

Woodland Dunes Nature Center Dunesletter



Spring 2013 ☞ Volume 151

Red Fox kit photographed May 22, 2010
along Woodland Dunes Ice Age Trail.



Naturalist, wildlife photographer
and writer Stan Tekiela will be at
Woodland Dunes May 10 & 11.
Check events for more details.

Over the past decade Stan has authored more than 100 field guides, nature appreciation books and wildlife audio CD's and is the originator of the popular state specific field guide series, *Birds of Wisconsin*, *Trees of Wisconsin* and *Wildflowers of Wisconsin* among many others. An entertaining speaker, join us in welcoming Stan to Woodland Dunes this spring.

From the Director

Spring is an amazing time to be near a wetland. I think the minute or so it takes to walk from my car to the nature center entrance is perhaps the most important of my day. Unlike so many other animals, many birds go out of their way to make themselves known this time of year, and their color and song are a welcome contrast to winter. In spring, there are new songs and sightings nearly every day, and we're constantly reminded how dynamic this preserve is.

The last couple of years I've done a short bird route at our headquarters once a week out to the end of Cattail Trail. The public is welcome to walk along- we'll post the dates, on weekday mornings, on our website. We'll also have weekend nature walks led by Bernie and additional birding trips led by John and Julie Woodcock of the Bird Brunch Bunch a group that gets together to talk birds over a meal once a month.

The dedication of our new tower will take place at Bird Breakfast on May 11th. This will be a special occasion, birding author Stan Tekiela will be here as will members of the Alyea family, and, we hope, the Krivacek family. Donations from the Alyea family made the tower construction possible and donations in memory of "Doc" Krivacek were used for the scope now mounted in the tower's upper level. Check the coming events page for more details.

There are two new opportunities to support Woodland Dunes. First, for those wanting to give to permanently help the center as a part of their legacy, an **endowment fund** has been established, thanks to the generosity of Jack and Laurel Alyea and Dr. Edgar and Judie Stuntz. Second, Woodland Dunes, with the help of two renewable energy incentive programs, will be adding a **solar photo-voltaic** system to our headquarters, which would produce the equivalent of about half the electricity used at the center. Even if we receive the full amounts possible, the incentives would not pay for initial installation of the system, and we would very much appreciate additional donations to help make this project happen. It would be a great tool for education about renewable energy, and reaffirm our commitment toward reducing our own impact on the environment.

This spring our usual bird, salamander, and water surveys will be done to monitor wildlife and water quality. New this year will be bat monitoring. Thanks to grants received for purchase of some remarkable equipment, surveys can be conducted here and other locations. Contact the nature center to get involved in any of these activities. Look too for more excellent family and school programs from Kelly, and our third annual Dash at the Dunes run-walk in April.

As always, we appreciate the support we receive from our members and sponsors. More than ever, there's a need for accurate information and resource management based on good research, we sincerely try to provide that for the good of the community. Your partnership sustains a legacy begun nearly four decades ago and which will continue for many springs to come. So, a toast to spring: to mud, salamanders, pussywillows, and redwings, may you experience the amazement that spring can bring!

Jim Knickelbine, Director

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Coming Events

Bloodroot is an early spring ephemeral, often appearing late April along Trillium Trail.

Invasive Work Day

Saturday, March 9, 9 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Help us restore areas of the preserve that are being overtaken by invasive, non-native plants. Bring work gloves and dress for the weather, meet at the headquarters on Hwy 310. **Call or email to let us know if you plan to help.**

The Wonder of It All Trail Camera Discoveries

Wednesday, March 13 ♦ 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Enjoy a look at some of the little-seen wildlife living at Woodland Dunes. Through trail cameras we made some surprise discoveries as to who is living in and traveling through the preserve. Photos will be viewed and natural history discussed of the animals caught on camera. **Registration appreciated by March 6.**

Healthy Soil

Monday, March 18 ♦ 1:00 p.m.

Wayne Craig of Grassway Organics will discuss the connection between healthy soil and healthy people. The ultimate goal of human and animal health starts with nutrient dense food - which starts in the soil. Abused soil, whether through chemicals, tillage or mismanagement, affects the health and nutrients of the plants grown in it. Healthy soil, healthy plants, healthy animals, healthy people - there is no shortcut. **Registration required by March 15.**

Kayak Destinations

Wednesday, March 20 ♦ 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Join the Lakeshore Seakayakers sharing their favorite Wisconsin and Midwest paddling destinations. This program will help prepare you for your next adventure on the water. Learn about great places to kayak and get answers to questions about gear, equipment, clubs and trips. **Registration appreciated by March 13.**

Collins Marsh Birding Field Trip

Saturday, March 30 ♦ 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Enjoy a morning at Collins Marsh with naturalist John Woodcock. Meet at the I43 park and ride on 42 & JJ. Call John and Julie for more information or to register, 920-683-3878. **Registration appreciated by March 22.**

Member Meet and Mingle

Wednesday, April 3 ♦ 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Enjoy a campfire, gourmet s'mores bar and chat with familiar faces and meet new ones. As the sun sets over the marsh, enjoy a walk along cattail trail or climb the tower to watch for wildlife. Please join us for this small thank you of your generous support. **Please RSVP by March 31.**

Timberdoodle and Frog Hike

Saturday, April 13 ♦ 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Member, \$4; Family \$10

Non-member, \$5; Family \$15

Join Woodland Dunes naturalists on a night hike to search for the elusive sky dancing Timberdoodle and listen and look for the frogs that live on the preserve. Waterproof boots suggested. **Registration by April 1 is appreciated.**

The Wonder of It All Insects: Up Close and Personal

Friday, April 19 ♦ 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Explore the world and lives of Wisconsin insects through close up photography with Tom Kroeger, Milwaukee's Lakeshore State Park manager. We'll look at their alien beauty and body forms, discuss their incredible adaptive abilities and take a glimpse at the micro-world they live in. Most of all, we'll enjoy an upclose look at our often ignored neighborhoods. **Registration required by April 10.**

Earth Day Beach Clean-up and Festival

Saturday, April 20

Beach clean: 9:00-10:00 a.m. Festival: 9:00-2:00 p.m.

Do your part this Earth Day and help clean beaches in Two Rivers, then enjoy booths, demonstrations and speakers at Manitowoc's Earth Day event held at Lincoln High School. To join the Woodland Dunes beach clean team contact the nature center. **Registration for beach clean-up required by April 10.**

REGISTER FOR PROGRAMS

Simple, easy and greatly appreciated, call 920-793-4007, email kellye@woodlanddunes.org or stop in and visit.

Check our events calendar at woodlanddunes.org for additional programs and updates.

Coming Events

To confirm events and register for classes, call (920) 793-4007 or email kellye@woodlanddunes.org.



Dash at the Dunes 5K Trail Run/Walk

Saturday, April 27
10:00 a.m. start

Register by April 12: \$20/person

Register April 13– April 25: \$25/person

**Please note: pre-registration will close April 25 at 5:00 p.m.

Walk-in registration April 27: 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.: \$30/person

Children 12 & under always \$10

Register online at www.woodlanddunes.org or

call 920-793-4007

Participants pre-registered by April 12th are guaranteed a short sleeve Dash at the Dunes t-shirt and children pre-registered by April 12th are guaranteed a t-shirt and prize for finishing. Snacks, drinks and prizes for the top finishers will be available.

This event is a fundraiser benefitting children's environmental education and land management programs at Woodland Dunes.

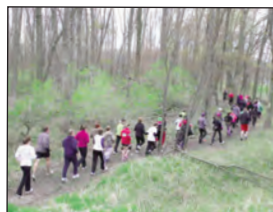
Participants park at Aurora Medical Center (5000 Memorial Dr.) and pick up registration materials inside the hospital atrium between 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.. Walk-in registration will close promptly at 9:00 a.m. Pre-registration is highly recommended.

The race starts at 10 a.m.

Overall, the course is a flat, wooded, beautiful 5K trail run! The race begins in the parking lot behind the Aurora Health Center which leads to the newly completed section of the Ice Age Trail. The trail leads participants through forested ridges and swales, across small bridges and through a secluded meadow. The last 3/4 of a mile runs along Columbus Street, crosses Hawthorne Ave. and ends at Woodland Dunes Nature Center.

Dogs are not allowed on the course. Strollers are not recommended on the Ice Age Trail. A bus will shuttle participants back to Aurora.

No refunds and no rain date.



Celebrity Bartender

Thursday, May 9 ♦ 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Raise your glass and help raise funds for Woodland Dunes at *Benchwarmers Sports Bar* in Fox Hills Resort. Bring your friends for this fun, happy hour event and watch Woodland Dunes employees and Board members serve the drinks! A portion of each drink sold, all tips and other money raised will be donated to Woodland Dunes. Snacks provided by Fox Hills.

Author Stan Tekiela presents **Uncommon Facts About Common Birds**

Friday, May 10 ♦ 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Cost: \$8; program plus Bird Breakfast on May 11, \$12

Enjoy this fun and entertaining talk presenting fascinating facts about common birds we see at our feeders and in our yards.

Stan will challenge your preconceived ideas about some common birds such as the European Starling, the American Crow and many more. You will never look at these birds the same way again. **Registration required by May 3.**

BIRD BREAKFAST AND MIGRATION CELEBRATION

Saturday, May 11 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Cost: Kids \$5, adults, \$6, under 4 free

Enjoy a ham and pancake breakfast and a morning of fun and learning about birds. Meet wild birds during bird banding demonstrations, enjoy guided bird and nature hikes including a **hike and big sit from 8:00-9:00 led by author Stan Tekiela**. The big sit: bring your coffee, lawn chair, binoculars and bird book and enjoy sitting in a birding hotspot. Stan will be available to sign books following the big sit until 10:00 a.m. At 10:00 join us for the dedication of the Harold W. Alyea tower. Kids games and activities will be on-going throughout the morning. Fun for the entire family! A fun celebration of spring and wildlife. Start your weekend of birding fun with Stan's talk on Friday. **Registration required for Stan's bird hike and big sit, and talk on Friday, space is limited.**



Stay connected, fan us on facebook for event information and wildlife updates.

Coming Events

Email jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org for monthly program reminders, a great way to stay connected.

Saturday Spring Nature Hike

Saturday, May 18 ♦ 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Join Woodland Dunes naturalist and founder Bernie Brouchoud on an exploration of the birds, spring flowers and other plants and wildlife you encounter as you stroll through the preserve.

Registration required by May 10.

Wisconsin Bats and Bat Monitoring

Thursday, May 23 ♦ 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Enjoy an evening learning about bat ecology and the status of bat populations in Wisconsin. Learn how you can help collect data and enjoy an evening bat walk. With the threat of white-nose syndrome it is important to track and understand populations of bats. **Registration appreciated by May 16.**

Saturday Spring Nature Hike

Saturday, May 25 ♦ 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Spring is a wonderful time to explore Woodland Dunes. Enjoy a walk through the preserve with naturalist Bernie Brouchoud. An enjoyable morning learning about the plants, birds and other wildlife that make their home at Woodland Dunes. **Registration required by May 17.**

Birding by Ear, learning the songs of spring

Thursdays, May 30 and June 6 ♦ 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Member: \$20; single class \$12

Non-member: \$25; single, \$15

Begin your journey into bird song with this two-part birding by ear series. Dr. Charles Sontag will share his 65 years of birding experience in this introductory class focused on learning bird songs. A mix of indoor and field time will give participants a chance to practice with the trained ears of Dr. Sontag and Woodland Dunes naturalists by their side. **Registration and payment required by May 20.**

BioBlitz

Saturday, June 1 ♦ 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Woodland Dunes Nature Center and The Rahr Memorial School Forest are teaming up to offer a one day BioBlitz. A BioBlitz is a timed count of all living species in a selected area with the focus on how many different species can be found. Experts will lead small groups of participants to search out and identify species. Groups will focus on trees & shrubs, forbs

(ground cover), fungi, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, birds, insects, and aquatic life. Transportation and lunch will be provided for participants. This event is open to people of all ages. You can select which groups you would like to be a part of. You will choose 4 and be assigned to 3 during the course of the day (a different group at each location). The BioBlitz will start at 8am at Woodland Dunes Field Station, 2754 E. Goodwin Rd. Two Rivers, WI **Registration required by May 24. Register on-line at** <http://manitowocpublicschools.com/webpages/schoolforest/>

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Ice Cream Social

Wednesday, June 12 ♦ 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Woodland Dunes volunteers join us for an evening picnic and make-your-own sundae bar. A small token of our appreciation for everything you make possible here at Woodland Dunes. All volunteers invited. **Please RSVP by June 5th.** If interested, following the picnic enjoy a presentation by Bill Mueller on aerial waterbird surveys along the shore of Lake Michigan.

Lake Michigan Aerial Waterbird Surveys

Wednesday, June 12 ♦ 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Join Bill Mueller from The Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory to learn about the waterfowl/waterbird surveys done by aircraft along the western shore of Lake Michigan. Get a glimpse into the lives of the species that inhabit these deep waters in fall, winter and spring. Research has been ongoing since fall of 2010 and is funded by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Great Lakes Commission. The objective is to learn where offshore waterfowl congregate, in what depths of water and in what seasons. This information will be valuable if wind power development occurs in offshore waters of the Great Lakes. **Registration required by June 5th.**



BUTTERFLY FEST 2013

Save the date

August 24 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Celebrate the Dorothy R. Starr Garden and the animals that find refuge there. Butterfly and wildflower hikes, monarch tagging, kids' activities and games. Great family fun with musician Bill Kehl, an educational and enjoyable entertainer. A fun morning for young and old alike.

Skunk Cabbage is the first flower to appear in spring, look for it along Yellow Birch trail in early March.

Fire on the Prairie

This spring a controlled burn will be done on about 60 acres of Woodland Dunes' grassland off Woodland Drive. The Wildland Fire Dept. of Fox Valley Technical College instructors and students will conduct the burn as a teaching exercise and revisit the site later in the year to examine the results.

Prairies are dynamic ecosystems, adapted to drier climates than forests, munching and burrowing herbivores, and periodic mass destruction from wildfire or the trampling of thousands of bison hooves. Over the millions of years that various forms of prairies have existed, they have come to depend on such events to maintain themselves.

Fires on prairies have historically been caused by two means--lightning, and humans. Especially in the West, lightning occurs in storms which don't produce much rain, and extensive wildfires occur as a result. Native people on our continent and others used fire to manage the land--to drive game or enemies, keep landscapes open so that potential threats can be seen, or to clear areas for agriculture.

Plants of native grasslands benefit from fire in several ways--removing trees and shrubs which invade and produce shade, reducing the buildup of thatch on the surface which makes it hard for seedlings to become established, converting nutrients in organic matter on the surface to a form more suitable for uptake by prairie plants, and, more recently, help in the management of some exotic invasive species.

Jim Knickelbine, Director

Swamp Angel

The bird regarded by most people as the finest singer in North America seldom sings as it passes through our area in spring. Little more than a call note, a low "chuck," is heard from the Hermit Thrush during migration. America's pioneer ornithologists Audubon and Wilson were unfamiliar with the song of the Hermit Thrush. Later ornithologists, who heard its ethereal song on its breeding ground, gave it an alternate name of "swamp angel."



The name "swamp angel" is misleading. The Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) nests in dry or damp woodlands, of mixed coniferous and deciduous trees. It is found across southern Canada and Alaska, in the northern Great Lakes states, New England, and the higher mountains of the east and west. In migration it occurs in woodlands where there is underbrush to provide shelter. It winters from the southern United States to the Bahama Islands, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

In the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, the Hermit Thrush was found nesting north of a line from Grantsburg to Medford, Shawano, and Sturgeon Bay. More nesting activity was noted in upland woods than in wetlands. The birds arrive in Wisconsin from late March to early May. Nesting activity begins by mid-May and may continue until early August. Two broods may be raised. Fall migration occurs from late September to early November.

Hermit Thrush nests are almost always located on the ground. Nests are built of plant stems, twigs, roots, grass, rotted wood, and sometimes mud. Finer materials are used as lining. The eggs, usually four in number, are greenish blue. The eggs hatch about twelve days after being laid and the nestlings fledge in another twelve days. In summer Hermit Thrushes eat insects and other small invertebrates. In fall and winter they add much fruit to their diets.

The song of the Hermit Thrush is flute-like in quality. It starts with a long clear introductory note, followed by seven to eleven quavering notes, connected by liquid slurs, and climaxes with a high echo-like note. Successive songs, no two exactly alike, are sung at different pitches. Words fail to describe the beauty of the song when heard in its woodland setting. Each interlude of singing may be preceded by several rising "bee-eee" calls.

There are five other related brown-backed thrushes in the United States and Canada. They all winter in Central and South America, and migrate later in spring and earlier in fall than the Hermit Thrush. All five have songs with flute-like quality. The wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), of the eastern United States, is considered to rank second to the Hermit Thrush in beauty of song.

The Hermit Thrush begins to sing shortly after arrival on its breeding ground in April. At first, and again in late summer, songs are heard mostly at dawn and dusk, but during the height of the nesting season, the birds sing at all times of day. By early August, nesting winds down, and singing ends. The birds then prepare to depart for their wintering grounds.

*John Woodcock
Board Member and first Woodland Dunes Naturalist*



The Living Classroom

Mourning Cloaks overwinter as adults and are some of the first butterflies seen flying on a warm spring day.

Volunteer Teacher Naturalists and Education Helpers Needed

Join a fun loving group of Woodland Dunes volunteers known as our Teacher Naturalists. When school groups visit we strive to keep a 1 to 10 ratio of adults to kids. With a small education staff we need additional people willing to guide students. After you have attended trainings and observe field trips you will be ready to sign up to teach on your own. Set your own schedule and sign up when it is most convenient for you to volunteer.

We also need volunteers to help set-up and take down field trips and assist teacher naturalists during programs.

This spring three programs will be offered:

Maple Syrup and Forest Ecology teaches 4th grade students about the history of maple syrup making and the importance of forest ecosystems. Students tap trees, see how maple syrup is made and explore the preserve to learn about wildlife and the forest. This program is run the month of March. Trainings were held in February but call or email if you are interested in helping.

Amphibmeander is geared for third grade students. The focus of the field trip is on wetlands and their importance. Students explore a vernal pool, ridge and swale and swamp habitat and have the opportunity to meet and learn about the plants and animals that make wetlands their home. Training sessions will be held Tuesday April 16, 23 and 30 from 9-11 a.m.; each session new material is covered. This program is run the month of May and early June.

Water Wonders explores our relationship with water. Students learn about water quality from the animals living in our ponds and what steps they can take to help keep waterways clean. A marsh ecosystem is explored to learn about this valuable habitat not only for wildlife but the role it plays in keeping pollutants out of the West Twin River. Training sessions will be held Thursdays April 18, 25 and May 2 from 9-11. This program is run the month of May and early June.

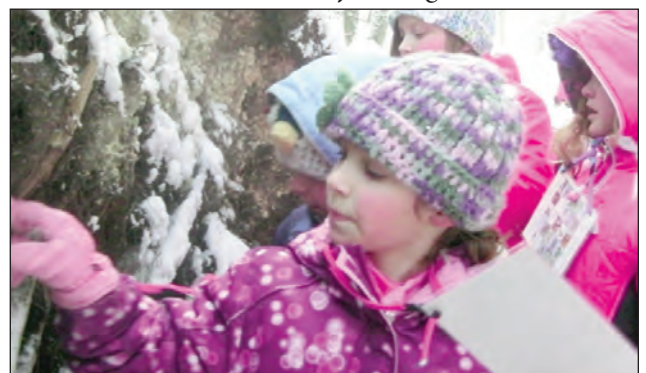
Call the nature center or email kelly at kellye@woodland-dunes.org to learn more and sign-up to become a Teacher Naturalist. A great way to give back to the kids in our community, meet a great group of people and learn more about the natural world.

Family Nature Activity: Pond Critters

A great family activity is searching for aquatic life in Woodland Dunes ponds. Visit the Little Wings Explorers Room to find books, puzzles and games about pond life. Take the aquatic nets, bins and identification guides out to David's Pond, a short walk down Cattail Trail to see who you can find. David's pond has a lowered platform to get you close to the water. When finished teach a valuable lesson by putting all the animals you find back into their habitat. Each animal found from dragonfly nymphs to leeches are an important part of the pond ecosystem. The shaded pavilion is a great place to relax with a snack after your adventure. The Little Wings Explorers Room has all the equipment you need to make your time at Woodland Dunes an enjoyable and meaningful experience.



Candlelight Night was enjoyed by all who attended. A snow covered woods, camp fire, gourmet smores, snowshoes and live music. What more could you ask for on a February evening?



Students enjoyed learning about animal and plant adaptations during Winter World. A snowshoe hike through the forest and visiting with chickadees are highlights for the kids.

Haiku's by our Young Naturalists

Snowy owl's beauty
Graceful flying speckled bird
Giant tawny eyes

Emma Daly, age 12

The blue jay screeched high
The great horned owl hooted low
Forest, songs to screams

Jacob Welch, age 10

Cranes, red-winged black birds
Meadow larks, orioles
Migration season

Andrew Welch, age 12

Turtle on a rock
Slow, in a heavy green shell
Sunbathing all day

Jenny Welch, age 7

Catfish is gliding
Just over the riverbed
Under the surface

Johnny Welch, age 8

A rainbow pallet
Every color, shade and hue
Nature is a gift

Rachel Welch, age 16

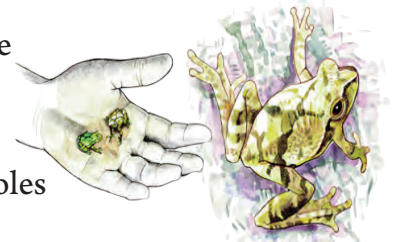
Snowstorm in the night
Blowing swirling all around
Wake to a clean slate

Gina Welch, Mom

Around the Pond

With spring comes the return of pleasant weather, more sunshine and, of course, rain. While all that rain is falling, it's refilling the dried up ponds that disappeared over last summer and fall. People may not think of it, but there are a lot of things going on in ponds come springtime.

- Frogs are starting to wake up. They've spent their entire winter underneath the mud of the frozen pond, or in other places, and they're ready to come out again. This means eggs, and soon, tadpoles will be wiggling around the pond.



Spring peepers are the smallest frogs living at Woodland Dunes.

- Several species of ducks and other waterfowl will return to the pond. They've gone through a long, hard migration and are ready to find a good pond or lake to spend the warmer months. Mallards, for example, can be found in most places where fresh water is readily available. In spring, they will build a nest close to the water, usually under some vegetation for protection. The ducklings generally hatch about a month after the eggs are laid, and within a day they are paddling around the pond.



- In early spring, Blue-Spotted Salamanders migrate to ponds to lay their eggs. After about four weeks, the larva will hatch. They look a little like tadpoles, but have gills like fish. While they are in their larval stage, they eat things such as worms and insects. The more food they find, the faster they change into their adult state. In the adult state they have legs and no gills and can be found in the forests under logs and other moist places. In early spring however, they can be found swimming in ponds at Woodland Dunes.



Note the gills on this Blue spotted salamander larva.

Many animals and plants make their home in the waters of a pond. These are just a few that may visit a pond near you.

Spring Scramble

Unscramble the words and put the shaded letters in the answer box for the punch line!

U E S N H N I S

B D S U E O N P

L G O P W Y O L

What do you call a frog that can't find a pond?

Answer box

Moonshine and Elephants Animals and Drug Use

Sharp-lobed Hepatica blooms along the Ice Age Trail beginning as early as April 9th.

What makes news today is often difficult to predict or even imagine, but most often it is some natural or man-made disaster. In 2007, I was struck by the news that a herd of about 40 Indian Elephants (*Elephas maximus*) had plundered a village in Northeastern India after they had apparently gotten drunk on unattended rice beer. The village was “trashed” when the elephants uprooted utility poles and flattened property. Stories such as this have also come from Africa, where African Elephants (*Loxodonta africana*) have gone on drunken rampages after dining on the fermenting fruit of the Marula Tree (similar to the mango in providing sweet yellow fruit which will also ferment).

Locals concluded that the elephants had purposely eaten the spoiled fruit, much like college students attending a weekend party, and were actually looking for the buzz the “hooch” provided. Unfortunately, that part of the story seems to be flawed, as the elephants are unlikely to eat spoiled or fermented fruit. A recent study by Steve Morris suggests that elephants eat only fresh fruit. In fact, elephants will push over trees in order to secure fresh fruit, even when fallen fruit is easily available. But, the news media especially enjoys these splashy stories, and certainly, the public would love to believe that elephants like to misbehave on alcohol just like humans. This affirms our identity with animals. The topic of this article is drug use in animals, and hypotheses that help us understand this kind of behavior.

Drug use and other risky behaviors by non-human animals, how-

ever, is becoming established in literature, and is part of a very interesting and much larger story in biology. Amotz Zahavi, an Israeli biologist, in 1975 proposed the Handicap hypothesis to explain the role of seemingly costly or self-destructive behaviors that especially pertain to reproduction.

These behaviors--or in some cases signals--have evolved to bring individuals together. To us they often seem to be signaling miscues. These include conspicuous consumption, drug use, and tattooing in people. In animals they include bright colors, outlandishly long tails and other exaggerated physical features of some birds. Each signal appears to be a disadvantage to the life of the individual, and would seemingly put the individual at risk. But Zahavi's hypothesis suggests that this is, in fact, an expression of enhanced reproductive opportunity and thus greater biological fitness, as long as females see it that way.

The “trick” is that even though it looks to us like a handicap to the individual possessing the trait, it is in reality a show of fitness. How else could the Peafowl have evolved enormous tail feathers that make flight almost impossible for it to survive if it wasn't the most fit? Jared Diamond in “*The Third Chimpanzee*” used Zahavi's hypothesis to explain certain risky behaviors in people--such as mentioned above--that also seem counter intuitive. He proposed that college-aged students imbibing drugs could be signaling to girls: Look, I can waste myself and still do all this schoolwork, I am a superior individual. And often, the paradox is: why does the male do it, and a female like it? Perhaps

this should be called the Evil Knievel principle.

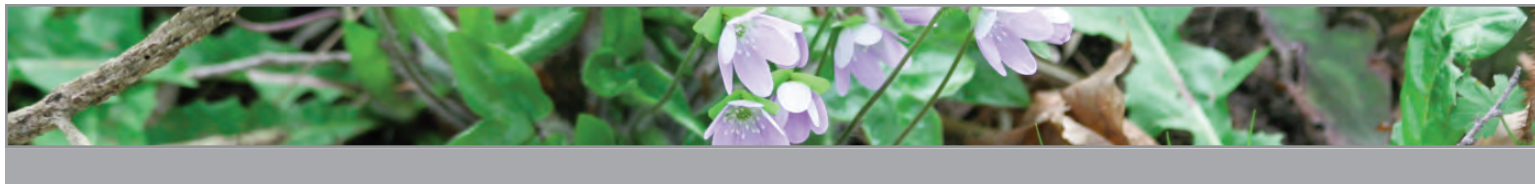
Researchers Wrangham and Rodrigues noted that individuals belonging to a Tanzanian tribe chew the unpleasant tasting leaves of the wild sunflower (*Aspilia sp.*) to treat stomach aches and other ills.

Interestingly, Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) in the area also “feed” on these same leaves.

These leaves contain the drug, thiarubrine-A, which kills parasites in the gastro intestinal (GI) system of humans and chimps, but does not harm the beneficial bacteria found in the gut. This suggested to the researchers that the chimps were indeed using the *Aspilia* as a drug, just like members of the Tanzanian tribe. And, in a similar vein, gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*) consume kusa (*Thomandelsia laurifolia*) leaves despite their extremely bitter taste. The benefit is not nutritive, but it treats GI dysfunction including intestinal parasites as well as diarrhea, colic and fever. Human tribes in the area, in addition, use preparations of this leaf as eyewash, and for the treatment of skin wounds and skin diseases. Clearly, non-human animals, and humans alike would not choose unpleasant tasting plants if it didn't include a benefit for such risky behavior.

It has long been known that Monarch Butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) dine on the milkweed plant (*Asclepias sp.*) because the cardiac glycosides manufactured by the plant are toxic to its predators. But, Emory University biologist Jaap de Roode has found another





reason milkweed is used by Monarchs. Female Monarchs infected with a parasite will lay their eggs on a specific species of milkweed that provides a toxin protecting the larvae of the infected female from the parasite. De Roode writes “that our experiment provides the best evidence to date that animals use medication.” Since the milkweed used by the female Monarchs affords protection only to the larvae, and not to the adult (adult butterflies feed only on nectar) the behavior is trans-generational. And, this is evidence that much more is going on in the animal world than we had previously believed possible.

British naturalists have contributed greatly to our understanding of birds, among other great scientific achievements. Recently, British ornithologists have reported that Blue Tits (*Parus caeruleus*), much like our Black-capped Chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*), use medicinal plants in the building of nests to ward off nest parasites. Aromatic plants such as Mint (*Pycnanthemum sp.*), Lavender (*Lavandula sp.*), and Yarrow (*Achillea sp.*) are known to kill bacteria, and their presence in a nest provide a more suitable environment for the development of chicks. Chicks reared in these nests grow faster and have an increased red blood cell count, which is an indicator of survival advantage.

Capuchin Monkeys (*Cebus capucinus*), as monkeys do, make mischief. As presented in an Animal Planet program, Capuchin Monkeys agitate millipedes causing the millipede to “secrete” a toxin. The monkeys rub this secretion on themselves causing hallucinations, and the mischief

ensues. This is similar to the effect of catnip (*Nepeta cataria*) on cats. The active drug in catnip, nepetalactone (a hypnotic or psychoactive drug) affects about 50 to 75% of the cats that are exposed to it. The cats that respond will paw, roll and lick the plant, which also produces various other behavioral responses. Our cat Dickens becomes agitated at first (a drug trip perhaps) and then goes to sleep. Maybe it is the dream that is the real trip! Those cats that are attracted to catnip actively seek it out. Some references suggest that the drug, nepetalactone probably has cat pheromonal properties.

Even Reindeer have been caught engaging in their own kind of mischief. Reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*) have been reported to dine upon the “deadly” mushroom, fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*). This mushroom is deadly to humans, but it appears to be tolerated by the reindeer and several species of mice. Apparently, it is the psychoactive compounds that the mushroom produces that attract the reindeer. Under the influence of the mushroom, the shrooming reindeer prance about as if flying (conjuring Santa’s Reindeer perhaps?). In some areas of Northern Europe, humans consume reindeer urine to get a “similar”, but controlled, high. (Their winters must be much longer and more difficult than we imagine, causing them to resort to these activities. I am afraid if this application of risk behavior had been left to me, its secrets would not yet be revealed!) It is also reported that reindeer consume



human urine. Although no explanation for this behavior was given, it can be assumed that the reindeer are “mineral feeding”, not risk taking, using the urine as a source of sodium, calcium potassium, magnesium and maybe even iodine.

The thought that non-human animals would use medicinal plants seems foreign. But, from earliest human times, plants have been used for many roles: nutritional, esthetic, as toxins (e.g. Poison Hemlock) and for medicinal and recreational reasons. Plaque, removed from the teeth of Neanderthals contains remnants of known medicinal plants. But, if human ancestors used medicinal plants, why not birds, butterflies and bears? And, where did original man get the idea to use said plants? The Handicap hypothesis implies that risk taking is built into our genetic makeup, and the cost/benefit of such behaviors provides survival advantages and ultimately, reproductive success. So whether the elephants are having a drunken bash or insects are treating parasitic infections with medicinal plants, risk taking and drug use are part of their biology, just as they are part of ours. And, these adaptations are important to the survival of that individual. Now, where is the closest tattoo parlor?

It is wonderful to have a friend like Peter Weber, Professor Emeritus, SUNY Oswego, who provided enormous help in preparing this article. He clarified the prose and gave purpose to its message. And, our son Charles provided much of the resource material for this topic. Both gave generously in preparing this work by sharing their expertise.

Charles Sontag, Board Member, Professor Emeritus

From the Field Citizen Science

Red-backed Salamanders live at Woodland Dunes, an amphibian that does not breed or lay eggs in ponds.

Everyone is Invited to Make a Difference - Share Your Wildlife Health Observations

Wildlife Of Wisconsin's (WOW) mission is to rehabilitate animals and using those experiences, help educate the public. Wildlife rehabilitators are on the forefront of emerging diseases in wildlife. At a recent symposium we, along with our fellow rehabilitators, were asked to contribute information about the events we respond to and the data we collect from our wild patients. This data will support a shared wildlife health community goal of establishing a baseline understanding for wildlife mortality, which could lead to forecasting future disease outbreaks and identifying areas of concern. This year by contacting rehabilitators from southern Wisconsin, we were able to see the West Nile Virus was running rampant in red-tailed hawks and watched as it progressed through Wisconsin.

WOW has been asked to direct the public to enter their wildlife health observations into the Wildlife Health Event Reporter aka WHER. One incidental report of a dead/sick wild animal may seem irrelevant, but when viewed with observations from other individuals it can enhance the big picture and provide a better understanding of what is happening across the landscape, or even in your own neighborhood. Using WHER can help us detect animals involved in algae blooms and diseases spreading through the state or nation.

WHER was built to serve as a near-real time wildlife disease surveillance and communication tool, but its effectiveness and future success

depends upon collecting a robust dataset from multiple sources, including the public, wildlife rehabilitators, and other organizations/agencies concerned about wildlife disease.

Whether you are a wildlife rehabber, wildlife professional or an everyday citizen concerned about wildlife, your wildlife health observations are valuable and contribute to the collective and growing knowledge base. Create an account today at www.wher.org and start exploring the system and its over 5,000 wildlife health reports. After subscribing individuals can receive alerts any time a report is contributed to WHER or limit alerts to specific geographic areas.

Remember, feel free to contact Wildlife Of Wisconsin's pager at 920-323-5609 when needing assistance, or you can call 920-732-3918 for general questions or concerns.

Sue Theys, Wildlife of Wisconsin



Don't just lay around this spring, help wildlife by reporting sightings and participating in monitoring opportunities. Photo taken during Budding Birders Camp for our youngest birders at the Kid's Christmas Bird Count.

Spring Monitoring Opportunities

Salamander Monitoring: Help inventory the number and species of salamanders at Woodland Dunes. Both aquatic and terrestrial traps will be set this spring. Sign-up for days to check.

Water Quality Monitoring: Join the on-going effort to monitor the health of the East and West Twin Rivers. This is a monthly commitment of about 1 hour. Data is entered into a state wide database.

Bat Monitoring: With the continued threat of white-nose syndrome, a fungus decimating bat populations, it is imperative numbers of bats and roosting sites are understood. Join the Dunes newest monitoring effort. You choose your route and the evening(s) that work best. Try it once or monitor throughout the active bat season. Learn more Thursday, May 23, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Contact the nature center to get involved in any of these monitoring efforts.



From the Field Christmas Bird Count

Common Redpolls enjoyed the bird feeders this winter, in spring they return to breeding sites farther North.

Christmas Bird Count

Before the turn of the century, during the holiday season people would participate in "side hunts." Participants would choose a side and go into the field collecting as many birds and mammals as they could. The group with the largest count was the winner. Due to concern from bird watchers and scientists of declining bird populations a new tradition began on Christmas day 1900. Ornithologist Frank Chapman, an officer in the newly formed Audubon Society proposed a Christmas Bird Census rather than a hunt and the Christmas Bird Count was born. Counts are done in Canada, the United States, Latin America, the Caribbean and Pacific Islands.

The 2012-2013 Christmas Bird Count for Manitowoc County resulted in 25,702 birds of 68 species being identified. Manitowoc County is divided into four areas for the count: SW, SE, NW and NE. The totals are sent to the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology for their permanent records. Highlights for the year were 2 Red-throated Loons, 1 Horned Grebe, 1 Snow Goose, 13 Glaucous Gulls, 23 Great Black-backed Gulls, 1 Carolina Wren, 1 American Robin, 107 Lapland Longsurs, 10 Pine Grosbeaks, 31 White-winged Crossbills, 167 Common Redpolls and 1 Hoary Redpoll. Many of the bird highlights are species not normally seen in Wisconsin or only seen sporadically. Lack of seed crop in the North brought some of these species farther south in search of food this winter season.

People seen watching birds: Don & Helen Bleser (NE), Bernie Brouchoud (NW,NE), Bob Domalgowski (SW,SE,NW,NE), Judy & Daniel Hassmer (NE), Barb & Jim Holschbach (NE), Kay & Bob Kavanagh (NW,NE) Betsy & Tom Kocourek (NE), John Meyer (SW,SE,NW,NE), Norb Pritzl (NE), Anne Schuette (NE), Chuck Sontag (SW,SE,NW,NE), Jim and Matt Knickelbine (SW,SE,NE), Jim Holschbach (NW), Patti & Joel Trick (NE), Jim Welnetz (NW), John & Julie Woodcock (SE) John Woodcock (NE). Thank you everyone who participated!

Kids Christmas Bird Count

New this year, Woodland Dunes invited kids 5 to 16 out for a morning of birding. Thank you Aaron Pauwels, Jenny, Johnny & Jacob Welch, Joshua Smith and Joseph & Matthew Emke-Zimmer. They identified 188 birds of 16 species making a great contribution to the bird data sent to the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology.



Birds seen watching people	SW	SE	NW	NE	Total
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	2	2
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	1	1
Double-crested Cormorant	-	1	-	-	1
Great Blue Heron	-	-	1	-	1
Snow Goose	-	1	-	-	1
Canada Goose	150	877	2	2913	3942
Cackling Goose	-	2	-	-	2
American Black Duck	-	2	-	16	18
Mallard	15	109	3	2050	2177
Redhead	-	-	-	32	32
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	158	158
Long-tailed Duck	-	1	-	5	6
Bufflehead	-	10	-	11	21
Common Goldeneye	-	57	-	62	119
Hooded Merganser	-	-	-	2	2
Common Merganser	-	-	-	27	27
Red-breasted Merganser	-	186	-	607	793
Bald Eagle	3	-	-	1	4
Northern Harrier	1	3	1	2	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	1	-	-	1
Cooper's Hawk	-	1	-	1	2
Red-tailed Hawk	-	8	18	9	35
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	-	5	5
American Kestrel	14	13	16	5	48
Peregrine Falcon	-	1	-	-	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	3	6	8	18
Wild Turkey	-	19	197	278	494
American Coot	-	1	-	-	1
Ring Billed Gull	-	157	-	-	157
Herring Gull	84	954	290	268	1596
Glaucous Gull	-	5	2	6	13
Great Black-backed Gull	-	12	3	8	23
Rock Pigeon	126	403	598	233	1360
Eastern Collared Dove	3	-	-	-	3
Mourning Dove	25	223	349	348	945
Great Horned Owl	-	1	-	2	3
Belted Kingfisher	-	-	1	2	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3	3	17	14	37
Downy Woodpecker	11	19	31	17	78
Hairy Woodpecker	-	5	9	16	30
Pileated Woodpecker	2	-	-	1	3
Northern Shrike	1	-	1	5	5
Blue Jay	14	24	57	27	122
American Crow	48	179	309	253	789
Horned Lark	-	1	12	51	64
Black-capped Chickadee	31	91	116	158	396
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-	4	2	12	18
White-breasted Nuthatch	11	25	17	37	90
Carolina Wren	-	-	-	1	1
American Robin	-	-	-	1	1
European Starling	208	1582	2734	2559	7083
Cedar Waxwing	-	176	-	10	186
American Tree Sparrow	105	37	114	92	348
Song Sparrow	1	-	4	-	5
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	2	-	-	2
Dark-eyed Junco	27	64	282	155	528
Lapland Longspur	-	-	-	107	107
Snow Bunting	-	2	257	240	499
Northern Cardinal	8	24	103	85	220
Pine Grosbeak	-	-	10	-	10
Purple Finch	-	-	11	-	11
House Finch	22	49	59	52	182
White-winged Crossbill	-	-	-	31	31
Common Redpoll	-	34	124	9	167
Hoary Redpoll	-	1	-	-	1
Pine Siskin	-	5	16	3	24
American Goldfinch	16	74	119	139	348
House Sparrow	113	329	1203	650	2295
Total	1044	5782	7094	11782	25702

Volunteer Spotlight

Marsh Marigolds bloom in April in wet areas of Woodland Dunes, look for them along Black Cherry Trail.



Spring Volunteer Spotlight Chuck Sontag

This issue's volunteer spotlight features one of those dear people who, although they contribute much, do whatever they can to avoid recognition. We are so fortunate to have these selfless volunteers, especially this one.

Dr. Charles Sontag first noticed birds as a child while ill and forced to restrict physical activity. Chuck received his undergraduate degree from Carroll College and graduate degrees from UW-Madison. He went on to a distinguished career most recently teaching biology, physiology and anatomy at UW-Manitowoc.

At that time, he had already been recording his bird observations along the lakefront at Manitowoc, and still does today. As part of a grant project for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), we are digitizing hundreds of thousands of his observations so that they can be used by FWS scientists to learn about birds and their movements around the Great Lakes. His is probably the largest single set of observations in the State, and will aid in our understanding of birdlife forever.

Charles has been on the Board of Directors at Woodland Dunes since the mid 70s. He has aided Woodland Dunes in many ways, having served as Board Chairman, chair of the Human Resource and Education Committees, helping at many events along with Marilyn, his energetic wife, providing programs for the public, and being a mentor for our staff.

Dr. Sontag was and is an exceptional teacher, and his classes at UW -Manitowoc inspired many of his students to pursue careers in the life sciences, including myself. His thorough explanation of the subject and gentle manner truly encourages people to learn. Recently, he helped with our Christmas Bird Count for Kids, and it was wonderful to listen to him talk with the children in his group about how wonderful and interesting birds are.

He has helped Woodland Dunes in many ways, and continues to do so, and we are all the better for it.

Jim Knickelbine, Director

We ask each of our volunteer spotlights to answer a few questions about themselves and volunteering.

1. About how long have you been volunteering at Woodland Dunes? I have been on the Board of WD since the mid 70's. But, doing special things, other than birding at WD, came later in the 80's and 90's.

2. What made you decide to volunteer here? I always thought that whatever gives one pleasure, should be given in return. Hopefully, this, in turn, will encourage others to make their contributions, great, creative or gifted.

3. What do you most enjoy about being involved with Woodland Dunes? The sense of pleasure/enjoyment that comes with activity. Just being part of something exciting, and important is certainly its own reward.

4. What are some of your other favorite hobbies or pastimes? Need you ask? Birding, hiking, playing in the Lakeshore Wind Ensemble and visiting our National Parks. And, did I mention birding?

5. What is your favorite bird? Is there a reason why? I delight in ALL birds, But, our Robin has a special place in my heart, partly because it has survived human activity, and because it has actually benefitted from the relationship.

Thank You

The following reflect gifts, donations and memberships received through Feb. 1st.

Grants

Cellcom Green Gift, program support
Chase Community Giving Grant,
program support

Matching Funds

Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation
U.S. Bank

Monetary Donations

Joy Krejarek
Louise Trickel

Donations

Judy Bull, canoe
Karen Koebel, book for library
Betsy Kocourek, event costumes
Margaret and Bill Pauwels, bird book
and CD
Ray Vesely, bird ornaments
Pat Watrud, Large Prints for field
stations
Henry Katz, bird seed

Memorials

In Memory of Steven Augustine
Gerald & Patricia Augustine

In memory of Ruth E. Kaufmann

Our Mom: Mary Jo, Beth, Holly,
Paul, Linda, Tom & Sarah

In memory of Grace Schleis

Carol Martin

In memory of Anne Kiley

William & Traci Hoeltke

In memory of Dean Watrud

Kathryn & Patrick Taddy
Friends of Duke Watrud
Pat Watrud

In memory of Helen Dicke-Krivacek

James Fluck

Fund Drive

David & Brenda Behnke
Don & Helen Bleser
Grace Boeder
Susan Boettger
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Catherine & Daniel Cole
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Lyle Heide
Meghan & Dean Hessler
Traci & Bill Hoeltke
Bruce & Lesley Huffer
Tom & Nancy Hunt
Don & Dolores Janda
Lewis & Beatrice Klein

Master Gardeners of MTWC Cty.
Joretta Mountford
Philip & Peg Rees
Janice Tetzlaff
Gerald & Germaine Waak
Bill & Nan Webster
Howard & Betty Wilsmann

2012 Membership List Omissions

Robert & Therese Brey
John Culley
Pat & David D'Aoust
Lewis & Beatrice Klien
Judith Knickelbine
Peter Koch
Tim & Nancy Leigh
Rick and Sharon Phillips
Timothy & Karen Schroeder

New Members

Gary Erickson
Howard & Shawn Linsmeier
Patrick Schmuhl & Rachel Clark

New Guarantor

Robert & Jaclyn Alyea

Event Support

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Volunteers

Scott Barner
Jean Biegun
Mary Johnsrud
Garrett Leigh
Nancy Leigh
Ellen Lewellen
Dick Luchsinger
Jeanie Miller
Mary Ozarowicz
Mary Savage

Chuck Schnell
Gary Theilbar
Julie Theilbar
Two Rivers Family Restaurant
Gina Welch
Rachel Welch
Julie Woodcock
Lucy Zeldenrust

Candlelight Night

Volunteers

Ed & Lee Brey
Jody & Rob Henseler
Tom & Betsy Kocourek
Nancy Leigh

Dick Luchsinger
Dolly McNulty
Susie Polk

Bakers

Kay Kauffman
Betsy Kocourek

Sponsor

Cellcom

Donations

Fricke Printing Service,
posters

Smores supplies

Don DeBryun
Dolly McNulty
Mary Savage

Thank You

Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel, a true hibernator become active again in spring.

Education Support

Winter World Teacher Naturalists

Bill Hoelke
Jessica Johnsrud
Jeannie Miller
Mary Ozarowitz
Susie Polk

Maple Syrup Teacher Naturalists

Lou Ann Gray
Bill Hoelke
Jim Knorr
Ellen Lewellen
Dick Luchsinger
Jeannie Miller
Mary Ozarowitz
Susie Polk
Mary Savage

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Planned Giving for Woodland Dunes

Woodland Dunes has recently partnered with Thrivent Community - West Shore to learn more about planned giving options for its members. Thrivent can offer a short, planned giving workshop to a small group of members to show them ways they can make a lasting impact for Woodland Dunes. Many of these strategies are simple and do not take a large investment. If you are interested in attending a workshop to learn more about planned giving contact Jessica at jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org.

Help Cellcom Continue Giving Green Gifts

Woodland Dunes was recently selected as a recipient of a Cellcom Green Gift. The company is able to offer the Green Gifts program because it recycles unwanted cell phones and cell phone batteries. The money received from salvaged and recycled materials is then used to support area organizations dedicated to supporting environmental sustainability. In 2012, Cellcom distributed \$26,500 to 20 green organizations within the company's service area. In its three-year history, Cellcom has awarded \$82,700 in Green Gifts!

You can help Cellcom continue this fabulous program by dropping off your unwanted cell phones and cell phone batteries at Woodland Dunes on Monday-Friday 9a.m.-4p.m. and Saturdays 9a.m.-noon (April-October). A drop box is located in the front hallway, under the brochure table.



Havins some fun at the presentation of the Green Gift check from Jaimie Salta, Manitowoc Cellcom Sales Consultant.

Ways of Giving

Memorial Bricks and Boulders

Celebrate the life of someone dear to you by purchasing a brick or boulder to reflect their love of nature, or memorialize a favorite relative whose personality brought light to your life. Your message will be engraved and highlighted in black. Choose from a 4" x 8" brick paver or a basketball sized boulder made of natural stone. The brick pavers will border gardens and paths near the Nature Center. Boulders will be added to the gardens.

To purchase a brick or boulder, please fill out the form below and send it to Woodland Dunes. Please contact Jessica at 793-4007 or jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org if you have any questions.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

4 x 8 Brick Paver (12 characters per line, maximum two lines) \$75

Natural Stone Boulder (12 characters per line, maximum two lines) \$200



In 2012, over 5,000 children and adults participated in an education program at Woodland Dunes. We need your help to continue educating and inspiring the community about the natural world.

I wish to support Woodland Dunes with the following donation:

\$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ other _____

Name (please print) _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make checks payable to Woodland Dunes and return this form with your donation to: Woodland Dunes, PO Box 486, Two Rivers, WI 54241

Woodland Dunes

Become a member or give a gift membership!

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

- c \$25 Individual
- c \$35 Family
- c \$50 Patron
- c \$100 Contributor

Guarantors

- c \$250 Conservator
- c \$500 Benefactor
- c \$1,000 Steward
- c \$5,000 Guardian

Please send this form and your tax-deductible membership to Woodland Dunes today.

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 Charles Sontag
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 Lucy Zeldenrust

Headquarters and Nature Shop

Hwy. 310 west of Two Rivers

Hours

Monday - Friday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Saturday: Summer • 9 a.m. to noon
 Winter • by appt. or for events
 Hiking trails open year round

Phone (920) 793-4007

nature@woodlanddunes.org
 www.woodlanddunes.org

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