

[View in browser](#)

[View as PDF](#)

The Cherokee Marsh News

April / May 2021



In this edition

- [Share your Cherokee Marsh memories and favorite things](#)
- [Cherokee Golf Course plans renovation](#)
- [Take action: advocacy & citizen science opportunities](#)
- [Seeking volunteers who like to sew](#)
- [Upcoming events](#)

A **prescribed burn** is planned for **Yahara Heights Park** on Thursday, April 1, 10:30 am – 4 pm.



Share your Cherokee Marsh memories and favorite things

2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Conservation Parks in the City of Madison. Following the city's acquiring land at Cherokee Marsh and anticipating the purchase of other conservation lands, the 1971 Parks and Open Space Plan for the first time listed Conservation Park as a category of park. In celebration of this milestone, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh are launching a project we're calling *Conserving Marsh Memories*. We need your help!

Do you have anecdotes and stories about your favorite things or best times spent at the marsh? Do you have photos, documents, or memories about the evolution of Cherokee Marsh public lands to share with us? We would love to include them in our project.

Text, photos, maps, and other images are welcome. You can also record and send a brief audio or video clip telling us why you love Cherokee Marsh or documenting an experience. With your help, we can introduce new audiences to this wetland treasure and conserve memories and history for future generations.

Email submissions to sheila.leary@icloud.com. Mail or drop off hard copy items to Marsh Memories, 1101 Burning Wood Way, Madison 53704. Please do so by Sept 1, 2021.

We plan to use the responses to document Cherokee Marsh history and favorite things on our website. Maybe make a video. And we'll share items in the Northside News, social media, future newsletters, and the like.

By submitting material for this project, you grant the Friends of Cherokee Marsh the non-exclusive rights to use the material in our educational communications, and you state that you have the consent of any identifiable people in the material for such use.



The gate is open and the pier is in at Cherokee Marsh - South Unit, 802 Wheeler Rd.



This canal drains from the Cherokee Golf Course into the upper Yahara River.

Cherokee Golf Course plans renovation

Jan Axelson

The privately owned Cherokee Golf Course lies just south of the trail system at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's North Unit. A drainageway runs from the wetlands to the east through the golf course, into a canal behind Menomonie Ln in the Cherokee Park neighborhood, and into the the upper Yahara River.

The Cherokee Country Club is progressing with plans to modernize the Cherokee Golf Course while improving water quality and wildlife habitat on the site. In March, Dave Olescuk, Vice President of Operations at Cherokee Country Club, coordinated a public meeting to share the plans. Members of the project team were present to provide details and answer questions.

Steve Wenzloff of PGA Design Services explained that golf courses typically undergo renovation every 10 to 20 years, but the planned renovation of the almost 60-year-old Cherokee course would be its first.

A major reason for the renovation is rising groundwater levels, which have saturated much of the site. The plan proposes raising the playing surfaces with sand excavated on site. Borings revealed that the site has a 4–10 ft layer of peat above a 10–30 ft deep layer of silty sand.

Wenzloff stated that the course will follow Wisconsin's Golf Industry Best Management Practices, which aim to balance performance and economic impact with environmental stewardship and community. An eventual goal is for the course to be designated a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.

Environmental improvements will include enlarging and deepening the on-site ponds. With increased ability to capture sediments from stormwater runoff, the ponds will help keep the Yahara River and its downstream lakes clean. The renovation will also replace areas of invasive plants with diverse native plant communities that have more value as food and shelter for wildlife.

The design team has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for permitting. A Dane County permit will also be required for erosion control and

stormwater management. Construction is expected to begin in late 2021 or early 2022.

Concerns of members of the public attending the meeting included the effect of increased traffic in the area due to a possible increase in the number of tournaments. Wenzloff responded that major tournaments will prepare and submit traffic control plans. Others expressed concerns about increased flooding. Wenzloff indicated that the course will continue to function as a floodplain and filtration basin, and the plan will result in no net change to the floodplain as required by law.

We will be keeping an eye on this proposal and will inform members of any future public meetings.

A version of this article appeared in the Northside News.



Take action: advocacy & citizen science opportunities

Help monitor frogs and toads at Cherokee Marsh

Madison Parks is seeking volunteers to perform Department of Natural Resources (DNR) frog and toad phenology surveys in various locations at

Cherokee Marsh's North and South Units.

The surveys require learning the local frog and toad calls (there are nine in our area) and then visiting a spot twice per week after dark from spring through early summer and documenting the calls heard.

The Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey website has links to videos for each species under “species accounts” here:

wiatri.net/inventory/frogtoadsurvey/Wlfrogs/SpAccounts.cfm

The short videos contain recordings of the calls for the different species. You can start by learning the calls of the early species in our area first: wood frog, boreal chorus frog, spring peeper, and northern leopard frog. (This is fun to do even if you're not doing surveys.)

Volunteers should then contact the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey staff at *WFTS@wisconsin.gov* to register. Program staff will provide more information and make sure you are ready to collect data using the survey manual and data sheets.

While this is a DNR citizen science program, Madison Parks is asking volunteers to consider monitoring in ponds and wetlands in Cherokee Marsh and other Madison conservation parks, as well as Warner Park and Tenney Park. Monitoring in other local wetlands is also possible.

For more information about biological monitoring in the conservation parks and to learn about locations where Parks would like data, contact:

Paul Quinlan
PQuinlan@cityofmadison.com
608-267-4918

More information:

[Wisconsin frog and toad survey](#)

**Provide your input for the online Wisconsin Conservation Congress
spring hearings**

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is the only statutory body in the state where citizens elect delegates to advise the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources on how to responsibly manage Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. The Congress accomplishes this through open, impartial, broad-ranged actions.

The Spring Hearings provide an opportunity for the public to weigh in on a wide range of natural resource-related topics.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will once again hold the annual Spring Hearings online. The public will have the opportunity to provide input on the proposed rule changes from the DNR, and advisory questions from the Natural Resources Board (NRB) and WCC through the online input option, which will open on **April 12, 2021, at 7 p.m. and will remain open for 72 hours.**

[More information](#)

Advocate for funding the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

For 30 years, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has been protecting our lakes and streams, securing critical wildlife habitat, and providing world-class recreational opportunities.

Governor Evers' 2021 budget proposal includes a bold vision for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program: authorizing the program for ten years and more than doubling the program's current funding.

You can help by contacting your legislators to share your support for the program. Even if you are confident that your legislators are supportive, it's important for them to hear from you so they can demonstrate the level of support to their colleagues in the legislature.

Learn about the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and use the provided web form to contact your legislators and the governor:

knowlesnelson.org

The Gathering Waters nonprofit has additional information on their website. If you upload a photo and message of support for the stewardship program, Gathering Waters will send a postcard to your legislators:

gatheringwaters.org/knowles-nelson-stewardship-program



Seeking volunteers who like to sew

Do you like to sew? We are looking for a few volunteers to help make bags for seed collecting.

Starting in mid-summer each year, volunteers from the Friends, Dane County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and other groups collect seeds from natural areas for use in future restorations.

Dane County Parks pioneered the use of using sturdy bags for collecting seeds. The bags are donated chicken feed and bird seed bags. To make a bag functional and durable for seed collecting, we attach an adjustable shoulder strap and reinforce the top and bottom by sewing bias tape along the edges.



Sewing takes about 30 minutes per bag and doesn't require any special thread or needles. The stitching just needs to be functional, not pretty. We provide the bags, bias tape, and strapping.

The bags will go to the DNR's State Natural Areas program for use in State Natural Areas around the state, including Westport Drumlin and nearby.

If you have access to a sewing machine and are interested in sewing 5 or 10 bags, contact Jan at janaxelson@gmail.com for details.



The stripped bark on this dead tree is likely the work of one or more pileated

woodpeckers, our largest woodpecker, in search of carpenter ants and other insects. The excavations often attract other woodpeckers. To see this tree, in Cherokee Marsh - North Unit, take the Overlook Trail to the top of the hill.



Have you noticed the new signs at the entrances? This is one of three new signs at the North and South Units. The signs replace older signs in need of replacement due to age, and in some cases, to provide the correct and complete name of the park unit. Thanks to Madison Parks for getting these made and installed.

We would like to acknowledge the following recently received special donation:

Maria McLean in honor of Jan Axelson



Photo by Marcus Brown

Upcoming events

All events will follow local COVID-19 guidelines.

[See the full calendar](#) for latest information or [sign up](#) to receive notices about events and volunteer opportunities.

Bird and nature adventures

Limited to the first 20 participants on site, no advance signups.

Sun, April 4, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Trees and climate change with Master Naturalist Alex Singer

AND

Sun, May 2, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Spring birds with expert birder Chuck Henrikson

AND
first Sunday of EVERY month, year-round, ALWAYS 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave.
Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

Contact: Paul Noeldner, paul_noeldner@hotmail.com, 608-698-0104

[Madison Parks bird and nature adventure page](#)

Self-guided nature adventures

Get ideas for your own self-guided nature adventures at Cherokee Marsh and other locations.

tinyurl.com/selfguided-adventures

Dog park cleanup

Saturday, April 3, 9 – 11 am

Volunteer crew leaders will meet you at the park entrance with bags and gloves. Dogs are welcome to join. No need to pre-register. Wear a facemask and practice physical distancing from anyone outside of your household. Sponsored by Dane County Parks.

Yahara Heights Park, Catfish Court, Waunakee
Token Creek Park, 6200 Williamsburg Way, DeForest
and other Dane County dog parks

Woodcock walk

Friday, April 16, 6:30 – 8:30 pm. View the sky dance of the American woodcock at dusk and look for sandhill cranes, Wilson's snipe, Bonaparte's gulls, and other spring migrants and arriving resident birds. Led by Timothy Baker. Sponsored by the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave.
Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

Earth Day Challenge

Saturday, April 24, 10 am – 12 noon

Help pick up trash that has accumulated over the winter. Cherokee Marsh - North Unit, South Unit, and other locations. Sponsored by Madison Parks.

More information and sign up:

cityofmadison.com/parks/events/earthdayChallenge.cfm

Warbler walks

Wednesday, May 5, 6 – 8 am

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave.

Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

AND

Wednesday, May 12, 6 – 8 am

New location!

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - South Unit, meet at 1000 Wheeler Rd, corner of Wheeler Rd and Ilene Ln.

Early morning walks to look for colorful warblers and other spring migrants. Led by Timothy Baker. Sponsored by the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

Board meetings

Wednesday, April 21, 5:30 – 7 pm

Wednesday, May 19, 5:30 – 7 pm

Our board of directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating, and managing our activities. Everyone is welcome to attend board meetings.

The meetings may be virtual or in person. Contact janaxelson@gmail.com for location or link.

Garlic mustard pulling

We will have group events for garlic mustard pulling in May. We'll also provide our popular map and information for those who would like to pull on their own. To be informed of these events, sign up to receive event notifications.

[Sign up](#)

Receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities

Our newsletter comes out 6 times per year. You can also sign up to receive timely notices and reminders, including announcements for last-minute events and volunteer opportunities that don't make it into the newsletter.

[Sign up](#) to receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

Copyright © 2021 Friends of Cherokee Marsh, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

