the Cedarburg Bog seek to make the public more aware of the Bog's uniqueness by creating opportunities to visit it. We plan projects and organize volunteer workdays for invasive species control, while seeking to improve facilities for educational and scientific programs and to support long-term monitoring and research.

Friends President Carl Schwartz said all of those goals are met by the new web site, developed by Dave Bishop, owner of Eco Web Design of Mequon, who worked with a team from the Friends' board of directors.

Bishop has created web sites for the Treasures of Oz, the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory, the Ozaukee-Washington Land Trust, and the Southeast Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium.

The new Bog Friends site replaces one created at the time the Friends group was organized six years ago, but never fully developed. Taking advantage of advances in web site technology, the new site will be easier to update and has a blog as well as news stories and a calendar of events that interfaces with other Google-based calendars, including the Treasures of Oz site. It also takes advantage of Google mapping to help you find your way to the Bog from any other point.

You can even go paperless to "Join the Friends" on the site through PayPal, or make an additional donation to support the Friends

efforts. Or you can contact us about volunteer opportunities. And the "Our Friends" page provides quick links to the Field Station's web site as well as those of nearby Nature Centers and conservation organizations.

Photo galleries showcase the Bog's plants, animals and landscape, as well as volunteer activities on lands owned by both the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Field Station.

The site also includes complete species lists of the plants, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and birds of the Bog, along with an archive of the *BogHaunter* newsletters from 2006 to 2010.

Carl Schwartz

PHOTO CONTEST REMINDER

The Friends of the Cedarburg Bog Photo Contest is under way. For details, please check <http://www.bogfriends.org/bog-friends-blog>

HONORED

For the second year in a row, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association has presented one of its "Wetlands Hero" awards to someone who is a true friend of the Cedarburg Bog and who has worked for more than 30 years to help others appreciate this special wetland.

The WWA awards recognize individuals and groups whose work advances the WWA's tri-fold mission: the protection, restoration and enjoyment of Wisconsin's wetlands and related ecosystems. The WWA's Wetland Enjoyment Award for 2012 went to Dr. James A. Reinartz, director of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Field Station at the Cedarburg Bog. The honor was presented at the WWA's Annual Membership Meeting & Wetlands Awards Ceremony on Oct. 27 at the McKay Visitor Center of the UW-Arboretum in Madison.

The Cedarburg Bog, in Ozaukee County, has been recognized by the WWA as a Wetland Gem.

Jim has educated and inspired countless children and adults to marvel at the intricacies of wetland ecosystems. He has a unique ability to foster a love of the outdoors in people and acts to educate others as a means to achieve broad-scale

wetlands advocacy and policy work. Throughout his career, Jim has educated and inspired many future wetland researchers, land stewards, and policy makers. He has also authored a wide variety of articles and research papers, including *A Guide to the Natural History of the Cedarburg Bog* (available at http://www4.uwm.edu/fieldstation/publications/bulletins/upload/fsbulletin18_2.pdf)

Introducing Jim at the ceremony was last year's recipient, Kate Redmond, Secretary of the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog.

In introducing Jim, Kate shared comments from what the WWA said were a record 14 nominating letters, offering this central theme: Jim has never lost his sense of excitement, awe and wonder, which he transmits in his interactions with people.



Jim Reinartz (right) and other 2011 WWA award recipients

For more details and photos of the WWA ceremony, see <http://wisconsinwetlands.org/2011annualmeeting.htm>

Carl Schwartz

CHRIS FREDRICH

A few years ago I put out a call for someone to format the newsletter so that it could go to the printer electronically, could be archived on the website, and could be sent to members who opt to receive the *BogHaunter* on-line. Chris Fredrich answered the call and took over the final squeezing of words and art into their allotted spaces, cheerfully putting up with my last-minute editorial "tweaking." She wrote articles, too, and her pencil sketches graced these pages. Chris died in early November and she is missed.

Kate Redmond, BogHaunter editor

*The Cedarburg Bog: designated
an Important Bird Area and a
Wetland Gem*

GROUNDWATER STUDY

What do you and the Cedarburg Bog have in common? Well, for one thing, you're both mostly water. How much water goes in, and what else is in it, makes a difference in how you feel, how you function, even whether you live or die. Fortunately, in Wisconsin the water that goes into us is pretty good stuff and, compared to other places in the country, there's plenty of it. But what about the water for the Cedarburg Bog? That water depends on rain and snow, water runoff from adjacent land, and groundwater that seeps in below the surface.



Great Blue Herons depend on clean water

Rain & snow we can't control. Surface water runoff to the Bog flows fairly cleanly, thanks to landowners around the Bog who make an effort to keep it that way. Groundwater, on the other hand, we know much less about, and not nearly enough to insure a healthy water supply for the Bog.

If you've been a *BogHaunter* reader for very long, you already know the Cedarburg Bog isn't a typical 'bog', where the water source is mainly acidic precipitation. The Cedarburg Bog is a much more complex groundwater dependent ecosystem. Some of the Bog's rarest plants and animals wouldn't survive here if there was no mineral-rich groundwater flowing in. Protecting that groundwater is one of the most important things we can do.

Finding out more about local groundwater is the topic of a recent grant awarded to the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog by the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program. In September the Friends, working with the Wisconsin Geological Natural History Survey, Ozaukee and

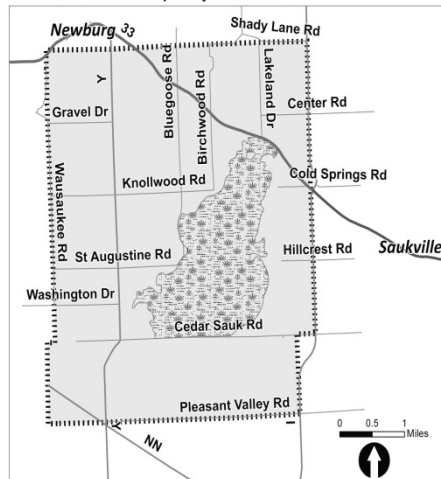
Washington Counties, and other partners, began a year-long study to identify the areas that make an important contribution to the Bog's groundwater, determine groundwater flow patterns and how these patterns affect habitat for the Bog's groundwater-dependent animals and plants.

The first step in the study is to map the local water table. To do this we're collecting data from logs that well drillers recorded when they installed water supply wells in the area. This data will help us make a 3-dimensional map of the water table and the different kinds of rock layers around the Bog. The map will help us understand where the Bog's groundwater is coming from, how it gets here, and, once it does, how it may affect habitat for critical species like the Hine's Emerald dragonfly.

If you own a well in the project area you can contribute to this study by making our map more accurate. One way to help is by allowing a surveyor to map the precise location of your well. Another is by allowing a qualified person to measure the water level in your well sometime next spring. We do all the work, and nothing touches your water! There's no cost or risk to you. If you're interested in learning more about the study, or helping with the mapping effort, leave a message for Joanne Kline at the Field Station (262-675-6844), or email bogfriends@gmail.com or drop me a note using the Field Station mailing address.

Joanne Kline

Groundwater Study Project Area



**Please join us for the
Friends of the Cedarburg Bog
Annual Winter Walk
and Chili Potluck
at the UWM Field Station**

January 29, 2012

1:00 - hike

4:30 - eats

We supply chili and beverage.

**You don't have to get chilly
to eat chili. Join us for the walk or
the potluck or both.**

**If your last name starts
with A to M,
please bring a dessert to share.**

**If your last name starts
with N to Z,
please bring a side dish to share.**

No dogs, please

**Please RSVP at 262-675-6844 or
fieldstn@uwm.edu**

NEW OZAUKEE COUNTY CONSERVATION WARDEN

Hello, I am the newly-stationed Conservation Warden with the Department of Natural Resources in Ozaukee County. I started work in Ozaukee County in July of 2011. The Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area is the largest portion of state-owned land in my patrol area and has been a major focus of my patrols so far this year.

I have been made aware of several enforcement issues related to the Bog such as illegal dumping/littering and hunters leaving tree stands, boats and duck blinds on state property year-round. I have been working to reduce the prevalence of these issues to keep the Bog as natural and pristine as possible. I ask that you please report any violations discovered to the WDNR Bog Property Manager Andrew Krueger (262-285-3015) or to me. We truly need your assistance in reducing these violations. My office number is 262-268-1977 and the WDNR Tip line is 1800-TIP-WDNR. Also, please do not hesitate to call me with any questions. Hope to see you in the Bog!

Warden Chris Shea

CALENDAR

Riveredge Bird Club

First Tuesday of the month.

Program – 7 PM

Riveredge Nature Center Barn.

Free. The public is welcome.

Science for Everyone

Public programs on Natural History.

7:00 to 8:15 PM

Third Tuesday of the month at Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg; and fourth Tuesday at Washington County Public Agency Center, West Bend. **Please note. The series no longer meets in Cedarburg.**

January 17, "Changes in Populations, Distribution and Abundance of Wisconsin's Bird Species"- Bill Mueller.

For locations and other topics, check www.riveredge.us or 800-287-8098. Free. \$5 donation suggested.

Snowshoeing and Cross-Country Skiing at Riveredge Nature Center:

Riveredge will host several snowshoe and ski events, including evening events and winter geocaching, in January and February. Please check www.riveredge.us or phone 800-287-8098 for dates, times and fees. Reservations are required.

Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg

Friends of the Cedarburg Bog

Quarterly board meeting

January 12, 7 – 9PM

UWM Field Station

Members welcome



Winter Wonderland

January 29, 1-4 PM

Make a winter bird feeder, go sledding or snowshoeing, enter the snowman building contests, and look at the sun through solar scopes.

Admission: Free

Lac Lawrann Conservancy,
300 Schmidt Road, West Bend.

Friends of the Cedarburg Bog Annual Winter Hike and Chili Potluck

January 29, Hike at 1:00; Chili Potluck at 4:30.

Hike into the heart of the Bog on a mid-winter day. See the invitation elsewhere in this newsletter. Please pre-register at 262-675-6844 or fieldstn@uwm.edu.

Owl Prowl – A Friends' Activity

Feb. 10, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Find out what's awake at the UWM Field Station on a winter's eve.

Bring binoculars and dress warmly. Please pre-register at 262-675-6844 or fieldstn@uwm.edu.

Free: A \$3 donation is suggested.

Lac Lawrann Winter Walk

February 18, 1 to 2:30 PM.

Take a walk with a naturalist and explore the winter landscape.

Admission: Free

Lac Lawrann Conservancy

300 Schmidt Road, West Bend

Tapping the Sugarbush

February 25, 1 to 2:30 PM

This event marks the start of the magical maple sugarin' season at Riveredge. Bring your family and friends and learn how to identify and properly tap a maple tree.

Fee: Adults \$3, Children \$1

Members: Free

Please pre-register at 800-287-8098 or www.riveredge.us
Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg

Maple Sugarin' Open House

March 24, 10 AM to 3 PM

Learn how the Native Americans made maple syrup, experience life at a sugar camp, stir syrup cooking over an open fire, participate in Native American crafts and games and much more. Enjoy our famous pancakes and maple syrup; other refreshments are available for purchase.

Pre-registration is suggested for groups.

Fee: Adult \$10, 10 & under \$5

Members: Adult \$5, 10 & under \$4

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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