

THE BOG HAUNTER

the newsletter of the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog
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BOG BIOBLITZ

The Friends of the Cedarburg Bog group is joining the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF) of Wisconsin to offer a fun and free citizen-science event called a "BioBlitz."

Designed as part educational event, part scientific endeavor and part festival, the BioBlitz will bring together scientists, volunteers, and the public to see how many species can be tallied in a day-long biological survey of Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area in Ozaukee County on Saturday, July 17.

Ecologists and scientists from the Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as well as non-profit conservationists and skilled amateur naturalists, will be on-hand to lead citizen-scientist teams all day at one of Wisconsin's premiere conservation areas. Cedarburg Bog is owned by the DNR and UW and was designated State Natural Area No. 2 in 1952



Environmental educators from Milwaukee's Urban Ecology Center (UEC), the Wisconsin Conservation Corps, the Milwaukee Public Museum and the UW-Milwaukee Field Station will be on hand to introduce conservation science to families and young children through fun, fast and easy activities.

Not interested in field trips? There will be displays set up by the Bog Friends, NRF, UEC, Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Bird City Wisconsin and others. Several guest speakers also are scheduled to give short talks under the tent at base camp at the

Field Station, at 3095 Blue Goose Rd., west of Saukville. Currently scheduled are:

Jean Lord, Pine View Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (rehabilitated birds of prey).

Dr. James Reinartz, UW-Milwaukee Field Station (natural history and bog ecology).

While a few BioBlitzes have been held in Wisconsin before, none has been held at any of Wisconsin's 600-plus State Natural Areas. These specially designated areas are considered "the best of the best" remnants of original Wisconsin landscapes. They represent a window into our past and a road map for how and why such areas should be protected and restored now and in the future.

Members of the public are invited to come for a few hours or stay for the whole day. The BioBlitz at Cedarburg Bog will run approximately 12 hours, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Short, guided data collection hikes throughout the day (rain or shine) will include birds, native and invasive plants, bats and other small mammals, spiders, butterflies, dragonflies and other insects, aquatic invertebrates, trees, frogs, toads, snakes and salamanders.

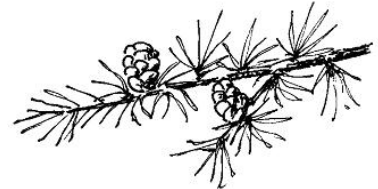
These hikes will leave from both the Field Station base camp and from the DNR parking lot on the south side of Highway 33 just east of Birchwood Rd.

A full schedule of activities is available online and is also expected to include events Friday night, July 16, involving bat and other small mammal research.

Registration is recommended and free, but not required. Visit www.wisconservation.org and follow the "BioBlitz" link on the home page

to register and learn more. Or you can contact Jeffrey Potter, NRF Special Projects Coordinator, at jeffrey.potter@wisconsin.gov or 608-261-4392.

Cedarburg Bog is the most intact large bog in southeastern Wisconsin and composed of a mosaic of vegetation types. Once part of a large post-glacial lake, the bog is a relict community - a southern example of the type more commonly found in northern Wisconsin. There are six lakes remaining within the bog, all with varying sizes and depths.



The site includes an unusual string or "patterned" bog, unique because it lies far south of its usual range in North America. It is composed of ridges of stunted cedar and tamarack. Surrounding vegetation consists of narrow-leaved sedges, bogbean, water horsetail, arrowgrass, orchids, and insectivorous sundew, bladderwort, and pitcher plant. A conifer-swamp hardwood forest is adjacent to the bog. There is a very diverse flora and fauna; many that are more common in northern boreal forests and that are at their southern range limit here.

The Natural Resources Foundation also is sponsoring two other BioBlitz events:

June 26 - Europe Bay Woods State Natural Area, Newport State Park, Door County.

July 24 - Dwight's Point State Natural Area, Douglas County.

This article was compiled from information supplied by the Natural Resources Foundation and the Friends of Cedarburg Bog.

WOODCOCK AND FROGS

On the evening of April 29, people gathered at the Field Station to witness the spring chorus of frogs and toads and the aerial displays of woodcock. On similar walks in past years, the weather has been so cool that the frogs heard numbered in the single digits. But, spring started early this year, and the warming of the waters jump-started the amphibians.



The frogs themselves were giddy with spring; peepers and chorus frogs dominated, joined later in the evening by American toads and gray tree frogs (wood and leopard frogs had already finished singing for the year). Their voices were joined by the evening calls of newly-arrived songbirds and of cranes and geese flying overhead into the Bog. Green darners dragonflies patrolled for midges, and June beetles erupted prematurely into the warm dusk.

An overflow crowd of equally giddy people convened to enjoy the symphony. One Bog neighbor and her sisters made the event a part of their family reunion. The group was split into two smaller groups, each following a different, frog-filled trail. One went to the Beech Woods and the other to the Bog boardwalk. It took a while after leaving the Bog to stop hearing the ruckus.

TREASURES OF OZ

The Cedarburg Bog will be one of the areas featured during the Treasures of Oz event on July 24. The event, designed to celebrate the natural areas in Ozaukee County, includes a stop at the public trail on north end of the Bog, along Highway 33. That trail, re-graded in the fall of 2009 to make it handicapped accessible, will sport new interpretive signs created by the Friends.

Treasures of Oz participants will follow a map from site to site, get their passports stamped at each stop and finishing their trip at the Forest

Beach Migratory Preserve. For more information or to download passports and maps, go to <http://treasuresofoz.org/>

BEN FRANKLIN'S NATIONAL BIRD

Concerning his preference for America's National Bird (a choice that Congress spent six years making), Benjamin Franklin wrote, "*I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral character. He does not get his Living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk [Osprey]; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him.....*

Besides he is a rank Coward...For the Truth, the Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America."

Europeans brought turkeys from the New World to the Old World, where they were greeted with amazement. The name "Turkey" was 16th century shorthand for an object that was new, exotic or strange, and its use was not limited to the imported American bird. Turkeys were thoroughly domesticated and returned to our shores with later settlers.



It's easy to see why the Europeans were impressed. Turkeys are massive birds; males may stand four feet tall, with a five-foot wingspread and a weight of 20-plus pounds. Females are about half that size. Their dark feathers have a burnished metallic or iridescent sheen, and their naked, red heads are adorned with an assortment of knobs and wattles and snoods.

Native Americans who historically hunted around the Cedarburg Bog had Wild Turkeys as one of their menu choices until 1881, when turkeys were erased from Wisconsin's landscape. Hard

winters, habitat destruction by loggers and homesteaders, introduced poultry diseases, and over-hunting caused turkey populations to crash nationwide. A writer in 1630s New England described shooting a dozen turkeys a day as they roosted, but in 1844 another writer lamented that turkeys had disappeared almost completely from the Atlantic seaboard.

Despite attempts to reintroduce them, turkeys were absent from Wisconsin for almost a century until Wisconsin Ruffed Grouse were traded for hardy Missouri turkeys in 1976. Successful beyond anyone's wildest dreams, turkeys now occupy corners of Wisconsin they never did before, and they have become birds of the suburban and even urban landscape.

Turkeys are upland game birds, and the Field Station's Beech Woods and the woodland at the Bog's north end are good turkey habitat. They like open woodlands with adjacent fields, especially when oak trees are present. At night, turkeys fly up into the trees to roost. They can be found in swamps, but they probably don't spend much time in the wetlands that comprise the majority of the Cedarburg Bog's acreage.

Today, the Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) is listed as "common" in the Cedarburg Bog Important Bird Area (IBA). The boundaries of the IBA are more generous than those of the combined DNR/UWM-owned property and include some of the surrounding woods and farmland. Flocks as large as 40 turkeys are seen in these fields, especially in winter where manure has been spread.

By early May, their voices are part of the spring chorus. Polygamous Toms strut their stuff noisily for nearby females. Hens lay 8 to 15 eggs (or more), in nests on the ground in the underbrush, depositing one egg per day until the clutch is complete. At times, several females lay eggs in a single nest.

Incubation lasts for about a month. Toward the end of incubation, hens may call to their poults in the egg, possibly an attempt to stimulate a "group hatching." Unlike songbirds, whose nestlings have a lengthy period of dependence, young turkeys

are *precocial* (think "precocious") – able to run around and feed themselves by the time they are a day old.



Turkeys are omnivores, eating nuts, seeds, berries, ferns, grass, grains and other farm crops, insects, snails, and small amphibians and reptiles. When snow is deep, they feed above the ground on tree buds and dried fruits. Above turkey eggs, poults and adults in the Bog's food chain are raccoons, foxes, coyotes, skunks, snakes, crows, a variety of raptors, and, surprisingly, woodchucks.

Turkeys are big, bulky birds whose first line of defense is running, and they've been clocked at 15 mph on foot. They are able fliers that shoot through the air like cannonballs (up to 55 mph). They also have an uncanny ability, when alarmed, to fold their legs and melt down into the skimpiest vegetation. Empty-handed turkey hunters find them to be alert, wily, and intelligent. Ben would approve.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEEDED!

FOCB is searching for a volunteer to coordinate other volunteers who work for the organization. The Volunteer Resources Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the system used to recruit, train, coordinate and recognize volunteers. This position, which will require an average time commitment of 3 to 4 hours per week, will involve interaction and camaraderie with volunteers and the volunteer Board committed to the goals of FOCB.

The Volunteer Coordinator can work at home, or office space and a computer will be provided at the UWM Field Station. FOCB will support participation in training opportunities for the Volunteer Resources Coordinator. Please call the UWM Field Station 262-675-6844 or email fieldstn@uwm.edu if you're interested in this volunteer position.

WHY IS A FIELD STATION?

In their article about the value of Field Stations, published in Volume 59, #3 of *BioScience* magazine, authors John Janovy, Jr. and Krista M. Major attempt to pin down why, in the face of all of the technology available in today's information age, field experience is so vital. What can college students possibly learn better in the outdoors than they could learn indoors in a well-equipped science lab? Teachers at all grade levels, in fact, ask that question as they contemplate leaving the classroom to take their students on a field trip.

Their conclusions? Study in the outdoors allows students a "particular kind of engagement with the subject matter." In the field, students observe organisms away from the highly controlled conditions and time constraints of a science lab, they see first-hand what kind of work is needed to understand natural systems, and they gain an appreciation of the work of previous scientific generations. The authors point out that many prominent scientists started out observing nature, and that hands-on experiences in the outdoor laboratory open students' minds to the workings of scientific inquiry.

The UWM Field Station was dedicated in the summer of 1967 on property that had been purchased by the Nature Conservancy. The 320 acres owned by the University are surrounded by DNR-owned acreage, giving students at the Field Station a 2000 acre-plus classroom/laboratory.

What happens here? The Field Station's *Annual Report* summarizes. Teachers across the various sciences bring their students for one or a series of day trips. Students engage in research that leads to publications and to Master's and PhD degrees. Professors carry out their own projects. At the Cedarburg Bog, formal workshops and public walks are added to the educational mix. And Citizen Scientists participate in a variety of projects; the Ephemeral Pond Study is in its third year of monitoring, breeding birds are being surveyed, and the Friends have erected some "deer exclosures" in woodlands, to study the impact of deer on plants of the forest floor. The Field Station facilities will enhance the up-coming BioBlitz.

WILD GRAPE

In the open places in the Bog's edges and woodlands, ropes of wild grape vine drape down from the canopies of trees and shrubs, loop around tree trunks, or crawl across the ground. Wild or Riverbank Grape (*Vitis riparia*) has shredded, brownish bark and leaves that are alternate, simple, toothed, and sometimes lobed, like maple leaves. Its flower clusters – puffs of tiny, fragrant, green flowers that look like fireworks – are easy to miss because they are often hidden beneath its leaves.

Woodland trees are in a race for the sun. Most trees in the Bog's woods have straight trunks with few side branches. It takes energy to grow branches and to produce the woody tissue that supports them. Why, in the race to the canopy, grow "out" when the rewards are "up?" Vines also need sunlight, but they have a more energy-efficient way to gain altitude – they piggyback on shrubs and trees.



Vines have developed a variety of strategies to expose their leaves to the light. Wild grape belongs to a group of vines called "*graspers*" that either curl (some counter-clockwise and others clockwise) around trees and shrubs or produce special tendrils that do the grasping. Wild grape uses tendrils (modified flower stalks) to climb up to the canopy. From there, it can cover its support tree, depriving it of sunlight and weighing it down.

Wild grape is eaten by game birds like turkeys, woodpeckers (including the Bog's largest woodpecker, the Pileated), and songbirds, plus mammals like foxes, raccoons, rabbits, possums and skunks. All of them spread grape seeds during their travels. Shredded grapevine is a favorite material for some birds' nests, and several Bog birds and rodents make their homes within the shelter of grape thickets. Wild grape vines attract many insects that live, eat, and get eaten there.

Despite their sourness, the fruits are eaten by people - fresh, dried, in preserves - or fermented. In an emergency, thick, old grapevines, cut, will provide a large quantity of drinkable sap. Grape leaves and fruits provided important foods and medicines for Native Americans. Browse with caution: moonseed (unrelated) and Virginia creepers (related) look similar to wild grape, but their fruits should not be eaten.

*Friends of the Cedarburg Bog
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WANTED

We need volunteers to lead walks in the Bog. The Public walks are becoming more popular, and if we can put more leaders on the trail, we can increase the number of people who can get out and see this incredible place. We'll train you. You don't need to be a scientist; you do need to be curious and willing to learn. Please contact Kate Redmond at the Field Station mailing address.



CALENDAR

Riveredge Speaks Out

Programs on Natural History for the curious.
Second Wednesdays and third Tuesdays of the month
7 - 8:30 p.m.
For locations and topics, contact 800-287-8098 or www.riveredge.us.
Talks resume in September.

Riveredge Bird Club

First Tuesdays of the month
Bird walk - 6 p.m. Program - 7 p.m.
Riveredge Nature Center Barn.
The public is welcome. No fee.

MAPS Bird Banding

July 3, 17, 24, 31
5 a.m. - 11a.m.
See song birds mist-netted and banded. Observers welcome (weather permitting).
Call Mary Holleback at 262-375-2715 for information or to register.
At: Riveredge Nature Center

"Edventures" for "Tweens"

Sessions start on July 1, 6, 27, 29.
1 - 5 p.m.
Adventure and NatureSpa mini-camps for 5th, 6th, and 7th graders.
Forest Fun! Pond Puttering! Field Frolicking! Beach Bumming! Nature science meets spa science! Beach, field, forest - Body, mind, spirit!
For information and registration materials contact (262) 689-2983 or Sci-techedventures@hotmail.com.
Held at the Ozaukee-Washington Land Trust's Forest Beach Migratory Preserve.

Butterfly Survey

July 10, 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Identify and document butterflies. .
Join for all or part of the day, pack a bag lunch, and wear your old shoes
Adults and teens welcome.
Fee: A \$5 donation is requested to support Riveredge research and stewardship efforts.

*Friends of the Cedarburg Bog
Quarterly Board Meeting*

July 15, 7 - 8:30 p.m.
At: UW-M Field Station
Members welcome.

Bog BioBlitz

July 17, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
What lives in the Bog? Help us to find out. See article above for details.

Jungle Gold

July 22, 7 - 8:30 p.m.
Geologist and storyteller Roger Kuhns relates a tale of life-altering lessons learned in the remote corners of French Guyana.
Co-sponsored by the Friends and Riveredge Nature Center
Fee \$6.
At: Riveredge Nature Center

Treasures of Oz

July 24, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. road trip.
1 - 4 p.m. at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve.
Explore the beauty of Ozaukee County. See the article above.

Bluegrass and Brats at This Old Barn

September 17.
Food available: 6 - 7:30 p.m.
Big Cedar Bluegrass: 7:30 p.m.
\$12 entry fee; food tickets extra.
At: Lac Lawrann Conservancy, West Bend

Sturgeon Fest

October 2
Join us as we release lake sturgeon in the attempt to restore a breeding population of lake sturgeon into the Milwaukee River. Sponsor and release your *own* sturgeon!
For times and information, call 800-287-8098 or see www.riveredge.us.
At: Thiensville Village Park

FRIENDS' SPONSORED EVENTS

*Please pre-register for Friends Events by contacting 262-675-6844 or fieldstn@uwm.edu.
A \$3 donation is suggested.*

Breeding Birds & Their Songs

July 3, 6:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Bring your binoculars.
Group size limit: 10

Butterflies at the Bog

July 11, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Group size limit: 20

What's Up in the Bog

July 18, 9 a.m. - Noon
Check out the Bog in mid-summer
Group size limit: 20

Photography at the Bog

October 2, 9 a.m. to noon

All Friends Events are at the Field Station.