

# The BogHaunter

the newsletter of the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog  
Volume 12, Number 3 FALL 2017

## BOARDWALK PLUS 10 YEARS

In 1952, the Cedarburg Bog was designated as State Natural Area #2. The Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy purchased adjacent land, and in 1964 it was donated to the University to be used as a Field Station. The original lab and office building was dedicated in the summer of 1967, and the University boardwalk was built in 1970.

To walk that first boardwalk was to interact intimately with the Bog. Much of it was a single row of 2"x12" boards laid on railroad ties on the Bog's mat, and in especially wet summers, parts of the boardwalk were submerged. Barrels and outriggers supported it at the stream and in the string bog, and the only "solid" portion was the "high bridge" in the string bog. Materials for the original boardwalk were set down along its route by National Guard helicopters as a bridge-building exercise.

It was not for the faint of heart, but it was better than what one duck hunter described of his pre-boardwalk experience – hopping from hummock to hummock carrying a bundle of newspapers, and leaving sheets behind to mark the way out.



Ready for another trip

Fast-forward to September 9, 2007, when two-thirds of the original boardwalk had gradually been replaced with wider, prefabricated sections that sat above the mat and didn't, well, bob and weave when you walked on them. It was time for the final, quarter-mile push from the

East Island into the strings. The problem was that materials had to be wheeled a half-mile in hand carts from the start of the boardwalk to where the work would actually begin.



Heads up!!!

Enter (again), the National Guard. With boardwalk sections and barrels stacked in the prairie and a crew of volunteers waiting in a clearing on the east end of the island, two Black Hawk helicopters, each attached to a bright orange "basket" the size of a VW Beetle, made trips to the island, where the baskets were unloaded. One Guardsman just shook his head when he tried to imagine muscling the materials into the Bog by hand.



Boardwalk building

With the supplies in place, work days were scheduled throughout the fall, and the boardwalk was finished in the spring of 2008. On May 5, 2008, the National Guard returned to fly out a bunch of soggy boards and barrels.

## MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE BOG

Every spring and every fall, millions of birds pass through our area, making pit stops at a variety of sites throughout southeastern Wisconsin on their way to breeding grounds as far north as the Arctic Ocean and to wintering grounds as far south as the very tip of South America where the cold Atlantic and Pacific Oceans converge. Inclement weather, predation, window collisions, tall buildings, and communications towers take their toll along these migratory pathways; however, loss of "stopover" habitat is increasingly adding to migrant bird mortality. Stopover sites provide critical food and safe shelter during the amazing but perilous journey.

The Cedarburg Bog has long been known for both the diversity and rarity of its breeding birds; some of the bird species recorded here, like Northern Waterthrush and Canada Warbler, breed nowhere else in southern Wisconsin. It was no big surprise, then, when the Cedarburg Bog complex was designated as an "Important Bird Area" (IBA) in 2006 by the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative. This designation can only occur if a site provides critical habitat to endangered, threatened, or vulnerable breeding bird species and/or if the site also provides high quality stopover resting and feeding habitat for migratory birds.

Studies of breeding birds in the Cedarburg Bog date back to the mid-1960s and continue today as part of the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. Information on the migratory birds using the Cedarburg Bog is much more limited. To learn more, a systematic study of migratory birds

using the bog complex was initiated in 2009 and concluded in 2013.



*A Bay-breasted Warbler during spring migration*

From 2009 through 2013, weekly spring and fall migratory bird censuses were conducted in three different areas of the Cedarburg Bog complex. The purpose of this study was: 1) to document the numbers and the species of migrant birds using these habitats for migration stopover in both spring and fall, 2) to determine what proportion of these species are listed as being species of conservation concern in Wisconsin, and 3) to collect data to serve as a baseline for possible future studies.

A total of 189 bird species were documented in the three designated habitats - 135 species in the "bog" habitat, 117 species in the "upland" habitat; and 174 species in the Mud Lake habitat. Sixty-two species (nearly 1/3rd of the total) are listed as being "of Concern" in both Wisconsin and national bird conservation plans. Species of conservation concern include songbirds, waterbirds, and shorebirds.

Many of the migrants found in the fall census likely bred or hatched in northern forests, including the vast boreal forests of Canada, and then travelled great distances before stopping over in the Cedarburg Bog IBA during migration. This study greatly expanded our knowledge of the number of migrating species that use the Cedarburg Bog complex. Some of the unique species from the overall list included the King Rail, Least Bittern, Red-shouldered Hawk, Henslow's Sparrow, Winter Wren, and Black and Forster's Terns.

The Cedarburg Bog IBA comprises nearly 4000 acres, much of which is seldom-if ever-visited by people; and there is an incredible diversity of upland, wetland, grassland, and

transitional habitats within this IBA. The Bog complex is only 26 miles north of the Milwaukee with its surrounding urban sprawl. The importance of this large and diverse area to migratory birds cannot be overstated, given the fragmented, developed, and agricultural landscape that surrounds it.

Stopover sites have been characterized as "fire escapes" (infrequently used but vital in case of emergency), "convenience stores" (habitat patches of varying size within a generally inhospitable landscape where birds can rest briefly and replenish some reserves), or "full service hotels" (extensive areas of predominately forested habitat that contain all necessary resources in abundance and can serve many individual birds and many species). Based on the large number of individual birds and of species recorded, and given the size and the diversity of habitats present, the Cedarburg Bog Important Bird Area clearly meets the criteria of a "full service hotel."

Victoria Piaskowski, John O'Donnell, & Gretchen Meyer  
*(A synopsis of an article published by the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology in the Summer, 2017 issue of its Journal, The Passenger Pigeon.)*



*A Sandhill Crane returns to the Bog*

### **INTERNATIONAL BOG FEST**

Since 1991, International Bog Day has raised awareness of the ecological importance of bogs and other wetlands. On July 23, about 130 guests and volunteers gathered at the Cedarburg Bog to enjoy Wisconsin's first International Bog Day celebration.

There were demonstrations of local raptors, reptiles and amphibians, a video from a live drone flight over the Bog, and hikes into the Bog. The event also included face-painting, music, prizes, and refreshments, including our signature "Black Bog Cow" float.

Thanks to all who came and to all who worked to make it happen.



*String bog from the boardwalk overlook*

### **THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

When we think about the devastation caused by flooding in Houston and Florida in the past month, we are thankful that we live in Wisconsin, out of the path of hurricanes. Although we live far away from the oceans, we have recently seen rain events that have caused locally heavy flooding in our area and we need to be mindful of the risk of damaging floods here as well. Wetlands like our very own Cedarburg Bog provide an important role in the prevention and mitigation of flooding in our area.

Wetlands like the Bog act like a sponge to help keep rivers and tributaries at normal levels. The Bog acts as a water purification system due to its ability to recycle nutrients. The beauty of wetlands is that they will accept water during flooding events and release water during dry periods to help maintain stable water tables.

We will be communicating with all of you in the coming months when we have our yearly membership drive. We hope you will consider renewing your membership in the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog, sharing the information with a friend, or giving a gift membership. Our mission, to preserve and protect the Bog, also serves to protect our community from these damaging and dangerous weather events that we have seen throughout the United States.

Pam Resnick Ross

The Cedarburg Bog is a Wetland Gem and an Important Bird Area.

## BOARD TALK

It's officially fall now whether you look at it from a meteorological view (starts September 1<sup>st</sup>) or an astronomical view (Starts September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 3:02pm to be exact). For me this is officially my favorite season to be outside in places like the Bog. Crisp temperatures and the lovely smell of decaying vegetation permeate as tamarack put on their brief smoky gold coat. In June I often like to get under the feathers of birders by reminding them that fall migration is about to begin. But on the flip side in September I remind them about how ducks are putting on their breeding plumage and owls are getting ready to mate. Signs of spring right?

The unparalleled education programs at the Bog continue into the fall as we prepare for owl prowls, geological sagas, member potlucks and then just around the corner is the winter walk! I'm thrilled with the recent success of International Bog Day and with the early excitement around the Bog Guardian Program. If you were waiting for a sign to really get involved with the Bog, Bog Guardian seems like the perfect entry point! Enjoy autumn and I hope to see you at the Bog!

*Tim Vargo, Board President*

## BOG GUARDIANS

The Friends of the Cedarburg Bog have written grants totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars to support the removal of invasive species, primarily glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) from the Bog. Glossy buckthorn demonstrates that once an invasive gets into the 2,200 acre wetland, much of which is difficult to access, controlling it becomes a real challenge.



*Common Teasel seed heads*

With funding from the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust and the WI DNR-Citizen Based Monitoring Program, the Friends has initiated a

new program – the Bog Guardians. This group of volunteers will conduct road surveys to locate invasives in the 28-square-mile project area surrounding the Cedarburg Bog with the hope of keeping them out of the Bog, the Field Station, and the nearby State Natural Areas.

Equally as important, the group is contacting local governments for permission to work along the roads (you can't just hop out of the car and cut/spray weeds on a public roadway) and will meet with neighboring landowners to help them identify and eradicate invasives on their properties.

Jamie Sue Beaupré, who has headed the buckthorn eradication program in the Bog for the past few years has been hired to manage the Bog Guardians program.

Volunteers are needed. Please contact Jamie at 262-323-1887 or [jamiebeaupre@bogfriends.org](mailto:jamiebeaupre@bogfriends.org). With enough workers, we can get rid of existing populations of teasel, wild parsnip, Phragmites, etc. and build a sustainable program for the future.



*In the conifer swamp at the start of the eclipse*

## THE BOG IN ECLIPSE

The Bog seemed like a good place to experience an eclipse, so on August 21, I walked to the string bog. There was filtered sun during the start and end of the event, but heavy clouds covered the sky at 1:30 PM, the peak of the eclipse. Still, you could tell something special was going on.

Birds were quiet; only the soft "veer" note of a Veery broke the silence. At about 2:15 PM, a Cardinal sang its territorial song, a chickadee started fussing, and other birds followed. Even odder, katydids and tree crickets stopped calling during much of the three-hours of the eclipse (mosquitoes were unaffected).



*Witch hazel flowers*

## DID YOU KNOW.....?

that Witch Hazel shrubs blossom in the fall in the upland woods and sunny edges in and around the Bog? Their spidery, yellow flowers appear in October and November, but their seed capsules wait to explode the following fall, propelling the seeds as far as 30 feet from the parent plant.

*Please join us for the*

## Annual Fall Potluck (and mini-Annual Meeting) at the UWM Field Station

October 8, 2017

3 PM hike

5:30 PM eats

6:30 campfire (and meeting)

We supply brats, burgers, and beverages. Join us for the walk, the potluck or both.

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

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

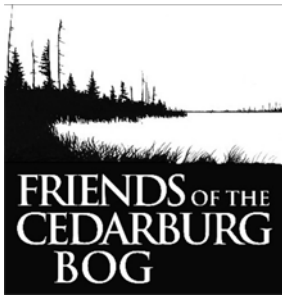
*Please, No Pets.*

Please RSVP at [bogfriends.org](http://bogfriends.org)  
(Click on Events)

Questions?

Email [fieldstn@uwm.edu](mailto:fieldstn@uwm.edu) or call  
262-675-6844

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



UWM Field Station  
3095 Blue Goose Road  
Saukville, WI 53080

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Volume 12, Number 3 FALL 2017

#### FRIENDS EVENTS

**Unless otherwise noted**, walks meet at the UWM Field Station on Blue Goose Rd. Space is limited, so please register. To register, visit [bogfriends.org](http://bogfriends.org) (click on Events). Walks are free and open to the public; a \$5 donation is appreciated. Questions? Contact (262) 675-6844 or [fieldstn@uwm.edu](mailto:fieldstn@uwm.edu). Please, No Pets.

#### Fall Potluck (& Annual Mini-Meeting)

October 8, 3 to 7 PM.  
See announcement on page 3.

#### Fall Owl Prowl

October 13, 7 to 9 PM  
Resident owl species are settling down for the winter, and migrants are moving through. Bring a flashlight

#### Glacial Geology of the Area

October 14, 9 AM to Noon  
Join us to find out about the area's glacial features, from the Bog (a post-glacial lake) to the kettle-filled Beech Woods.

#### Quarterly Board Meeting

October 26, 6 to 8 PM  
Members welcome.

#### How do Trees Grow?

November 12, 12:30-3:30 PM  
Ever wonder how trees can do what they do? Find out at this indoor-outdoor event.



Black Hawk over the Bog

#### CALENDAR

See the *Treasures of Oz* website [treasuresofoz.org](http://treasuresofoz.org) and the websites of our partner organizations for more details about these and many other events.

#### Science for Everyone

Programs on Natural History held on the 3rd Tuesday 7 to 8:15 PM at **RNC** and **LLC** alternating months.  
Free, \$5 donation appreciated.

#### Fungi Fair

October 14, 10 AM to 3 PM **UEC Riverside**  
Learn about the exciting world of fungi and mushrooms. Short lectures, mushroom cooking demos, short local forays, mycological specimens and more with the Wisconsin Mycological Society.  
For adults. Free - donations appreciated

#### Autumn Celebration

October 14, Noon to 4 PM  
**UEC Washington Park**

Come enjoy fall with nature hikes, crafts, caramel apples, food, games, and much more! **Celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Washington Park branch! Special ceremony at noon.** For everyone. Free

#### Noel J. Cutright Bird Club

Free and open to the public held at **RNC** on the 1st Tuesday at 7 PM. Free. Open to the public.

#### Southeastern Wisconsin Conservation Summit

November 3 and 4, 8:15 AM start. **FBMP**  
Presentations and posters on area conservation topics designed to educate and to foster regional collaboration. Speakers will describe research, monitoring and restoration projects on a wide variety of species and ecosystems. Please register.

#### Annual Christmas Count

December 16, **RNC**  
Participate in a Citizen Science project with a 116 year history. Feeder counters and road counters needed, all or part of the day. Beginners will be paired with veterans. Contact Mary at [mholleback@riveredge.us](mailto:mholleback@riveredge.us) or 262-416-1224.

#### Aldo Leopold and the Sand County Ghost

Nov. 4, time TBA **MNP**  
Kohl's Wild Theater will perform *Aldo Leopold and the Sand County Ghost*.  
This event is free and open to all ages.

**RNC** – Riveredge Nature Center  
4458 County Hwy Y, Saukville  
[riveredgenaturecenter.org](http://riveredgenaturecenter.org)  
(262) 375-2715 (800) 287-8098

**MNP** – Mequon Nature Preserve  
8200 W County Line Rd, Mequon  
[mequonnaturepreserve.org](http://mequonnaturepreserve.org)  
(262) 242-8055

**UEC** – Urban Ecology Center  
Riverside Park, 1500 E Park Place, MKE  
[urbanecologycenter.org](http://urbanecologycenter.org) See website for other UEC locations)  
(414) 964-8505

**FBMP** – Forest Beach Migratory Preserve.  
4970 Country Club Rd, Port Washington, WI  
<http://wg1bbo.org/>