

Lakeshore Nature Preserve Fall 2009 E-newsletter

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Happy end of fall from the Preserve team!

Over and above the continuing dedication of our Volunteer Preserve Stewards more than 121 people volunteered 206 hours of stewardship service this fall!

Clean Ups

Several groups did clean-ups in the Preserve and on Campus. Approximately 75 current and alumni members of the Chancellor's Scholarship Program participated in a campus-wide clean-up for their 25 year anniversary; the Beta Chi Theta fraternity did 2 clean-ups in the Preserve this fall; and Boy Scout Pack 34 spent one cool, drizzly night in October cleaning up the fire pits on Picnic Point.



Willow Creek Woods savanna restoration

In August graduate students from the business school, MBAs with Heart came out to help prepare sites for future planting experiments in Willow Creek Woods. About 15 students volunteered 30 hours before classes even started for the semester!

Central Lakeshore Path

As bikers, runners, walkers, and strollers passed on the Lakeshore Path, and the UW band provided a backing soundtrack, Preserve staff and volunteers gave the adjacent landscape a bit of a face lift – ecologically and aesthetically. The project, made possible by a generous donation from the Class of 1953, focused on clearing undesirable woody vegetation to open views of University Bay and Picnic Point, as well as increase sunlight reaching shoreline vegetation.



Over the years, invasive trees and shrubs have overtaken large areas, freed from the fire and large herbivores that previously influenced the vegetative community. Thirty-eight people donated 86 volunteer hours to plant native species along the path in September and October. The groups that assisted us were: Students for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, UW Base Camp, Kappa Delta Chi service sorority, The Nelson Institute's Doris Duke Conservation Fellows, and Horticulture 120 students. The native plants will help prevent shoreline erosion. One sand hill crane family seems happy with our work; it has frequented Triangle Marsh regularly since September.

Frautsch Point

Fifteen volunteers worked on an Eagle Scout project, replacing buckthorn with desirable plants northwest of the Big Oak.



Tent Colony Woods

If you have not recently visited Tent Colony Woods, your next visit may afford you a bit more elbowroom, courtesy of ongoing work aimed at removing invasive brush species and restoring diversity to the native woodland plant community. A large amount of sweat equity offered by volunteers, Audubon interns and preserve staff has been invested in cutting honeysuckle bushes and wrestling their gnarled stumps from the ground east of the Raymer's Cove parking lot.

A portion of the cleared area was seeded with native grasses and planted with plugs of native wildflowers and grasses by volunteers of the University League of Women. An area was also left unplanted to serve as a control plot, so we can document what plants may return on their own from the seed bank, stimulated by the increased sunlight reaching the forest floor. As you enjoy this area next spring, be sure to keep an eye out for new faces in the plant community that could be returning from the colonies of yore.



Farmhouse Hillside

Just off the main service road in the northeast corner of Bill's Woods, on a small overgrown knoll, lie the remains of the former Picnic Point farmhouse (later known as the Edward Young house) and its stone walkway. The site is also home to several old oak trees hidden in the tangle of competing non-native trees such as buckthorn, Norway maple, and honeysuckle. But the old oaks are beginning to reemerge from the forest, as the undesirable understory vegetation is removed, thanks in large part to Preserve Steward Glenda Denniston's efforts and Chadbourne Residence Hall volunteers who removed buckthorn and planted native species. Native forbs and grasses have been planted in the newly opened area to nudge the community back to a more savanna-like state.

The farmhouse site also contains a fairly well established patch of the invasive vine porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*), a high priority for management in the Preserve. As its name indicates, porcelainberry produces showy berries that can be found as pink, purple, blue, or even green, and are almost iridescent in appearance.



Picnic Point Indian Mounds

UW-Grounds department and Preserve staff carefully removed woody understory vegetation from the Indian mounds on Picnic Point. A seed mix of grasses and forbs was then spread across the site to create a stable groundlayer—one which will better protect the soils that form this ancient landscape feature. The site will continue to be maintained in this more open condition.

