

Lakeshore Nature Preserve: UW-Madison
A Seasonal E-Newsletter
Spring 2008

Greetings:

It's been a long winter, but spring is upon us and our busiest season has begun. Here is a quick update on what we have been up to—and what we have in store for the coming months.

Cathie Bruner, Field Manager

SPRING FIELD WORK NEEDS YOU!

Garlic Mustard

Garlic mustard season opened officially on my receipt March 26, 2008 of the first report from steward Roma Lenehan of garlic mustard removal from Eagle Heights Woods. Garlic mustard control has entered its 11th season. We are proud of the work by dedicated individuals who have steadfastly adhered to such a high quality control program.

For the best information on this topic see the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve website garlic mustard article. You will find new information on the science of garlic mustard control as well as a listing of volunteer work party dates and times.

Call 265-9275 if you want to volunteer on your own, at a different time, or put together your own group to volunteer.

Join us at the 2008 Garlic Mustard Pull-A-Thon on Saturday, May 17, from 1:45-4 PM or pledge money per bag of Garlic Mustard pulled. (Rain date only: Sunday, May 18 1:45-4 PM Picnic Point)

Plantings spring and summer

In late April 2008 we will plant native plants at the entrance and along the path of Tent Colony Woods to continue the repopulation of native species in the shade of the lindens and the great sugar maples.

Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve will continue to augment the native plants of Bills Woods. Habitat shrubs will be added to the south edge of University Houses gardens. Seed has been sown on the Indian mound west of Picnic Point beach as part of the erosion control restoration. "Brock Seed" has been sown at the entrance of Frautschi Point to replace weeds. Look for new plants later in the season just past the Picnic Point entrance and along the Lakeshore Path between Willow Creek and Picnic Point. Plants will be added to "the gully", the Frautschi Point field edge and "east savanna" project of Picnic Point field. Join us to plant!

Partnerships in Stewardship



Steward Tom Helgeson, graduate students Lars Higdon and Emily Sievers, and steward Glenda Denniston enjoy the end of fall on Picnic Point. Teamwork of student and community stewards is essential for learning, caring, and building sustainability.

Students for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve restoration efforts will be supervised by steward Amy Jo Dusick as the students join up with Glenda Denniston at the East Savanna restoration on Picnic Point. (see Students of Lakeshore Nature Preserve).

Student Preserve Committee reps move on down the trail

We pass another bench mark this spring when three dedicated students leave the Preserve Committee to move on to next phases of their lives.

Travis Tennesen has provided dedicated service to the Preserve as a student representative on the Preserve Committee through the master planning years and provided support for the establishment of the student organization.



When Lars Higdon graduates he too will know he contributed to the Preserve. He leaves as legacy a restoration guide for Tent Colony Woods and with Rebecca Kagle who graduated in 2007 he led the Muir Woods restoration (above) and Lakeshore Path team.



Zach Hirschtritt graduates with a big achievement behind him. He is responsible for bringing into existence with his friends and colleagues the Students of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve organization, a promise of tomorrow!



Travis, Lars, Zach, we thank you and all of the students who have participated this last year for helping take the Preserve into the hands of the next generation.

Brock Seed Mix



Long term land stewards of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and Pleasant Valley Conservancy Tom and Kathie Brock contribute to return of plant diversity with what Preserve stewards call “Brock seed mix” and this year invited us to expand our program by joining them in the greenhouse propagating rare and endangered plants. Thank you Tom and Kathie!

Visit the first “backcountry” bench in the Preserve



The Preserve master plan calls for the creation of rustic looking benches in places where visitors can gather and rest a while. The first such bench --crafted from a black locust log cut in the Preserve and placed on top of old granite pavers --was installed late last fall right before the first big snowfall.

The bench was made possible by a generous gift from the Academic Staff Endowment Fund. Former Preserve committee member Jan Hornback and secretary of the academic staff Colleen McCabe championed the fundraising effort that made the bench possible.

You can find the bench just down the trail from Muir Knoll. It is positioned to take advantage of views of the woods and Lake Mendota.

The bench was designed and fabricated by Facilities Planning and Management staff—from the landscape architecture, grounds, carpentry, masonry, sign and machine shops. Well done!

A limited number of additional bench locations are under development. Contact Preserve program manager Daniel Einstein for information on donor opportunities.

Fruiting Buckthorn control



Steward Tom Helgeson with the assistance of student Samantha Nagy girdled 3910 fruiting buckthorn in the Preserve between November 2007 and April 10 2008. Tom first observed responses to different techniques over a number of years before expanding to this broad scale. The girdling will stop seed production without incurring the major expense all at once and disturbance of killing and removal.

Through the 2008 season we will monitor and evaluate responses by the girdled plant and the response of buckthorn seeds and other vegetation in the area to the changed conditions. More information on buckthorn removal efforts will be found on the Preserve projects webpage.

Contact Cathie if you would like to be an observer and help us learn what happens next!

New trails lead to diverse cultural landscapes of the Preserve

In 2007 Preserve stewards installed a loop trail to provide class and visitor access to long term teaching sites in the Preserve.

Access the trail from the limestone trail either below Bill's Woods to the left of the Picnic Point iron gate or to the right of the gate.

The trail provides access to the soil teaching pits, savanna and woodland restorations, an open grown oak visited every year by geography laboratory classes, and emerges at the top of Picnic Point with access to Biocore Prairie, the working landscapes of Eagle Heights Gardens, FH King Students for Sustainable Agriculture teaching gardens, CALS research and teaching plots, the old orchard, and the anthropology and ceramics kilns.



Faculty and graduate students of the Soils Department restored the historic soils pits with viewing galleries for classes.



The trail winds through the Bill's Woods savanna and woodland projects that volunteers from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve have worked so hard to restore.



Stewards protected the old oak with log edging and a viewing area for classroom use. The trail also improves safety and allows unimpeded bird watching by providing access to all the areas previously available only by using the roadway shared by vehicles.



An informal wood chipped seating area of old logs at the trail juncture with the paved route through Picnic Point is a prototype of a repeating trail element amenity for visitors. Theme walks will be developed over time with information on the website for self-guided walks.



Army ROTC and Eagle Heights Assembly volunteers, under supervision of steward Tom Helgeson, re-chipped the Big Oak Trail in November 2007 and installed a connector trail to join the Lakeshore Path.



Steward Glenda Denniston enjoys the help in restoration and continues to confirm discovery of native plants emerging in the recovered light, confirming their identity with the aid of the UW Herbarium.



Hike from the Big Oak Trail along the woods edge to Biocore Prairie to enjoy the recovered glimpse of the lake from on high through recovered views of BIG plants too: these oaks of the old farm fence line.

Woodland restoration below Lot 34

Steward Stephen Thomforde reports from the scene on April 10: "Plants and woody vegetation planted last fall looked VERY GOOD! No bunny damage to this point. Thank you owls."

Come see what is up and growing!



Last summer Audubon Society interns worked for a day per week in the Preserve thanks to support from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and helped restore the woods. Chelsea Statz and Samantha Nagy restore the runoff flumes to preserve remnant vegetation and prevent erosion.

Willow Creek Woods



During last winter Grounds staff removed the undesirable vegetation on the west edge of the project area opening the old oaks and the effigy mound to full view.

This spring student teams will carefully rake and seed the area under supervision of Stephen Thomforde, protecting the soils of this archaeological treasure. They will follow guidelines developed by Preserve program manager Daniel Einstein in association with Wisconsin Historical Society and faculty from the anthropology department.

Picnic Point entrance

This spring visitors enjoy the view of sand hill cranes from the Picnic Point lawn and look across University Bay to the rest of campus. We will replant for habitat and view management. Donations to the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve will provide funds to implement new shrub plantings.



Photos before and after removal of invasive plants clogging the view.

Lot 60 noise abated

Over the years, visitors to the Preserve have commented that their experiences have been hindered by the loud roar of engines coming from the Lot 60 parking area—especially on weekends in the early spring.

Many people were surprised to discover that the noise was being generated by student-managed College of Engineering Formula One race team. Each year student race drivers and mechanics gather to build and test their machines, using Lot 60 as their training ground.

While honing engineering design skills in an experiential setting is a great learning experience, the students were recently reminded that their use of Lot 60 is contingent upon their use of mufflers--so that their cars do not produce more noise than one might expect from a street car.

So instead of the roar of their engines, Preserve visitors can now rest assured that their Sunday strolls along the lakeshore path will be peaceful again.

See you in the Preserve!