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The Cherokee Marsh News

Aug / Sept 2020



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COVID-19 update

Bird and nature outings

The August bird and nature outing at Cherokee Marsh has been cancelled.

Check the [Madison Parks blog](#) for suggestions for self-guided walks at Cherokee Marsh and other locations. See below for details about a video on exploring moths in your backyard.

Board meetings

Our board meetings may continue to be held virtually. If you are interested in attending a virtual board meeting, contact paul_noeldner@hotmail.com for details.

Latest updates on COVID-19 openings, closures, and more

[COVID-19 update from Madison Parks](#)

[Dane County Parks Changes and Updates Due to COVID-19](#)

[Public Health Madison & Dane County updates](#)

[EXPLORING MOTHS]

Finding Nature In Your Own Back Yard.



Jeff Steele
Volunteer Naturalist

Explore moths

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our moth walk was cancelled this year, but walk leader Jeff Steele suggested joining with videographer Mats Rudels to create a fun and informative video showing ways to go "mothing" on your own this summer.

Learn from Jeff as he shares his knowledge and excitement for moths and the best ways to attract these fascinating creatures.

This video was made possible by a contribution from the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and cooperation with Madison Parks along with the efforts and creativity of Jeff and Mats.

[View video](#)



High water levels cause shoreline wetland loss

On July 12, Cherokee Park neighborhood residents noticed a large chunk of wetland that had lodged near the canoe and kayak landing on Burning Wood Way. The wetland contained cattails, swamp milkweed, poison sumac shrubs, and other marsh plants.

An on-water search revealed that the wetland, estimated to be about 130 ft in length, had broken off from the shoreline about a mile upstream. This area has seen other shoreline loss in recent years. In following days, south winds pushed the floating wetland back upstream about 3/4 mile.

Shoreline wetland erosion like this has been occurring on the upper Yahara River at Cherokee Marsh for over 100 years. The dam at Tenney Park raises the water level on Lake Mendota by about 5 ft and also floods the upper Yahara River for about 3 miles upstream from Mendota.

The artificially raised water levels cause the shoreline wetlands to float up, as if on hinges, no longer anchored in soil. Large storms and wind can sever this fragile connection and cause pieces of the shoreline to break off and float away.

A detached piece of wetland may lodge itself in another location, but observations of similar events over the years have shown that wind and wave

action will continue to erode the edges, sending pieces downstream until there is nothing left.

Read about the fate of another shoreline wetland in our June / July 2010 newsletter:

[The gradual destruction of a floating island](#)



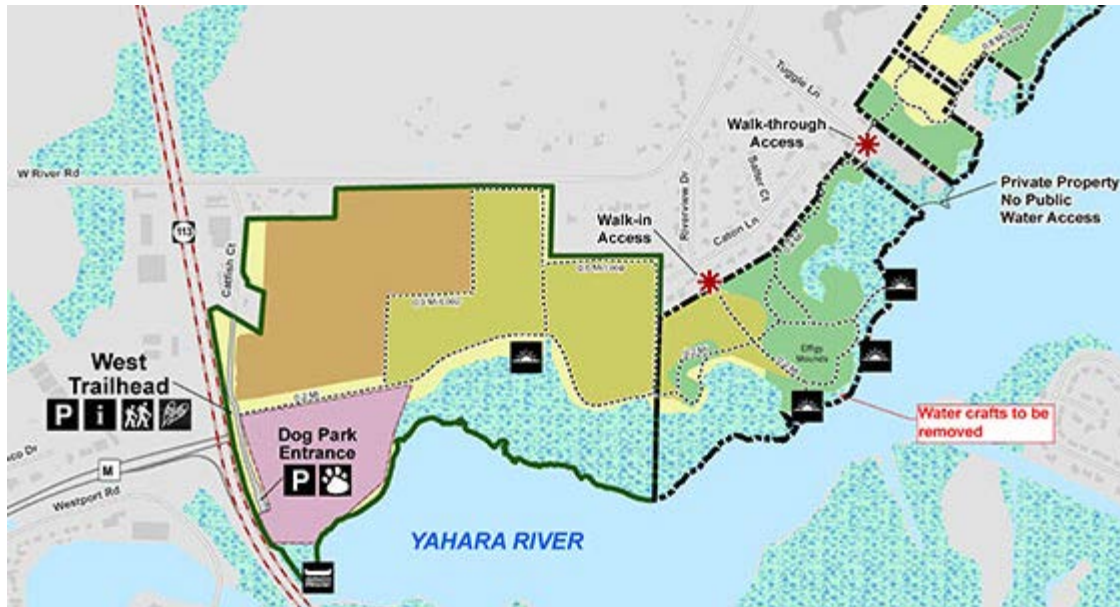
New kiosks at Yahara Heights and Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area

Dane County has installed new kiosks with trail maps and other information at two locations:

West entrance (Catfish Ct): heading north from Madison on HWY 113 / Northport Dr., 1/3 mile past HWY M, turn right on River Rd., then immediate right onto Catfish Ct. There is a small parking area for the trail system just before the fenced dog exercise area. The address for navigating is Catfish Ct, Waunakee, WI 53597.

East entrance (River Rd): heading north from Madison on HWY 113 / Northport Dr., 1/3 mile past HWY M, turn right on River Rd and continue for 1.5 miles. A small parking area is on the right (south) side of the road.

[Information and trail map](#)



Canoes and kayaks to be removed at Yahara Heights

This message does not apply to Madison Parks storage racks at Cherokee Marsh or other locations.

A message from Dane County Parks

Hello Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Yahara Heights Volunteers and Neighbors,

Greetings. We hope this letter finds you safe and well during this difficult time. We are reaching out to all of our neighbors who live next to Cherokee Marsh Natural Resource Area to inform them of our policy for storing canoes, kayaks or other watercraft on County owned lands.

Dane County Parks only allows boat storage on racks that are located at designated canoe or boat landings that can be accessed from a parking lot. Several canoes and kayaks are currently being stored along the shoreline of Cherokee Marsh on County owned land. The enclosed map shows the location of the area. This is not a designated canoe landing, nor do we have plans to develop a public launch site for accessing from the trails or through the neighborhood.

If you have been storing a boat there, please remove it by August 31st. All boats will be removed by Dane County Parks after this date. Any water craft removed by Dane County will be held for 60 days and can be recovered by contacting Park Ranger Brian Berkan at (608) 220-4386. After the 60 days, boats will be considered abandoned and will be donated or recycled.

Please note that there is a designated canoe landing nearby at Yahara Heights Dog Park for accessing Cherokee Marsh and the Yahara River. You can find additional information about it by visiting the [park website](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sara Rigelman at (608) 212-1235 or rigelman@countyofdane.com.



Aquatic invasive species survey to be held

Sheila Leary

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Wild Warner will join other volunteers on Saturday, August 15, for the annual statewide Aquatic Invasive Species Snapshot Day.

Armed with rakes, nets, waders, plastic bags and cameras, volunteers will search for problem plants and invertebrates at up to 10 sites. Last year's survey of Northside waters included sampling at the Cherokee Park canoe launch, School Road boat launch, Cherokee Marsh - North Unit boathouse pier, Governor's Island shore, Token Creek canoe launch and boardwalk, Governor Nelson State Park beach and boat launch, Yahara Heights canoe launch, and

Dorn Creek at North Shore Road.

Among the findings last year were abundant invasive zebra mussels in Lake Mendota off Governor's Island. At another location, nets revealed a pair of exotic Chinese mystery snails, a species assumed to have been dumped into the river from a home aquarium. Specimens gathered by citizen scientists around the state are sent on to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and shared on the Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) database.

Snapshot Day is coordinated by the River Alliance of Wisconsin in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR, UW-Extension, and more than 20 partner organizations around the state, including Friends of Cherokee Marsh and Wild Warner. Snapshot Day takes place every August.

Training will be online, and social distancing will be observed in all procedures on Snapshot Day.

No charge to participate. Registration is required, and slots are filling rapidly.

[Check to see if you can still sign up to participate](#)



Butterfly counters find 23 species

On a July 6 butterfly count, volunteers Julie Melton and Dave Fallow found 23 species at Cherokee Marsh. Here are the numbers:

Viceroy 2
Eastern Tailed-Blue 2
Summer Azure 1
Baltimore Checkerspot 3
Bronze Copper 1
Pearl Crescent 1
Hackberry Emperor 1
Tawny Emperor 1
Great Spangled Fritillary 19
Banded Hairstreak 14
Red Admiral 1
Eyed Brown 20
Common Wood-Nymph 13
Black Dash 4
Dion Skipper 2
Dun Skipper 3
Least Skipper 11
Mulberry Wing 13
Silver-spotted Skipper 8
Clouded Sulphur 7
Black Swallowtail 1
Mourning Cloak 1
Monarch 10



Volunteer Mary Binkley found this patch of invasive Indian pokeweed in a disturbed area at Yahara Heights. Native to Asia, Indian pokeweed is similar to American pokeweed but with more upright flower stalks and berries that are ridged rather than smooth.



Upcoming events

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

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.

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