

# The Cherokee Marsh News

*The newsletter of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh*

## Creating an Endowment for Cherokee Marsh

*We were honored that the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF) of Wisconsin featured the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund in Bridges, their quarterly newsletter. Reprinted here with the NRF's permission is the article, from the Summer, 2013, issue.*

It's a step both simple yet at the same time very daunting: setting up an endowment for a place that matters deeply to an individual or group.

In 2005, people who care about Cherokee Marsh came together to advocate on behalf of the largest wetland in Dane County. By 2006, they had formed as the Friends of Cherokee Marsh. Now more than 115 members strong, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh advocate for land purchases, help local school districts by providing grants for field studies, cosponsor hikes and paddles so that others can learn about this special place, conduct workdays to help maintain the ecosystem, and coordinate with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the city, and the county — all of whom have management responsibilities.

Over time, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh realized that funding was an urgent issue, particularly for restoration work. And, as with anyone who has taken responsibility to care for lands and waters, they realized the restoration and management needs would go on in perpetuity.

A fortuitous meeting with a Foundation staff member on a Field Trip to Cherokee Marsh led the group to consider creating an endowment.

"After considering various options, an endowment with the Foundation seemed the right fit," says Jan Axelson, president of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

"We wanted a sustainable, long-term way to fund our efforts, with a defined purpose and professional management."

The Friends board spent many months researching the options and talking with other groups that had endowment funds with our Foundation. Speaking with them gave the Friends of Cherokee Marsh comfort with the decision and also provided opportunities to learn from others' successes.

Started earlier this year, their fund already stands at nearly \$4,000 [\$6235 as of mid-September], well on their way to reaching the \$10,000 mark that will take them from being an acorn fund to a true endowment.

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*Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's North Unit has a new viewing stand constructed by a crew from Operation Fresh Start. Photo by Jan Axelson.*

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# Creating an Endowment

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“Starting the fund is very doable, even for smaller organizations,” says Jan. “We’ve learned that the financial goals are reasonable, but that we all have to do some marketing and fundraising in order to meet them. We want to make it easy for those who love the marsh, as we do, to contribute to its care.”

For information about the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, visit them at: [CherokeeMarsh.org](http://CherokeeMarsh.org). Anyone can make donations to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund, or many other endowments with our Foundation, by visiting the Donate section of our website at [WisConservation.org](http://WisConservation.org) or calling us at (866) 264-4096.

# Floating Bog Project Shows Results

*Jan Axelson*

In 2012, we reported on the experimental floating bog interceptor (FBI) project along the shoreline at Cherokee Lake on the upper Yahara River. The FBIs are a series of floating mats that serve as growing platforms for aquatic plants. The purpose is to capture sediments and help restore shoreline wetlands lost to erosion. All materials in the FBIs are natural and biodegradable.

This year, graduate student Michael Busch from the UW Civil and Environmental Engineering Department is working with Professor Chin Wu to refine the design and measure the effectiveness of the FBIs. The data so far shows that sediment is accumulating behind the FBIs as

intended. Along the shoreline behind the FBIs, the erosion that had been occurring has stopped.

Enhancements this year include wave-barrier mats that hang from the front of the FBIs, more drainage holes, and a new anchoring system. In past years, the researchers removed the FBIs before freeze up. This year, two sets of FBIs will remain through the winter inside enclosures of open fencing built from 8-ft posts.

A goal of the project is to serve as a model for a larger-scale effort to preserve and restore the shoreline wetlands at Cherokee Marsh.



*The floating bog interceptors (FBIs) are helping to prevent shoreline erosion at Cherokee Lake. Photo by Jan Axelson.*



*New this year are experimental enclosures for the FBIs. Photo by Jan Axelson.*

## Help Us Reach Our Goal

The total now stands at **\$6235** contributed to the **Cherokee Marsh Conservation Fund** to support the management, protection, conservation, restoration and appreciation of Cherokee Marsh and its watershed.

Thus far, an amazing **close to 30% of Friends members have contributed** to the fund. We very much appreciate the generous response that is getting the fund off to a strong start.

If you haven't yet contributed, you can **help us meet our goal of 50% of our members contributing to the fund this year.**

With a donation of any amount, you can request a free 1-year membership in the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF) of Wisconsin. NRF membership includes access to members-only field trips to interesting natural areas around the state. Donors of \$100 or more in 2013 will receive special recognition from the Friends as Founding Contributors.

We appreciate donations of any amount. Use the form on the last page of this newsletter or visit [Cherokeemarsh.org/conserv](http://Cherokeemarsh.org/conserv) to donate online or for more information.

# Celebrate Bird City!

Paul Noeldner and Jan Axelson

Madison will soon be a Bird City! Much as Tree City designation helps cities enjoy and protect trees, Bird City helps cities enjoy birds and save important habitat for migrating birds and local wildlife.

To be certified as a Bird City, the community must show that it works to create and protect bird habitat and to educate the public about the importance of birds and their conservation needs.

On **Sunday, September 29**, Cherokee Marsh and other locations will host a Bird City Celebration featuring a variety of activities:

## Live Birds of Prey

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

**Lakeview Branch, Madison Public Library**, 2845 N Sherman Ave, in the Northside TownCenter next to Pierce's Market. (Yes, the library will be open on this Sunday only!) Hoo's Woods raptor education center will present a program featuring live raptors and other birds of prey.

## Hayrides and Hikes

3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park North Unit**, 6098 N. Sherman Ave. Meet in the main parking lot at the end of N. Sherman Ave.

3:00 - 5:00 pm, ride in a tractor-pulled hay wagon through the park. Hayrides are \$2/person to help pay for Parks staff time.

5:00 - 7:00 pm, take a guided trail hike, no charge.

Sponsored by the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, Madison Audubon, and Madison Parks.

## More!

Plus more activities throughout the day at the Warner Park Community and Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr., and other locations on the Northside, including Maple Bluff, and around Madison. Find out more about Bird City and the celebration at [birdcitywisconsin.org](http://birdcitywisconsin.org) and [cityofmadison.com/parks](http://cityofmadison.com/parks).

### Keep in touch!

"Like" our Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh](http://www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh)

Join our email group:

[www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh)



# Volunteers Show Their Love for the Marsh

This summer, Cherokee Marsh has benefitted from the generous donation of time by volunteers from the Cherokee Marsh area and beyond.

Volunteers from REI and the Friends worked to remove giant reed grass (phragmites) that is invading the high-quality wetlands in the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area. A team from Malcolm Shabazz City High School is also scheduled to help out with this project.

American Family Insurance provided dozens of volunteers who helped clear brush around the effigy mounds at Yahara Heights County Park.

Madison's Northside Action Team and other volunteers with Dane County Parks and the Friends collected seeds from the prairie at Yahara Heights County Park.

A big thanks to everyone who came out to help, including group leaders Don Ferber, Ron Endres, Jim Hughes, and Jared Urban.



*Volunteers from REI and the Friends work to remove invasive phragmites from the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area. Photo by Jan Axelson.*

## Call for Director Candidates

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh directors are responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating, and managing the group's activities. Board elections take place at our annual member meeting in January. If you're interested in joining our board of directors or if you'd like to find out more, contact Jan at [info@cherokeemarsh.org](mailto:info@cherokeemarsh.org) or 608-241-5828.

# 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.

## Celebrate Bird City

Sunday, September 29, all day

Multiple locations

See page 3 for details.

## Tour the New Trail System at the Stormwater Ponds

Wednesday, October 9, 5:30 – 7 pm

**Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, South Unit.** Meet at 1002 Wheeler Rd, corner of Ilene Ln and Wheeler Rd.

Explore the new trail system created in 2012 as part of a stormwater pond/natural landscape restoration project. Parks staff will lead the walk. Sponsored by Madison Parks, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh, and Madison Audubon Society.

# Scenes from Marsh Madness

We had a perfect evening for our Marsh Madness event at the Truax-Longmire VFW Post 8483. A wildlife highlight was a praying mantis on the hill! Photos by Muriel Simms.



## Hayrides and Hikes

Saturday, October 19, 1 pm – 4 pm

**Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, North Unit,** 6098 N. Sherman Ave. Travel north on N. Sherman Ave. to the main parking lot at the end of the road.

Ride in a tractor-pulled hay wagon through the park, take a guided trail hike, or do both. Hikes are free. Hayrides are \$2/person to help pay for Parks staff time. No reservations needed. Hayrides and hikes will leave the main parking lot at frequent intervals from 1 to 3 pm. Sponsored by Madison Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

## Reserve a Group Hayride

Reserve a hayride for your group. These rides are perfect for scout troops, church groups, birthday parties, and neighborhood groups. Each event is one hour: 30 minute ride, 30 minute campfire and s'mores. Cost is \$85.00 + tax per group (1-24 people). Dates available for Cherokee Marsh are Sept 28, Oct 5, 6, 12, 13, 20, 26, and 27, and Nov 2 and 3. More information at:

[cityofmadison.com/parks/celebrate/hayrides.cfm](http://cityofmadison.com/parks/celebrate/hayrides.cfm)

## Friends of Cherokee Marsh

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*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

