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The Cherokee Marsh News

April / May 2023



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**Come to an event or volunteer opportunity
this spring**

Spring is officially here, and that means that events are happening. Our event listings below in this newsletter (with new listings not included in the recent Events email) include tours and volunteer events as well as opportunities to learn skills that you can bring back to the marsh and watershed, including stream monitoring, chainsawing, and paddle route clearing.



Help bring the Prairie Partner interns to Cherokee Marsh

Mary Binkley and Jan Axelson

Cherokee Marsh and Yahara Heights provide delightful spaces to walk with friends, with your dog on leash (on County land), or on your own. But keeping Cherokee Marsh healthy and beautiful requires a commitment to caring for it. You can help by donating to the **Friends of Cherokee Marsh** to help fund the **Prairie Partners Crew**.

We are asking for your help because the Parks crews can't do everything that needs doing; they just don't have the staff. So we sponsor the Prairie Partners, a group of five young adults, to work one day a week throughout the summer. (They work with other non-profits on the other days of the week.)

The Prairie Partners help control invasive plants, gather seed for future restorations, and keep Cherokee Marsh healthy and beautiful for all – both wildlife and humans – to enjoy. The crew will start work in May and continue through mid-August, alternating between Dane County and City of Madison lands.

\$8,000 covers the cost for the Prairie Partners. **We would greatly appreciate your help funding them.** We'll acknowledge all gifts with a letter to document your donation.

2023 will be our fourth year sponsoring a crew. Their dedication and energy has made a big difference in the work that gets accomplished, and we're excited to begin another year with them.

Please help by providing a tax-deductible donation to Friends of Cherokee Marsh, indicating it's for the Prairie Partners crew.

Thank you!

[Donate online](#). Choose *Donate* and select *Prairie Partners*.

Or mail a check to **Friends of Cherokee Marsh, PO Box 14536, Madison WI 53708**. Please write ***Prairie Partners*** in the memo field.



Provide your input for the 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.

You can provide input on Wisconsin's natural resource issues through the Spring Hearings which will again be online beginning **April 10 starting at 12 noon and remain open through April 13 at noon.**

There are no age or residency requirements to participate. You don't have to answer every question though responding with *no opinion* rather than leaving a question blank is preferred.

[More information about the hearings and how to participate.](#)

It can be daunting to look through the extensive set to questions provided. The Sierra Club's Wisconsin chapter has a [Conservation Congress Voter Guide](#).

Register for Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin field trips

Registration opens April 4 at 12 noon. Many NRF trips are popular and fill quickly.

Once again this year, there are a number of Natural Resource Foundation field trips in the Cherokee Marsh watershed:

May 10 and May 13 - Shin-Rin Yoku (Forest Bathing) and Japanese tea ceremony (private land)

June 6 - Kayaking Cherokee Marsh

June 28 - Red-headed woodpeckers at Cherokee Marsh

July 24 - Restoring a lost landscape: Westport prairie partnership

Aug 9 - Twilight paddle on the upper Yahara River

[More information and register](#)

Become a Master Naturalist

Master Naturalist training with Madison's Friends of Urban Nature (FUN) is full, but you can join the waitlist or sign up for a training at a different location. [More information.](#)



Events and volunteering

Join us for any or all of these upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. Events are free with no registration required unless otherwise indicated.

Unless otherwise indicated, events are free with no registration required.

[Sign up](#) to receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities including announcements for last-minute events and volunteer opportunities that don't make it into the newsletter.

[See the full calendar](#) for latest information.

Bird and Nature Adventures

Sunday, April 2, 1:30 - 3 pm, Being a Forager-Steward with Master Naturalists Kathlean Wolf and Kacy Zander

AND

Sunday, May 7, 1:30 - 3 pm, Spring Birds with Master Naturalist Chuck Henrikson

AND

The 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](#)

Dog park clean up day

Sat, April 8, 9 - 11 am

Yahara Heights and other county parks. Come to help out or sign up to lead.
Rescheduled from April 1.

[More information](#)

Woodcock walk

Friday, April 7 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. No registration needed, just show up. 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.

[Join waitlist for Madison Audubon April 14 woodcock walk.](#)

Great Midwest Crane Count

Saturday, April 15, 5:30 am - 7:30 am

Each year in mid-April, over 1,600 volunteers travel to their local wetlands and favorite birding locations to participate in the Crane Count. This annual survey of sandhill and whooping cranes spans over 120 counties in six states of the upper Midwest, including Wisconsin and portions of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan,

Ohio and Minnesota.

To participate in the Crane Count you first need to contact your county coordinator to be assigned a site and receive additional instructions.

[More information and sign up](#)

Earth Day Challenge

Saturday, April 22, 10 am – 12 noon

Make room for native wildflowers by helping pull garlic mustard in the woods. No experience needed.

Earth Day Challenge in most parks is focused on self-guided trash pickup. The Cherokee Marsh events are volunteer-led garlic mustard pulls, possibly with trash pickup as needed.

[Sign up](#)

[Learn about garlic mustard](#)

Sponsored by the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Madison Parks. Questions, contact Jan Axelson, janaxelson@gmail.com or (608) 215-0426.

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

AND

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, South Unit, 802 Wheeler Rd, corner of School Rd and Wheeler Rd.

Earth Day Birding for Families with the Feminist Bird Club

Verify location and time when you register.

Sat, April 22, 10 am - 12 noon

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, South Unit, 802 Wheeler Rd, corner of School Rd and Wheeler Rd.

Take some time to celebrate the birds this Earth Day and join a guided birding outing with the Feminist Bird Club-Madison Chapter. You'll learn birding basics and lots of fun facts about our feathered friends while we wander the beautiful trails of Cherokee South and look for signs of spring migration. No birding experience required! Binoculars will be available to borrow.

Registration required. [More information and register.](#)

Bird and Nature Festival

Sunday, April 23, 12 noon - 4 pm

Warner Park, 2930 N Sherman Ave

The 2023 Bird & Nature Festival is a free, family-friendly event celebrating Madison Bird City, Arbor Day and Earth Day. See live birds by Open Door Bird Sanctuary and visit nature displays throughout the day. Plan 30-45 minutes for your visit anytime between 12 and 4 pm, during this ongoing event.

See, Do, Explore! See birds of prey including a hawk and eagles up close with Open Door Bird Sanctuary!

Tree planting - approx. at 1:30pm

Exhibits & hands-on activities by nature organizations

Nature Conservancy; Friends of Cherokee Marsh, Wild Warner, and more!

View a local eagle's nest by telescope

Food carts: TBA

All ages welcome

Music

Free admission

[More information](#)

Volunteer as a Stream Monitor

Looking for a way to protect your local waterways? Become a volunteer stream

monitor with the Rock River Coalition! From April to October, their 180+ stream monitors collect data vital to understanding the health of our streams and rivers across the Rock River Basin.

Rock River Coalition is hosting a workshop on **Saturday, April 29th, 9 AM – 2:30 PM, in Waunakee** for anyone interested in volunteering or just learning more about streams. By the end of this workshop, you'll know how to measure water quality and be ready to adopt your own stream monitoring site. No experience is needed, and all equipment is provided. Register [here](#) or contact addie@rockrivercoalition.org for more information.

Warbler Walks

Early mornings, two locations!

Wednesday, May 3

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.

Registration required. [More information and register.](#)

AND

Wednesday, May 10

6 - 8 am

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - South Unit. Meet at 1000 Wheeler Road (corner with Ilene Ln)

Registration required. [More information and register](#)

With over two dozen warblers moving in and through Madison this time of year, we always have fun tallying up how many we can find! Join us for an early morning walk to look for colorful warblers and other spring migrants.

This is a Madison Audubon Event, co-sponsored with Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

Frog walk

Thu, May 4, 7 pm – 8:30 pm

One of the joys of spring in Wisconsin is hearing the wonderful choruses of breeding frogs that signal the return of life to our landscape following winter. Join us on this evening hike through Dane County's largest wetland to learn about our native frog and toad species and how to identify their calls. Distance: approximately 2 miles roundtrip. Leader: Jeff Steele.

Cancellation will occur only for thunderstorms or tornado warning. (A light rain is ideal for frogging.)

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

Birding by Boat

Wednesday, May 17
7 - 8:30 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - South Unit, 5002 School Road,
Madison

Join Madison Audubon and the BIPOC Birding Club of Wisconsin for a slow paddle exploring the incredible diversity of Cherokee Marsh at sunset. Get a great experience looking for spring birds, insects, and aquatic plants by boat; we expect to see species like Green Heron, Kingfishers, swallows, Sora, and more!

No experience with being in a canoe or birding necessary! This is a low-key, casual event.

Registration required. [More information and register](#)

Nature Exploration-Cherokee Marsh

Note this event is in Cherokee Park, not Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park!

May 20, 2023 10 am - noon

Cherokee Park, 1000 Burning Wood Way

MSCR offers opportunities for families and kids to spend time outdoors with nature activity kits! Each activity “kit” contains three different types of activities (art, science and exploration) for you to complete while exploring Madison parks. Every date focuses on a different nature theme. Activities take approximately one hour to complete and participants must complete activities by program end time. All activities are self guided after instruction is given from staff. No pre-registration is required. Best suited for ages 4-8 years.

Free. [More information and enroll](#)

Chainsaw training

Hosted by Dane County Parks. Multiple dates.

[More information and sign up](#)

Wisconsin Water Trail Development 101

If you are interested in helping clear trails on the upper Yahara or Token Creek, contact Jan at janaxelson@gmail.com or 608-215-0426.

Capitol Water Trails is always looking for volunteers to help maintain water trails. Here is a chance to learn about water trail development and maintenance.

Capitol Water Trails is hosting two events on April 29 with the Maunasha River Alliance and the Friends of the Koshkonong Creek.

Want to learn more about water trail development and maintenance from someone with over 30 years of experience? Come learn from Steve Falter on April 29 at Badger Farms. The class starts at 9am and runs till 1pm. The cost is \$40 and includes a BBQ lunch.

Wisconsin Water Trail Development 101

When: **Saturday, April 29, 2023**

Time: **9am to 1pm**

Where: **Badger Farms LLC, 1682 Co Rd BB, Deerfield, WI**

Description: Come learn how to properly remove blockages, mitigate flooding issues, maintain, and develop water trails on our waterways for all canoers and kayakers to enjoy. Classroom training, Demonstrations, and Web postings for use after the class. With Capitol Water Trails, Maunasha River Alliance, and Friends of Koshkonong Inc.

Cost: \$40 (includes BBQ lunch)

Contact: Steve Falter (founder of Capitol Water Trails) with questions or registration issues at cwt@capitolwatertrails.org

After the class, stick around for the Water Trails Fundraiser & Fun. Also at Badger Farms and starting at 7pm. Food, beer, and fun! There will be two 50/50 raffles, a silent auction (bidding ends at 10pm)

[More information and sign up](#)

Board meetings

Friends of Cherokee Marsh board meeting. Public welcome. Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr. To confirm time and place, contact janaxelson@gmail.com.

Wednesday, April 19, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Wednesday, May 17, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Self-guided nature adventures

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

tinyurl.com/selfguided-adventures

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