

Friends of Cherokee Marsh Newsletter Aug / Sept 2018

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# The Cherokee Marsh News Aug /Sept 2018



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*Photo by Ellen Barnard*

## **Purple martins find housing at Cherokee Park**

*Friends member Ellen Barnard is the steward for the purple martin tower erected in 2016 on Burning Wood Way in the Cherokee Park neighborhood. Here is her report.*

Welcome martins! After two seasons of the patient work of removing pesky house sparrows every day for months, we are excited to welcome Purple Martins to Cherokee Park.

Last fall several subadult martins were spotted investigating the martin condo on the edge of the water. Apparently they were satisfied with the digs because two pairs moved in this past June, with a third joining later. There are now 3 nests in the house and probably voracious young inside each nest.

Martins have no natural living quarters west of the Rockies; they large old trees that made up their colony homes are no longer present along our shores in sufficient numbers. So they rely on humans to provide their housing.

They live in colonies, so the homes must have multiple spaces. This one offers an entry way and second “suite” for each family, offering safety and privacy for each.

Contrary to popular beliefs, martins do not eat large numbers of mosquitoes, but they do eat some mosquitoes and many other flying insects, including wasps and moths.

Many thanks to Friends member Mike Rewey for generously donating and installing this wonderful condo for the martins. We expect many years of their graceful flights and warbling song in the morning and evening.



## **Benvenuto's fundraiser will benefit environmental ed at Cherokee Marsh**

*Anita Weier*

You can support children’s environmental education while enjoying a tasty Italian meal on **Monday, Sept. 24, 11 am to 10 pm.**

Anyone who has lunch or dinner at the Northside Benvenuto’s on that day — or orders delivery or take-out or buys a gift card — will help children learn about nature on a trip to the Cherokee Marsh. But this money will flow only if you

mention that you want your purchase to benefit the Friends of Cherokee Marsh.

The Friends group donates money every year to the Madison Metropolitan School District to be used to fund bus trips by students to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park for guided, hands-on learning. Last year, thanks in part to fundraisers like this one, the Friends gave \$1,200 to the Madison School District — funding visits by more than 900 elementary and middle school students to the marsh.

"Young students appreciate being exposed to nature and learning the names of various plants and animals," explained MSCR School Naturalist Educator Nelson Eisman.

"We turn over dead logs to see the invertebrates sheltering there. We dip onto the marsh water to see tadpoles and insect larva. We listen to the quiet and hear and see cranes, eagles, terns, pelicans and other birds. Sometimes we see a snake, turtle, deer or frog. We take a hike in the fresh air."

Depending on the guides and the paths taken, students learn about water and land creatures and their habitat, insects, invasive species, bird calls and leaf identification (including poison ivy). They also learn how the marsh protects the Yahara Lakes by filtering out harmful substances.

Benvenuto's, located at 1849 Northport Drive in the Northside Town Center, will donate a generous 20 percent of the purchases on Sept. 24 to the Friends, but only if customers mention that they want the restaurant to do so.

If you can't make it to Benvenuto's on that date, just go to [Cherokeemarsh.org](http://Cherokeemarsh.org) to donate, and specify that you want your donation to be spent on environmental education.



## Thanks to our volunteers

At the request of the Madison Parks' Conservation staff, our dedicated volunteers put in a total of 41 hours removing invasive cattails from the wetland behind the Bonner Rd pond at Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's South Unit. Some of those workdays were hot and humid! Fewer cattails means more room for native wetland flowers and grasses like this monkey flower. Thanks also to Madison Parks for the loan of the loppers!



## For clean water, remove grass clippings from the street

The City crews have been keeping grass clippings out of the street as they mow the terraces, keeping algae-producing nutrients out of Cherokee Marsh and the lakes. Setting a good example!



*Photo by Alex Tande*

## Photographers needed!

Your photos can help show folks in Madison and beyond how special Cherokee Marsh is. The Friends, Madison Parks, and the Northside News are all in need of good photos of Cherokee Marsh.

If you would like to see your photos in **this newsletter and in other publicity for the Friends**, we would love to hear from you. Send to [info@cherokeemarsh.org](mailto:info@cherokeemarsh.org).

If you would like to see your photos in **Madison Parks' third annual calendar**, the deadline to submit your photos is Aug 31. [Learn more](#).

An upcoming issue of the [Northside News](#), mailed to all Northside Madison households, will feature photos of Cherokee Marsh and other natural areas on the Northside. Send your photos to [submissions@northsidenews.org](mailto:submissions@northsidenews.org).

A good place to capture photos is at our monthly Bird and Nature Outings and other events; see the calendar below or [on our website](#). Especially needed are photos that show families and kids enjoying the outdoors in and around the marsh. Photos with recognizable children require verbal permission from a parent or guardian for public use.

## Calling all volunteers and educators: join us for a picnic and hike

Save the date! **Oct 6 @3:30 pm** for a special picnic to thank all of our volunteers and educators at Cherokee Marsh. If you have volunteered or served as an educator at Cherokee Marsh, including Yahara Heights and Token Creek, you and your family and guests are invited to this event. Volunteers include garlic mustard pullers, seed gatherers, phragmites bundlers, outing leaders, bird monitors, newsletter and publicity volunteers, event tablers, and all who have volunteered to help Cherokee Marsh.

The picnic will take place at the property of a volunteer on the north side of the marsh and will include a walk through a prairie to the upper Yahara shoreline. An anonymous donor is funding the picnic in appreciation of our volunteers.

Watch for more details in our Oct/Nov newsletter.

*It's not too late to volunteer!* [Sign up](#) to receive notices of volunteer events.



# Upcoming events

[See full calendar](#)

## Bird and nature outings

**Sun, Aug 5, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm.** Native plant ID with guide Jeff Steele .

**AND**

**Sun, Sept 2, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm,** Here comes fall! with Naturalist Guide Tom Murn.

**AND**

**first Sunday of EVERY month, year-round, ALWAYS 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

**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 road.  
([map](#))

Family-friendly bird and nature walks led by naturalist guides and other local experts.

Sponsored by Madison Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh. Questions?  
Contact Paul Noeldner at (608)-698-0104 or [paul\\_noeldner@hotmail.com](mailto:paul_noeldner@hotmail.com)

[Madison Parks Bird and Nature Outings page](#)

## Guided walk with Parks staff at South Cherokee

**Wed, Aug 8, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm**

**Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, South Unit.** Meet at 802 Wheeler Rd,  
corner of School Road and Wheeler Road. ([map](#))

Did you know that Cherokee Marsh's South Unit includes three miles of trails through woods, prairie, and wetlands with great views of the upper Yahara



River? Learn more about this park at a free tour led by veteran Parks Conservation Crew member Jay Walters. Sponsored by Madison Parks. [More information.](#)

## **Swift night out!**

**Fri, Aug 31, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm**

**Corner of Wheeler Rd and Comanche Way**

Watch for chimney swifts that (hopefully) are using the swift tower as they congregate before migration. Be prepared for mosquitoes. If raining or threat of thunderstorms, we will cancel.

## **Meet the Friends at the Northside Farmers Market**

**Sun, Sept 16, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**Northside Town Center, 1865 Northport Dr**

Stop by to say hi and learn what's new at our table at the market.

## **Benvenuto's fundraiser to support environmental ed at Cherokee Marsh**

**Mon, Sept 24, 11 am – 10 pm**

**Benvenuto's Italian Grill, Northside Town Center, 1849 Northport Dr.**

Dine in, carry out, or buy a gift card and **mention the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Benvenutos will donate 20% of your tab** to bring schoolchildren to Cherokee Marsh for environmental education. See story above for more information.

## **Board meetings**

**Wed, Aug 15, 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm**

**Wed, Sept 19, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

**Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Dr**

Members and the public are welcome at our monthly board meetings.  
Occasionally we reschedule, so contact us to confirm: (608) 215-0426,  
*janaxelson@gmail.com*

## **Receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities**

Our newsletter comes out six times / 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.**

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