WOODLAND DUNES
NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE

DUNESLETTER
Autumn 2026 | Volume 205

CONTENTS

2 Habitat Management
3 Supporting this space
4 Nature Corner
5 Butterfly & Bee Garden
6 Events
8 Summer Interns
9 Thank You
10 Pelicans
11 Membership
12 Save The Dates

Monarch Caterpillar by Kennedy Zittel

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings Woodland Dunes Members!
As I write this article I can hear the osprey's chatter outside my office window. They have been quite active this year and it's always a delight to watch them bring fish to the platform near our parking lot. The other sound at the moment is a persistent catbird, maybe vying for some of the last of the mulberries or perhaps defending a nest in the dense shrubbery just off the front area of the old farmhouse portion of the Nature Center. What a privilege to hear nature just outside one's window.

> "What a privilege to hear nature just outside one's window.

Summertime as usual is busy with a diverse array of programs and habitat management with the added benefit of summer interns bringing their talents and enthusiasm to our crew. Please be sure to read about these individuals in the pages that follow. I hope if you were able to attend our membership and volunteer appreciation meeting on August 7th you had a chance to speak with them directly.

One of the programs that Jess, Kennedy, and Aidan, as well as Volunteer Erin held for the first time was Woodland Dunes Wizard Camp! Participants were able to choose a wand, rescue a lost owl and then name that owl and complete an adoption form. They learned about pH in the potions section and transfiguration in another– i.e. animals and plants that may change from a tadpole to a frog or a caterpillar to a butterfly. A big thank you to all the crafters who felt owls- they sewed five species- Snowy, Northern Saw-whet, Great Horned, Barn and Barred Owls-all were adopted to good homes. Wizard Camp was a huge success. I am so proud of the creativity our education team brings to their programs and the excitement and engagement they inspire in children.

We are grateful for all the support that you continue to show this nature center via your financial contributions, your volunteer time and your creative talents that support programs, trails, and our gift shop. Our community is

stronger because we provide programs and a shared natural space for everyone. With that we are looking forward to the fall season, with plenty of new programs and hikes to take in.

~ Sue Crowley, Executive Director

Habitat Management

Over the past three years (2024-26) Woodland Dunes staff, volunteers, and summer habitat restoration interns have been busy working on our Riparian Forest Restoration Project. This project's goals were to restore 15 acres of ecologically-significant forested wetland habitat connected to the West Twin River by the planting 2,500 native trees and shrubs. The need for this project arose from the fact that our wetland forests here at Woodland Dunes were historically dominated by black and green ash. Since 2023, many of Woodland Dunes ash trees have perished due to the invasive wood-boring insect, the emerald ash borer (EAB). As of August 2026, Woodland Dunes has planted 3077 native trees and shrubs across 15.5 acres of wetland habitat. Funding for this project was acquired through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant program.

Our project area was split into two main areas: A large swale along Columbus Street, just south of our Conifer Trail and wetland areas near Goldenrod Loop and Willow Trail. Before planting could happen, staff and volunteers worked to remove invasive species like common buckthorn and Tatarian honeysuckle. Much of the initial invasive species removal occurred in the fall and winter of 2024, but retreatment of sprouts also occurred in the summers of 2025 and 2026.

After our sites were prepped by knocking back invasive species, we began our plantings. Species were chosen to reflect the natural composition found at Woodland Dunes as well as to reflect species that may be well adapted to wetlands in changing climatic conditions. The majority of our trees and shrubs have also been caged with metal fencing and poles to minimize the impact of deer browse. Our staff is thankful for the volunteers from Woodland Dunes deer hunting program who contributed dozens of hours to cut the over 2,000 cages we used for this project.

Our first planting area was north of Goldenrod Loop. In the summer of 2024 we planted a wide variety of trees, with the dominant species being swamp white oak, bur oak, eastern cottonwood, and black willow. We also experimented with companion planting small plugs of native shrubs together with some of our larger trees. Additionally, 100 silver maple and 400 northern white cedar bareroot trees were planted on sites between Willow and Goldenrod and just south of Willow Trail in 2025 and 2026 respectively. In this area in total we planted 1440 trees and shrubs.

Our second planting area occurred in a large swale along Columbus Street, south of our Conifer Trail. In the spring of 2025 staff and volunteers began planting 400 bareroot trees: white pine, white spruce, tamarack and silver maple. In the summer of 2025, our habitat interns planted an additional 1137 containerized trees and shrubs, with the main species planted being swamp white oak, bur oak, silky dogwood and buttonbush. In the spring of 2026, staff and volunteers planted additional bareroot trees to replace stock that didn't make it past its first winter. In this area we planted 1,687 trees and shrubs.

The final aspect of this project was to build a demonstration deer exclosure on a ¾-acre section of wetland swale near the northern entrance of our Conifer Trail. A deer exclosure is essentially a seven-foot tall fence enclosing the native trees, shrubs or herbaceous plants to protect them from deer herbivory. Our fence was established with the hard work of our 2024 summer habitat restoration interns. There are many large ash trees in the vicinity which we monitor regularly, but thus far we have only had minor damage to the fence, without any noted breaches by hungry deer.

Inside the fence we have made note of the naturally occurring species present on site. Incredibly, after only a few weeks, many of the native shrubs, which had clearly been regularly browsed, started to burgeon with new growth. Staff and summer 2024 interns worked to remove and treat invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle from the site to allow more of these native species to fill in. Our 2025 summer interns then helped plant 150 native trees and shrubs allocated to our Columbus Street planting within the exclosure. Our exclosure will remain up until 2034, 10 years from its establishment. Long-term management includes perimeter monitoring, invasive species monitoring and treatment, and additional planting for native plant diversity.

Through this project Woodland Dunes was able to employ twelve summer interns who gained hands-on habitat management skills like invasive species management, deer exclosure construction, and native tree and shrub planting. In addition, this project engaged 46 individual volunteers, including teams from Carron Net Company and Lakeshore College. All of those who volunteered their time to help cut cages, clear invasives and plant native trees and shrubs were critical to the success of achieving our goals. Thank you!

With the loss of the dominant ash canopy, there is an abundant amount of light hitting the forest floor. Our plantings are already taking advantage of this and putting on an exciting amount of new growth. We look forward to watching and documenting the successes and potential roadblocks of this project long term. This information will be utilized to better inform our future projects. Stay tuned for snapshots of this project in the near future.

– Max Kornetzke, Land Manager

Nature Center
P.O. Box 486
3000 Hawthorne Avenue
Two Rivers, WI 54241

Hours
Monday - Friday: 9 am - 4 pm
Saturday: 9 am - 12 pm
(April - October)

Contact
Phone: (920) 793-4007
Website: woodlanddunes.org
Facebook:
Look up Woodland Dunes
in Two Rivers, WI
and like our page!

Staff
Executive Director
Sue Crowley
Assistant Director/ Education Coordinator
Jess Johnsrud
Development Director
Jason Prigge
Land Manager
Max Kornetzke
Naturalist
Kennedy Zittel
Administrative Assistant
Jenifer Thompson
Cleaning Specialist
Kyle Kraus

Board of Directors
President Mark McLaughlin
Vice President Bob Gahl
Treasurer Troy Christianson
Secretary Kelly Vorron

Board Members
Becky Abler
Andrea Holschbach
Lee Kummer
Nick Lohr
Dolly McNulty
Logan Rooney
Titus Seilheimer
Joel Trick

Emeritus Directors
Founders, previous board members, and previous executive directors are eligible for this honor.

2025 Inductees
Helen Bleser
Lyn Brouchoud
Donald DeBruyn
James Knickelbine
Ellen Lewellen
Robert Weinert
John Woodcock
Lucy Zeldenrust

2026 Emeritus Inductees
Susan Knorr
Tom Kocourek
Charles Sontag

Legacy Leaders
Designated to people who have passed away and have significantly contributed and shaped Woodland Dunes.

2025 Inductees
Bernie Brouchoud
Gordon Buboltz
Helen Dicke-Krivacek
Winnie Smith
Beverly Vareka

Supporting this space, sustains everyone

I view our organization as a place for everyone, it's a place where kids discover the beauty of a dragonfly on a cattail (like my son did when he was a toddler) or where families find quiet trails to share and make memories. It is a place where visitors can experience the changing seasons of wetlands, prairies, forests, and the globally significant ridges and swales habitats we manage.

There is always something happening, something peaceful waiting to be discovered, which, in my opinion is something that we need more of in this crazy world.

Experiences are made possible through the passion and ongoing care of our staff, volunteers, members and donors. With that support we continue offering meaningful experiences for people of all ages. Kids get the chance to see nature up close and ask big questions. Families can spend time together outdoors. Visitors can learn about the plants, animals, and ecosystems that make this area unique. Those moments matter, and they are possible because people in our community choose to support Woodland Dunes.

The work extends well beyond the boundaries of the nature center. Healthy natural areas provide habitat for plants and animals and create opportunities for recreation and reflection. As a result, people develop a stronger connection to the world around them. For young people especially, time spent outdoors can spark curiosity and a lifelong appreciation for conservation. I am reminded of this every day when I encounter one of our young interns. They were exposed to places like Woodland Dunes as kids and are now seeking to join the cause with passion and intelligence.

Keeping these experiences available takes a mammoth effort of ongoing care.

The contributions that come across my desk, large or small, represent a shared belief that these spaces matter. Your support helps Woodland Dunes remain a vibrant community resource that responds to the needs of the land through programs, and the visitors we serve. It is an investment in both the present and the future health of our local environment right here along the coast of this amazing lake.

This year, heiknbrew is happening on September 11th from 5-9 pm and will be our only major fundraiser. We would love to see everyone there. It's anopportunity to get together, enjoy good friends, and good food and music while supporting a place that has meant so much to so many of us over the past 52 years.

Currently, our development committee is working on future events and new ways for people to get involved. There is plenty to look forward to, but heiknbrew will be especially important this year. Attending the event, bringing a friend, sharing it with others, or donating are all meaningful ways to show support.

No matter how you choose to participate, it makes a difference. A gift of any size helps Woodland Dunes continue its work and reminds us that our community values the outdoors, environmental education, and the natural spaces we all share.

I believe in my heart that Woodland Dunes belongs to everyone who has found joy, curiosity, or a little peace on its trails. With your continued support, we can keep that spirit going for years to come.

To learn more about, heiknbrew, upcoming programs, and ways to support our work, please visit woodlanddunes.org or reach out to me at: jasonp@woodlanddunes.org.

By Jason Prigge, Development Director

NATURE CORNER

Robin by Kennedy Zittel

We documented 93 bird species across the preserve during our summer bird survey season (June 10 - July 15) this year, an increase from last summer's 86 species.

During the spring survey season, I find myself having to rely more on bird calls rather than sight, as the birds flutter through the vegetation singing to claim territories and attract mates. During the summer season however, birds are quieter, and I find myself enjoying identifying birds by sight instead. It seemed that regardless of what habitat I was in, I was able to enjoy a wide variety of colors from our summertime feathered neighbors.

The flashy reds of the Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and even a Red-headed Woodpecker were welcome pops of color amongst the tree leaves this summer. Oranges and yellows were common sights along many of our trails, as American Robins and Baltimore Orioles feasted on fruit while American Goldfinches, Northern Yellow Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats flashed their cheery yellow feathers amongst the shrubs. Greens are harder to come by, and certainly harder to see amongst the leaves, however, the shiny green feathers of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird regularly danced around the Dorothy R. Star Butterfly Garden. Indigo Buntings, Tree Swallows, and Eastern Bluebirds were blue against blue as they were seen flying against the sky catching the bountiful summer insects. Purple Martins offered a rare glimpse of purple in our bird world. I could go on and on, as there are certainly many beautiful birds to see here in the summer. But we shouldn't forget about the less colorful and more camouflaged birds either. With the beautiful stripes of the Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush or the spots of the Northern Flicker and Wood Thrush offering fun patterns to try and find in the forest. Additional exciting finds this summer include a Henslow's Sparrow in one of the prairies and a pair of Black-billed Cuckoos that seemed to take residence in the marsh throughout the summer. Below is a list of the species we documented during the summer bird survey season.

By Kennedy Zittel, Naturalist

*Note: Incidental Sightings during the survey season are marked with an asterisk **

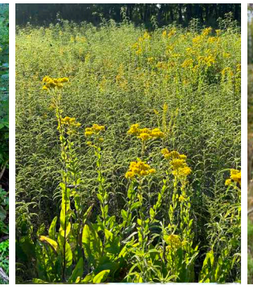
- Alder Flycatcher
- American Crow
- American Goldfinch
- American Kestrel
- American Redstart
- American Robin
- American Woodcock*
- Bald Eagle
- Baltimore Oriole
- Barn Swallow
- Belted Kingfisher
- Black-and-White Warbler
- Black-billed Cuckoo
- Black-capped Chickadee
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Blue Jay
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- Blue-winged Warbler
- Bobolink*
- Brown Creeper
- Brown Thrasher
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Canada Goose
- Canada Warbler
- Cedar Waxwing
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Chimney Swift
- Clay-colored Sparrow
- Cliff Swallow
- Common Grackle
- Common Yellowthroat
- Downy Woodpecker
- Eastern Bluebird
- Eastern Kingbird
- Eastern Meadowlark
- Eastern Phoebe
- Eastern Towhee
- Eastern Wood-Pewee
- European Starling
- Field Sparrow
- Grasshopper Sparrow
- Gray Catbird
- Great Blue Heron
- Great Crested Flycatcher
- Green Heron
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Henslow's Sparrow*
- Horned Lark*
- House Finch
- House Sparrow
- Indigo Bunting
- Killdeer
- Mallard
- Marsh Wren
- Mourning Dove
- Mourning Warbler
- Northern Cardinal
- Northern Flicker
- Northern House Wren
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow
- Northern Waterthrush
- Northern Yellow Warbler
- Osprey
- Ovenbird
- Pileated Woodpecker*
- Pine Warbler
- Purple Martin
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Red-eyed Vireo
- Red-headed Woodpecker
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Ring-billed Gull
- Rock Pigeon
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- Sandhill Crane
- Scarlet Tanager
- Sedge Wren
- Song Sparrow
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Swamp Sparrow
- Tree Swallow
- Turkey Vulture
- Veery
- White-breasted Nuthatch
- White-throated Sparrow
- Wild Turkey
- Willow Flycatcher
- Wood Thrush
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

THE DOROTHY R. STAR *Butterfly & Bee Garden*

All photos by Max Kornetzke

Riddell's goldenrod
(Oligoneuron riddellii)

Round leaf goldenrod
(Solidago patula)



Stiff goldenrod
(Oligoneuron rigidum)

Hairy goldenrod
(Solidago hispida)

Grass-leaved goldenrod
(Euthamia graminifolia)

Showy goldenrod
(Solidago speciosa)

Goldenrod is ubiquitous throughout fall. Most roadsides, rights-of-way, and old fields are full of the most common species. Canada goldenrod *(Solidago canadensis)* and tall goldenrod *(Solidago altissima)* are seemingly everywhere. Did you know, though, that there are 24 species of goldenrod native to Wisconsin?

These 24 species are spread across three genera: Solidago, Oligoneuron and Euthamia. The diversity of species creates a large flowering period. The first bloomer, early goldenrod *(Solidago juncea)*, starts flowering in late June, while our last bloomer, showy goldenrod *(Solidago speciosa)* opens from September through October, with the latest blooms sometimes holding on into early November.

Goldenrod species, as their names imply, are generally a bright, sunshine yellow. There are, however, two species of white goldenrod native to Wisconsin: upland white goldenrod *(Oligoneuron album)* and the uncommon silverrod *(Solidago bicolor)*. They also come in different shapes and sizes. Round-leaf goldenrod *(Solidago patula)* and elm-leaf goldenrod *(Solidago ulmifolia)* both have distinct, branched and airy inflorescences. Zig-zag goldenrod *(Solidago flexicaulis)* has a stem that zig-zags between the alternating leaves with flower buds emerging from the upper leaf axil. Blue-stem goldenrod *(Solidago caesia)*, a state endangered species, has waxy blue stems, forms loose clumps and has small bunches of yellow flowers that emerge from upper leaf axils.

Some species are uncommon habitat specialists: Ohio goldenrod *(Oligoneuron ohioensis)* naturally occurs in fens or wet prairies with alkaline soils; cliff goldenrod *(Solidago sciaphila)* grows on the dry cliffs of the Driftless region; and sand dune goldenrod *(Solidago simplex var. gillmanii)*, a state threatened species, is only found on the dunes of Door County.
From dry, exposed rocky soils to inundated, mucky wetlands there really is a goldenrod for every situation.

Unfortunately, the myth that goldenrod causes seasonal allergies persists. This myth blossoms from the fact that our most common goldenrod species are very abundant and obvious with their bright yellow flowers, flower at the same time as the true culprits: ragweeds. Ragweeds *(Ambrosia species)* are another group of abundant native, annual and perennial wildflowers that often grow in heavily disturbed soils like farm field edges, rights-of-way and sides of roads, often alongside goldenrod. The smaller species are generally inconspicuous with their green flowers that produce copious amounts of light pollen that blows in the wind. Conversely, goldenrods have heavier pollen that requires insect pollination to move from plant to plant.

Goldenrods are some of the most ecologically important herbaceous plants of the growing season. Goldenrods are host plants for well over 100 butterfly and moth species. They also serve as host plants for a myriad of other insects, like the iconic goldenrod gall fly *(Eurosta solidaginis)* which forms spherical galls on the stems of certain Solidago species. These plants also produce large quantities of sticky pollen and nectar that support a wide variety of bees, beetles, wasps, butterflies and moths. They are a group of marvelous, beautiful keystone plants which offer so much to both wildlife and humans alike.

For those interested in adding one of these ecological powerhouses to their garden, but maybe want species that will play well with other plants in a smaller setting, try these:

For dry to medium soils in full sun:
stiff goldenrod *(Oligoneuron rigidum)*,
showy goldenrod *(Solidago speciosa)*,
gray goldenrod *(Solidago nemoralis)*,
upland white goldenrod *(Oligoneuron album)*.

For medium to wet soils in full sun:
Riddell's goldenrod *(Oligoneuron riddellii)*,
Ohio goldenrod *(Oligoneuron ohioensis)*,
bog goldenrod *(Solidago uliginosa)*.

For medium moisture soils in full to art shade:
zig-zag goldenrod *(Solidago flexicaulis)*,
blue-stem goldenrod *(Solidago caesia)*.

- Max Kornetzke, Butterfly Garden Coordinator

UPCOMING EVENTS

Unless otherwise stated, registration is required for all programs. Please note registration deadlines and program location. To register, email Jess at jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org or call 920-793-4007.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Wild Families

10:00-11:00 am | Members: $3/child | Non-members: $4/child

Wild Families is a program for families to explore various nature topics through hands-on activities, crafts, games, and hikes. This program is best for ages 6-12 years. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Some portions of this program will be led by staff while others will be for families to explore on their own. Dress for the weather - a majority of the program will take place outdoors. Registration is required by the Monday before each session, space is limited.

Saturday, September 5th: Magnificent Monarchs

Learn about the migration journey monarch butterflies take each fall and the challenges they may face along the way. Look for monarchs in the gardens near the Nature Center and help us tag one (weather conditions permitting).

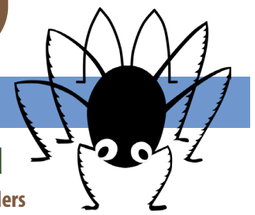
Saturday, October 24th: "Creepy" Crawly Critters

Learn more about the "creepy" crawly critters that call Woodland Dunes home on a short, guided walk and through hands-on activities. Explore who lives under a log and learn why slugs are so slimy. . . while making your own!

Saturday, November 7th: Fall Family Hike

Let's go on a hike on Blazing Star Trail! Bring a backpack with an extra layer, water bottle and enjoy a family-friendly hike. We will use binoculars and explore this beautiful part of the preserve. Wear tennis shoes/hiking shoes and be prepared for slightly uneven ground. Hike is 0.75 miles.

Raising a Wild Child



Thursday, September 10th: Spiders
Thursday, October 8th: Fall Leaves
Thursday, November 12th: Nature's Textures
10:45am-Noon
Members: $2/child | Non-members: $3/child

Experience the wonders of nature with your 2-5 year old through nature hikes, play and guided activities. Help your child notice the natural world and ignite their curiosity! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dress for the weather, the majority of the program takes place outdoors. Registration required by the Monday before each session, space is limited.

Enchanted Forest

Saturday, October 3rd
4:30-7:30 pm
Members: $5/person
Non-Members: $7/person
Children 3 and under, free

Journey along a candlelit trail and meet some of Mother Nature's misunderstood (costumed) wildlife and learn why they are important in nature. This is an educational evening, not a scary one. Non-scary costumes and warm clothes are encouraged. Registration required and opens Monday, September 14th. Space is limited, group sizes are kept small. Timeslots start at 4:30 pm and are offered every 10 minutes. Call or email early to reserve a timeslot as this event sells out!

PROGRAMS FOR EVERYONE

Fall Star Parties

Saturday, September 19th: 8:30-9:30 pm
Saturday, October 17th: 7:30-8:30 pm
Saturday, November 7th: 7:00-8:00 pm

Our Sky Shed now offers electronically assisted astronomy (EAA) so everyone can see the night sky on a screen mounted on the wall. View night sky constellations and other celestial objects with astronomers Al and Ben through telescopes and EAA. Celebrate National Observe the Moon Night at the September star party and enjoy viewing the moon. Programs are weather and sky conditions permitting and take place outside the Nature Center. Registration required by the Thursday before each session. Sponsored by Dufek Foundation

SPECIAL EVENT

Exploring Wisconsin's Diverse Landscapes: From Glaciers to Great Lakes

Saturday, October 24th
1:00-2:00pm | Free

From the jaw-dropping Driftless Area and dramatic Niagara Escarpment to vast waterways and stunning glacial lakes, Wisconsin surprises residents and visitors alike with its diverse landscapes. Join local author, Lily Comp, as she explores the parks, overlooks, and hiking trails featured in her new book, Scenic Natural Wonders of Wisconsin, that showcase the unique geologic forces shaping the state. Signed copies of Scenic Natural Wonders of Wisconsin will be available for purchase after the event. Register by Thursday, October 22nd.

ADULT LEARNING SERIES

All programs in this series have a sliding scale fee of $3-$10 per person. This will be collected at check-in, cash is preferred. Supported by Dufek Foundation.

Native Seed Collection

Thursday, September 24th | 9:30 am-Noon

Join our Land Manager for a brief presentation on native seed collection then head outside to the prairie and learn how to identify, collect and process some of the native prairie species. Learn about the different kinds of stratification requirements native seeds might have and how to best grow them into young plants for your own native pollinator garden. Space is limited, bring garden gloves (some available to borrow). Registration required by Monday, September 21st.

Wicked Plants of Wisconsin

Wednesday, October 28th | 10:00-11:00 am

Learn about the dark, twisted, creepy, and downright fascinating side of plants in Wisconsin! Plants may seem passive, but they have evolved unique and terrifying adaptations that help them survive. From digesting live prey to giving nasty burns, learn about all the creepy cool evolutionary advantages of Wisconsin plants. Register by Monday, October 26th.

Seeds of Resilience: Indigenous Stewardship and Wild Rice Restoration

Saturday, November 14th | 9:00-11:30 am

Join us for a special program that will connect the ecological science and cultural knowledge of wild rice, or manoomin. Learn from Lac du Flambeau tribal member Stephanie Thompson as she shares the historical, cultural, and spiritual significance of manoomin from an Ojibwe perspective, along with traditional teachings, respectful harvesting practices, and the enduring relationship between Ojibwe people and wild rice. Additionally, Amy Carrozzino-Lyon, restoration scientist and Titus Seilheimer, fisheries biologist, will discuss the ecological importance of wild rice and local restoration projects. Afterwards, everyone is invited to help us plant wild rice seed along the boardwalk and in the marsh (weather conditions permitting). Register by Thursday, November 12th.

Dunes' Digest: A Lunch and Learn Series

Noon-1:00 pm

All programs in this series have a sliding scale fee of $3-$10 per person. This will be collected at check-in, cash is preferred. Join other nature enthusiasts for an hour of nature knowledge. This series will run November-April and offer a different topic and presenter each month. Bring your own lunch and we will provide coffee, tea, water and a sweet treat. Registration is required by the Monday before each program.

Wednesday, November 18th

Ecological Forestry What is it and why it is important? Join WI DNR Forest Ecologist and Silviculturist, Brad Hutnik, to learn more about this approach to forest management and its implications in restoration projects.

GUIDED WALKS

Members: Free
Non-members: Sliding scale $3-$10/person

Join a staff member on a guided hike along one of our trails. Some hikes will have a specific topic while others will be about whatever nature presents to us that day. Registration is required no later than the Monday before the hike takes place. Please note space is limited and some hikes fill early. Meeting locations vary depending on conditions. Hikes will be under a mile long unless specified.

Amazing Monarchs

Thursday, September 10th – 10:00 am

Join staff for a walk down Willow Trail as we talk about the amazing monarch and their migration!

Full Moon Seed Hike

Saturday, September 26th - 6:15 pm

Join staff and enjoy the evening sunset and full moon rise against fall colors, all while learning about and helping collect native seeds for habitat enhancement projects at Woodland Dunes. Trail TBD.

Fall Phenology Hike

Thursday, October 1st - 9:00 am

Learn about what the flora and fauna of Woodland Dunes does during the fall, what's blooming, who is migrating, and more as we explore one of the trails. Trail TBD.

Fantastic Bats

Friday, October 16th - 10:00 am

Celebrate Bat Appreciation Month by learning more about bats. Test your bat knowledge through a trivia game as we walk one of the trails. Trail TBD.

Lichen & Moss Hunt

Friday, November 6th - 2:00pm

Learn about the importance of moss and lichen as we hike one of our favorite trails. Trail TBD.

National Take A Hike Day

Tuesday, November 17th -

Celebrate National Take A Hike Day with a guided walk along one of our trails. Trail TBD.

WOODLAND DUNES' SUMMER INTERNS

Pictured L to R: Jaden Johnson, Kassidy Beseler, Aidan Montgomery, Raymie Miller

Aidan Montgomery

Although coming from Akron, Ohio, Woodland Dunes has always been familiar to me. I visited Two Rivers countless times as a kid to see my grandparents, and Woodland Dunes was always on the "to-do list". Had you told five-year-old Aidan that 17 years later he would one day be working at Woodland Dunes, I don't know if he would have believed you! This summer, I've had the opportunity to observe bird bandings, perform monthly water quality tests, participate in wildlife surveys, create and lead activities and programs for all ages, and learn from Jess and Kennedy, who have been instrumental to my success this summer.

My goals for this summer were to further develop my skills in program creation, learn more about the methodology of outdoor education, and receive consistent feedback from Jess and Kennedy.
To support this goal, I was given the responsibility of planning and leading two Little Wings Play Days, a guided walk, and multiple components of each summer camp, as well as designing new activities for the education room and creating signs for a self-guided walk. After this position, I feel more confident in my ability to design and lead outdoor education experiences.
I am so grateful for the opportunities given to me by the Woodland Dunes staff and volunteers!

Jaden Johnson

My time here at Woodland Dunes has been such an enriching process to be a part of. I have quite enjoyed a variety of experiences here, from bird banding and bat surveys, to monitoring water quality on the newly restored Forget-Me-Not Creek through the citizen science project Water Action Volunteers (WAV).
I also appreciate our typical job duties of invasive species removal and native species planting. As a part of the group, I love getting to work and live with my coworkers as we learn about and from each other. One of the most memorable adventures here has been working on the deer exclosure located on the Bugler Preserve. Hauling 4x4s out and augering them into the ground is very tough but rewarding work. Having recently graduated from University of Wisconsin-Green Bay with a degree in Environmental Science, I am hoping to use the skills and experiences that I gained this summer alongside my degree to pursue a career, and possibly a secondary degree, in the natural sciences, whether it be through land restoration, conservation, education or other horticultural-based positions.

Kassidy Beseler

This summer at Woodland Dunes has been an amazing experience for me as I journey through obtaining my degree in Environmental Science at University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. I was unsure of my plant identification skills when starting this job, but after the first week I had already learned so many different plant species. The staff at Woodland Dunes Nature Center are incredibly kind and have helped me feel welcomed and confident in my position as a Habitat Restoration Intern. It has been such a fulfilling experience to be able to actively restore a variety of habitats such as wetlands, forests, and prairies. It has been amazing learning how to manage and remove problematic invasive species like glossy buckthorn, common buckthorn, non-native honeysuckle, and Japanese barberry, while also encouraging native plant diversity and colonization by transplanting native species.
I participated in a multitude of biomonitoring and surveys to collect data and determine how restoration is affecting animals. We were lucky to experience different types of bird banding, bumble bee monitoring, and aquatic macroinvertebrate surveys with Water Action Volunteers (WAV). I have learned so much about habitat management, conservation, and restoration from this internship that will help me as I continue to work in the natural sciences.

Raymie Miller

I have enjoyed the opportunity to be a habitat restoration intern here at Woodland Dunes immensely. I absolutely love all of this type of work; invasive species removal, tree planting, and other habitat activities really help me feel like I'm making a positive difference in the world. I've also enjoyed many activities such as bird banding as well as surveying plant and animal species. It's so rewarding to get outside and see everything that habitat work is doing. I'm from Appleton, so this isn't far away from home for me, but it is far enough away that the plant and animal communities feel distinctly different from home. After this summer, I have one semester left at UW-Stevens Point. After that, I hope to go into the field of ecological restoration and management somewhere, but I am not sure where yet. I look forward to it! In the meantime, I will be spending time birding every day, as I always do.

Thank You!

*Donations are recognized on **a quarterly basis**. If you don't see your donation on here, it missed the cutoff and will be in the next issue. Thank you.*

Corporate Members

To become a corporate member and support our mission please contact:

Jason Prigge, Development Director
email:jasonp@woodlanddunes.org

GOLD

BankFirst

Kerry | Red Arrow

Fricke Printing Service

Vagabond Creative Studio

SILVER

Crafts Inc

Shoto Conservation Club Inc. — Shoto, Wisconsin

Sauve's Auto

BRONZE

Briess Malt & Ingredients Co.

Shoreline Hometown Credit Union

COPPER

Lakeside Foods Est 1887

Inkind Tapped on the Lakeshore
Regel Construction

Memoriams/Honorariums

In Memory of Lynda Anhalt
Mark and Terese Jaeger

In Memory of Geri Berkovitz
Lyn Brouchoud
Mary and Terry Berkovitz
Cathy Coenen
John Kay and Judy Dolan
Margaret Fencl
Josh and Linda Jelinek
Dennis and Monica Klosinski
Tina and Jeff Kvitek
Bill and Brenda Landwehr
Sandy Neveu
Tom and Lucy Seidl
Kris and Pete Tarnowski
Karen Tisler
Gary and Tori Zipperer

In Memory of Brian Geerdts
David and Laura Griffin

In Honor of Annette Henry
Gerald Henry

Endowment Donations

Dolly McNulty

General Donations

Advocate Aurora
Barry and Sandy Bast
Dale Drewek
James and Susan Knorr
Ruth Meyer
Tamara Oertel
Sempra
Jill Surfus

Estate and Foundations

Estate of Allen Kendall Loughead

Inkind Donations

Brian Thompson

Butterfly Garden

Jason and Tina Prigge

Little Wings Play Area Donations

Marcia Flaherty
Vicki Gilbert
Sherry Hirssig
Alan and Cheryl Petrashek
Anne Schuette

Bobolink Membership

Scott Behringer
Larry and Mary Bergner
Leonard and Shirley Coombs
Appie Geraldson
Mark and Terese Jaeger
Bonnie Jost
Ken and Kathy Kuecker
Robert LeClair
Amy Mullins
Anthony Munz
James and Amy Steffen
Holly Suszek
Jared Trainor
Michael Tyeplanor
David and Suzanne Wiesner

Whippoorwill Membership

Justin and Keri Gerlach

Tanager Membership

Stephanie Hallisy
Scott Wichlacz

Bald Eagle Membership

Lee and Eileen Kummer

L to R: Staff and Interns: Kennedy, Zittel, Jaden Johnson, Kassidy Beseler, Sue Crowley, Raymie Miller, & Max Kornetzke; Supporters & Volunteers: Greg Scheuer, Doris Magyar, Marisol Mittnacct, Judy Bull, Merrie Star, and Jenene Garey.

Special Visit & Thank You Supporters of the Dorothy R. Star Butterfly and Bee Garden

On Friday, July 24, 2026 we had a visit from Merrie Star and Greg Scheuer, who annually support the funding for our beautiful garden. In addition, long-time volunteers stopped in to have some snacks and reminisce. We are grateful for all the ways this accessible space is supported by dedicated volunteers. Everyone's positive contributions enable the garden to bloom and grow for all to enjoy-including the bees and butterflies!

How about those White Pelicans?

Many people have asked me about the large numbers of American White Pelicans *(Pelecanus erythrorhynchos)* that have been seen in recent months along the Lake Michigan shoreline from Two Rivers to Manitowoc and beyond. Although not an entirely new phenomenon, they have been notably abundant and widespread this year.

This bird is a striking sight, with its huge size, bright white plumage and almost comically large, yellow-orange bill. They are even more impressive in the air, soaring in coordinated flocks, their white plumage flashing in the sunlight as they wheel overhead. Many of us grew up without ever seeing this bird, but now want to know more about how and when they became such a common sight.

The American White Pelican is one of eight species of Pelican worldwide and two in North America, the other species being the Brown Pelican *(Pelecanus occidentalis)*. The species we are seeing is all white with black wingtips, and a yellow-orange bill and legs. They have a wingspan of eight to nine and a half feet, and average nine to 17 pounds in weight. Pelicans on average live for 15 years and up to 26 years, though they do not breed until they are three to five years of age, hence a significant percentage of the population are non-breeders.

One notable and unique feature of this species is an upright, disc-shaped growth approximately two to three inches in diameter arising on the top of the beak. This structure appears in early spring each year in adults. Its function is unknown, but it appears to be used in courtship and breeding behavior. The structure tends to be larger in males and is lost in late summer before growing again the next year.

The species nests on the ground in colonies, usually on islands to escape ground predators. They lay two eggs; both members of the pair share incubation duties. Their diet consists primarily of forage fish, which they capture from the surface by dipping their bill in shallow water. Groups of birds will often feed cooperatively, at times through coordinated and synchronized movements as they pursue schools of fish in shallow water. Birds may commonly travel 30-60 miles from the nesting colony in foraging flights.

The American White Pelican is distributed across the northern plains of the United States and prairie provinces of Canada, wintering in the southern United States to the Gulf of Mexico coast. Following historic declines, the species has been increasing continent-wide since the 1990s. In Wisconsin, they have been uncommon but regular through historic times, though until recently there was never any confirmed breeding.

The first documented nesting attempt was at Green Bay in 1994, and at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge beginning in 2000. Since then the species has expanded rapidly, with a statewide survey in 2013 documenting more than 4,000 pairs. A 2025 survey showed more than 8,000 nests at colony sites in Brown, Dodge, Door and Winnebago Counties, with more than 4,000 nests at Cat Island in lower Green Bay.

American White Pelicans have been found regularly in the Manitowoc area for the past 25 years, though usually in low numbers and for short periods. Beginning about ten years ago, larger numbers began to be seen, most notably during late May to mid-June. This period coincides with the time of peak alewife abundance, when this common

Lake Michigan forage fish enters nearshore and tributary waters spawn. Studies of nesting pelicans in Green Bay have documented that birds nesting at Cat Island do travel to the Lake Michigan shore on feeding flights, so some of the birds we see here are definitely foraging birds from that colony.

Besides the foraging birds from Cat Island, there have often been large aggregations of birds loafing at the Manitowoc Impoundment. I believe that many of these birds are sub-adults and non-breeders, and localize here during the periods when food is abundant. This site is a convenient location near the lakeshore, and offers a safe place to gather with low levels of human disturbance.

As an active birder, I am used to seeing American White Pelicans along the Lake Michigan shoreline, but even so, this year they were strikingly numerous and widespread. It appears that the spawning alewives that birds were gorging on were either more abundant than normal or present for longer periods than in past years. I live in Two Rivers, and on numerous occasions in early to mid-June, I observed 200 or more birds in the lower harbor. On one occasion, I made an effort to count the number of pelicans in the lower East Twin and West Twin Rivers within a mile of the river mouth and was able to count at least 620.

In answer to the questions as to why the species has been so noticeably abundant this year, it appears to be tied to an increasing population and an abundant seasonal food resource. I expect that this species will remain a common sight along the Lake Michigan shore for the immediate future, at least seasonally.

By Joel Trick, Member of the Board of Directors

Renew your Dunes' Defender Membership

On behalf of the Woodland Dunes staff and board members, we would like to express our deep gratitude for your continued membership and support. We are 356 members strong and are committed to providing engaging nature programming and enhancing the habitat for nature's beings now and into the future.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

LEVELS	ANNUAL AMOUNT	MONTHLY AMOUNT
☐ Bobolink	$50.00	$4.17
☐ Cardinal	$120.00	$10.00
☐ Whippoorwill	$240.00	$20.00
☐ Tanager	$480.00	$40.00
☐ Golden Plover	$1200.00	$100.00
☐ Sandhill Crane	$2400.00	$200.00
☐ Saw-whet Owl	$4800.00	$400.00
☐ Bald Eagle	$6000.00	$500.00

Please check or circle the membership level you wish to support.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER ***For Monthly Donor Installments***

☐ Transfer $_____ from my account each month
Please make my withdrawal on the ☐ 1st or ☐ 15th of the month.

☐ I wish to start/change Electronic Funds Transfers. **I have enclosed a voided check (required).** I understand the amount indicated will be withdrawn automatically from my account each month until I notify Woodland Dunes Nature Center to stop.

Please send this form and your tax-deductible membership to Woodland Dunes, PO Box 486, Two Rivers, WI 54241-0486.

WOODLAND DUNES
NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE

PO Box 486 I Two Rivers, WI 54241-0486

Conservation
Environmental Education
Outdoor Recreation

REGISTER NOW!