

The Cherokee Marsh News

The newsletter of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh

Enjoy a Butterfly Bonanza at Our Annual Meeting

Paul Noeldner and Jan Axelson

Mark your calendar for our annual member meeting, Saturday, January 18, 2014, 10 am – noon. We're trying out a new, larger location this year, the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr.

Do you know a Monarch butterfly when you see one? Maybe you can even tell a Swallowtail from a Fritillary. But did you know that our area has more than 160 unique species of butterflies?

Our featured guest will be Northside resident Dr. Douglas Buege, President of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association. Dr. Buege will introduce a rainbow of over thirty of our regular butterfly species as well as some rare and endangered species we need to protect in places like Cherokee Marsh. Dr. Buege will also show what you need to become an amateur butterflyer. Come and learn more about these magicians of the air!

Join us for this free, fun, and informative presentation about Wisconsin's bonanza of butterflies. Before the presentation, we'll hold a short business meeting to elect directors for 2014-2015. If you need further enticement to attend, we'll have refreshments and our popular door prizes donated by local businesses. Everyone, member and non-member, is welcome to attend.



The common buckeye is one of many butterflies you can see in Cherokee Marsh. Photo by Douglas Buege.

Annual Member Meeting

Saturday, January 18

10:00 – 10:30 am—member meeting: annual report and elect directors for 2014-2015.

10:30 – 11:30 am—Enjoy a Butterfly Bonanza with Dr. Douglas Buege

11:30 – 11:45 am—Door prizes and social hour

**Warner Park Community Recreation Center
1625 Northport Drive, Madison**



Dr. Douglas Buege will share stories about our local butterflies. Photo by Douglas Buege.

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Carp Harvested from Cherokee Marsh

Jan Axelson

Among the fish that reside in the upper Yahara River at Cherokee Marsh are catfish, northern pike, bluegill...and common carp. The carp are large, non-native, bottom-feeding fish, typically 1–2 ft in length and 10–20 lbs though they can grow much bigger.

Large populations of carp can damage aquatic ecosystems such as the upper Yahara River. As the carp root around feeding, they stir up phosphorus-laden sediment that muddies the water, prevents the establishment of desirable aquatic plants, and contributes to algae blooms. During spawning in spring and summer, the fish thrash around and dislodge shoreline vegetation.

Kurt Welke, Dane County Fisheries Manager for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), reported at our 2011 annual meeting how the DNR radio-tagged twenty carp from Cherokee Lake to find out where the carp go in winter. The answer: in late December, every one of the tagged carp remained in Cherokee Lake.

If the carp are gathering in Cherokee Lake, perhaps a harvest at that location can help control the numbers. The first step is to estimate the total population.

This November, a fishing crew hired by the DNR used large nets to round up a mass of carp in Cherokee Lake. A DNR crew tagged 2019 fish by clipping their fins, then returned the tagged fish to the water.

Late in the month and just before the lake froze over, the fishermen returned and repeated the capture. In this second round, the DNR crew recorded the numbers of tagged and untagged fish and will use the numbers to estimate the total carp population in the lake. The fish captured in the second round were trucked to a fish processor in New York.

The carp study is an in-house DNR project with support from Dane County as a cooperator. Stay tuned for updates on this long-awaited research!



Fisherman set nets to capture the carp in the first round of the study..



DNR staff tag the captured carp by clipping their fins.



When it was time to harvest the carp in the second round, the lake had frozen.



The carp were loaded onto a truck to be taken to market.

Photos by Jan Axelson

It's Time to Renew Your Membership — Plus a Special Request

Show your support for Cherokee Marsh and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh by renewing your membership this December.

Your member dues provide resources to help protect, preserve, and restore Dane County's largest wetland. And just as important, your membership helps to demonstrate public support for protecting the marsh.

Our Special Request

This year, we're asking all members to consider including a donation to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund with your member renewal. Thanks to you, our members, we've raised an impressive **\$7365** since we established the fund in April. As we've reported, one year after reaching \$10,000, the fund will begin paying dividends to support conservation at Cherokee Marsh. The dividends will grow as the fund grows, providing a permanent source of funding for the marsh.

We've made donating as easy as possible. On the renewal form, check the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund box and indicate the amount of your contribution. You don't need to write a separate check.

Or renew and donate online at CherokeeMarsh.org. Pay online with your PayPal account or use a credit card. You don't have to be a PayPal member to pay online.

If you contribute at least \$100 to the fund by December 31, you'll be recognized as a Founding Donors in our newsletter and at the annual meeting.

Our goal is to have 50% of our members contribute to the fund, and we're well on our way with 29% of members (and some non-members too!) contributing thus far.

Is My Membership Up for Renewal?

All memberships expire on December 31. If you joined the Friends after June 30, 2013, your membership is paid through December 31, 2014. For everyone else, it's time to renew. If you're not sure when you joined, contact us at info@CherokeeMarsh.org or 608-241-5828.

As a member, you'll receive our newsletter six times a year and will know that you're helping to protect and preserve a healthy Cherokee Marsh.

How to Renew

You can save us time and money by renewing now. Use the member renewal form on the last page of this newsletter or at CherokeeMarsh.org

A Friends Membership Is a Perfect Gift

If you know someone who loves Cherokee Marsh, consider giving them a gift membership to the Friends this holiday season or as a birthday gift.

DNR Land Manager Details Funding Needs

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources declared 325 acres of Cherokee Marsh as a State Natural Area because it is an outstanding example of a native wetland community and provides critical habitat for rare species.

Nate Fayram, State Natural Areas Biologist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, serves as the land manager for the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area.

Here is what Nate has to say about the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund:

In my role at the DNR as land manager for Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area, and from my previous work on the State Natural Areas crew, I know from direct experience that preserving and maintaining the high quality wetland communities in Cherokee Marsh requires active management.

Frequent prescribed burns and removal of aggressive shrubs and invasive species are essential to allow native wetland flowers, grasses, and sedges to grow and thrive. Controlling brush and tree encroachment at Cherokee Marsh with prescribed fire and other techniques will expand the open grassland habitat needed by birds such as Sedge Wrens in the summer, and Short-eared Owls in the winter. These management activities cost over \$12,000 per year for materials, equipment, and staffing.

With public funding for restoration decreasing, your donation to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund can help meet the need for a permanent source of funding to protect and preserve the Cherokee Marsh wetlands we know and love.

What We Did in 2013

Jan Axelson

2013 was another busy year for the Friends. Our activities included restoring, advocating, educating, and promoting enjoyment of Cherokee Marsh.

Restoring

Perhaps the biggest project in our group's history has been this year's establishing and raising money for the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund. Since spring, we've raised over \$7000 to provide a permanent source of funding to support the management, protection, conservation, restoration and appreciation of Cherokee Marsh.

We also continued to co-sponsor, promote, and volunteer in a variety of fieldwork projects.

In the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area (SNA), in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, we removed invasive purple loosestrife, and along with volunteers recruited by Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), we continued working to remove invasive giant reed grass (phragmites) from high-quality wetland areas in the SNA.

We pulled garlic mustard and scattered seeds in restored areas in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, collected and planted prairie seeds and gathered and burned brush at Yahara Heights County Park, and planted wetland plants along the shorelines of the Wheeler Rd stormwater ponds.

Thanks to our partners, Madison Area Weed Warriors, Madison Parks, and Dane County Parks, for sponsoring activities this year. Also thanks to the volunteers from American Family Insurance who helped out at Yahara Heights.

We also cleaned up the Yahara River shoreline as part of Dane County's Take a Stake in our Waters initiative.

Advocating

We held an Earth Day Celebration to show our appreciation for 363 acres added to Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park since 2008.

In a statement to the Madison Board of Park Commissioners, we supported Madison Parks' plans for restoration activities in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park.

We advocated for a Community Engagement Coordinator in the Dane County budget to coordinate volunteers for Dane County waters.

To support other groups whose activities benefit Cherokee Marsh, we continued our organizational membership in the Clean Lakes Alliance, Natural Heritage Land Trust, and the River Alliance of Wisconsin. The Friends are a member of the Community Board of the Clean Lakes Alliance.

We participated in Dane County Watershed Gatherings and Northside Nonprofits meetings. We met with the Friends

of the Yahara Headwaters, who advocate for the Yahara River upstream from Cherokee Marsh.

Educating

With help from Madison Parks and a Dane County Environmental Council Community Partners grant, we updated the signboard at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's North Unit. As part of the project, Madison Parks created a new trail map for the North Unit, and the Friends commissioned a new Cherokee Marsh watershed map showing access points and canoe/kayak landings. The maps are also available on our website.

We contributed \$500 to support transportation for hands-on, outdoor, science education in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park through the Madison Area School District's Naturalist program.

We talked to many people at our tables at the Northside Farmers Market, Clean Lakes Festival, Northside Planning Council's 20th Anniversary Celebration, Isthmus Green Day, and Save our Lakes Summit.

We kept folks informed about what was happening in the marsh in our bi-monthly newsletter, Facebook page, website, and email group.

Enjoying

Our Marsh Madness! social event brought Friends members out to enjoy a lovely late summer evening at the Truax Longmire VFW Post 8483 on County HWY CV.

Throughout the year, we co-sponsored and helped promote tours in the marsh and on surrounding lands. The City of Madison's day-long Bird City Celebration included hayrides and a bird walk at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park. Other walks focused on birds, wildflowers, butterflies, bats, and the Wheeler Road stormwater ponds.

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Volunteers planted a prairie in a recently cleared area at Yahara Heights County Park. Photo by Jan Axelson.

2013

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There was a paddle tour and the first—and very popular—Cherokee Marsh candlelight ski event. We led the hikes for Madison Parks' Hayrides and Hikes event. Thanks to the many dedicated and knowledgeable tour leaders and our partners, Madison Audubon Society, Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association, and Madison Parks, for sponsoring events this year.

Our 2013 annual meeting featured a presentation on Wetland Bird Conservation in Wisconsin by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist Andy Paulios.

Know Your Director Candidates

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh Board of Directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating and managing the activities of our group. At the annual member meeting (see page 1), members elect directors for the coming two years.

The board usually meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm at the Lakeview Branch of the Madison Public Library, 2845 N. Sherman Ave. All meetings are open to members and the public. To confirm the time or request an agenda, or if you're interested in joining the board or helping out on a committee, contact Jan at info@CherokeeMarsh.org or 608-241-5828.

Half of the directors' terms end in even-numbered years and the other half end in odd-numbered years. Directors Timothy Baker, Janet Battista, Dana Erlandsen, Lesleigh Luttrell, and Justin Sargent are in the middle of their terms and thus aren't up for re-election.

Here are statements from the five announced candidates for five open positions in January's election. For terms that will end at our annual meeting in January, 2016:

Jan Axelson

I believe the Friends perform an important role as a voice for Cherokee Marsh. In the coming years, I want to continue to work to increase awareness of the beauty and importance of the marsh, to preserve and restore public lands in the marsh, and to protect the ecosystem in the face of development in the watershed. Since moving to Madison's North side 13 years ago, I've spent many hours walking, paddling, birding, and skiing on the marsh's public lands and waters. I enjoy using my skills as a writer and webmaster and also helping out "in the field" to benefit the marsh.

Thanks for Your Support and Participation

With your support in the coming year, we can continue and expand our activities to promote land protection, restoration, education, and enjoyment of Cherokee Marsh. If you have ideas for Friends activities or would like to help, we want to hear from you. Call, write, or attend one of our monthly meetings.

Paul Noeldner

From serving a number of years on the Madison Audubon Society board and continued involvement as membership and outreach coordinator, I have enjoyed numerous opportunities to volunteer and partner in effective ways with Friends of Cherokee and other local environmental groups. I hope to bring some of that broader environmental community experience, contacts and energy to the FOCM board.

My specific support for Cherokee Marsh includes testifying to local government in favor of watershed and ecosystem preservation at Cherokee Marsh and the recent wonderful additions to the protected area, establishing and monitoring the Bluebird trail and the new Kestrel Boxes, volunteering regularly with Russ Hefty and FOCM on Cherokee Marsh prairie restoration and invasives removal activities, and leading or helping with the northside Christmas Bird Count team, Big Birding Day team, the new Bird City Madison celebration in coordination with Madison Parks, FOCM, and other local partners, and ongoing birding, educational, citizen science and Bird City activities that help engage the public in supporting and enjoying Cherokee Marsh birds and wildlife.

My background and career in computers and in providing leadership with Madison Audubon website, membership, education and outreach goals will carry forward to help work on similar goals for FOCM. When my wife Barb and I regularly hike, ski, and paddle at Cherokee Marsh and look at all the progress and restored areas, and when I spend time with some wonderful folks who have helped make it possible and became close friends, it feels like going home. One of my favorite experiences was hiking a

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Candidates

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few years ago through the brambles and thickets trying to keep up with an elderly Maarit Threlfall, who at a much younger age worked on the original plant transect studies that helped establish Cherokee Marsh, as she pointed out some of the amazing biodiversity, hidden fens, and—more importantly—opportunities and challenges that remain. I will work hard to help protect it and advance this cause.

Muriel Simms

I helped co-found the Friends in 2005 along with other committed and dedicated neighbors. I have served as a Friends board member and occasionally as an officer for eight years. The Friends group feels that it has much work that needs to be done to preserve and protect Cherokee Marsh. I still want to be a part of these efforts.

Dick Walker

I have lived in Madison for over 45 years, on Lake Mendota for over 26 of those years and the last 7 years in the Cherokee Marsh area, albeit off the water. I have always been concerned about the health of the lakes of the area and know that they are affected greatly by the health of Cherokee Marsh and other sources of water north of the lakes and the cities around those lakes. I should like to continue to be a part of an organization whose primary interest is in the Marsh's well being, however that interest is expressed.

I feel that the Marsh and the areas surrounding it need to be protected against any further abuse and FOCM is one voice to be heard for its well being and long term survival.



Muskkrats have been busy building houses out of American lotus leaves on the upper Yahara River. Photo by Jan Axelson.

I became a printmaker, taking my first art classes shortly before retiring from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1995, where I served on the faculty for over 30 years.

What started as a way to become more knowledgeable about prints, which I had collected for many years, turned into a learning process of production and preservation. Still active today while serving on several boards and other volunteer activities.

Dorothy Wheeler

I have a lifelong interest in protecting the environment, I won my election to the county board in 2004 by emphasizing my desire to keeping our urban environment as clean as possible and I kept my promise to do just that.

My voting record as recorded by the Sierra Club was 100% on environmental issues. I still want to keep working on this important goal and I feel that being on the board of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh gives me the opportunity to continue to support a cleaner environment for the enjoyment of generations to come. I like helping to protect the habitats of the wildlife that live and thrive in the marsh as well as in the uplands adjacent to the marsh. I like knowing that protecting the marsh helps filter the water that goes into our lakes keeping them cleaner. All of the lakes in the Mendota chain need the marsh to protect their waters so the marsh is a treasure in our midst. I like feeling that I have a small role in protecting it.

Enjoy New Trails This Winter

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's South Unit has new trail loops to enjoy this winter. One loop, completed last year, circles the western stormwater pond and will be groomed for classic (striding) cross-country skiing. The second loop takes you past the eastern pond. This loop won't be groomed and is open for hiking and when snow-covered, skiing and snowshoeing.

Access the western loop from the front parking lot at the corner of Wheeler Rd. and School Rd. Access the eastern loop from Wheeler Rd. at Delaware Blvd.

In addition to these loops, the South Unit has over two miles of trails just west of the park's entrance. When conditions permit, these trails are groomed for classic skiing.

The trails in the Conservation Park's North Unit (6098 N. Sherman Ave.) and Mendota Unit (access from Westport Meadows Park, 4336 Beilfuss Dr.) are ungroomed and are open for hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing.

Events Calendar

Don't miss out on last-minute events that don't make it into this calendar. For the latest event information, *Like* us on Facebook, join our email group, or visit CherokeeMarsh.org.

If you want to be added to our email notification list for volunteer events, email info@cherokeemarsh.org.

Annual meeting + Enjoy a Butterfly Bonanza

Saturday, January 18, 10:00 am – noon

Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr.

See page 1 for details.

Snowshoe Walk

Saturday, February 1

Naturalist-led walk sponsored by the Natural Heritage Land Trust. Details and registration info at www.nhlt.org



Madison Parks conducted a prescribed burn in a portion of the South Unit of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park this fall. Photo by Jan Axelson.



Keep in touch!

"Like" our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh

Join our email group:

www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh

Environmental News Notes

Clean Lakes Alliance Releases Annual Report, Holds Mendota Freeze Contest

Check out the website of the Clean Lakes Alliance to view their annual report for 2012 and enter to win a prize by guessing when Lake Mendota will freeze this winter.

cleanlakesalliance.com

Volunteers Help Inventory City Parks

Michael Tews of Madison Commons reports how volunteers are helping inventory and restore natural areas in city parks including Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park.

Volunteers join city staff in inventory of city's natural spaces

tinyurl.com/volunteers-join-city-staff

Friends of Cherokee Marsh

PO Box 3390

Madison WI 53704

info@CherokeeMarsh.org

www.CherokeeMarsh.org

To protect, preserve, and restore the beauty, value, and health of the Cherokee Marsh and upper Yahara River watershed.

Directors

Jan Axelson (President)

Timothy Baker

Janet Battista (Vice President)

Dana Erlandsen

Lesleigh Luttrell (Treasurer)

Lydia Maurer

Paul Noeldner

Justin Sargent

Muriel Simms

Dick Walker

Dorothy Wheeler (Secretary)

Advisor

Don Hammes

Membership and Contribution Form

YES! I want to be a Friend of Cherokee Marsh.

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh are dedicated to protecting, preserving, and restoring the beauty, value, and health of Cherokee Marsh and the upper Yahara River watershed. Your contribution of time, talent, or funds will help preserve and restore the crucial wetland ecosystem of Cherokee Marsh.

Memberships are per calendar year. New memberships paid after June 30 are valid through the current and following year.

- Individual \$15 Osprey \$100
 Family \$25 Sandhill Crane \$250
 Mallard \$50 Great Blue Heron \$500
 Additional donation \$ _____
 Additional donation \$ _____ in honor of _____
 Additional donation \$ _____ in memory of _____

Here is my additional donation to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund.

- \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

Find out more about the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund at CherokeeMarsh.org/conserve

Name _____

Family member(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____ Second (family member) Email _____

Phone _____ Don't publicize my financial support.

I'm interested in helping with:

- Field work Publicity Tours Education Board/Committees

Other _____

Please mail this form and payment to:

Friends of Cherokee Marsh, PO Box 3390, Madison WI 53704

Thank you for joining us in our effort to protect this valuable resource!

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh is a Federal tax-exempt charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.