University of Wisconsin-Madison
Facilities Planning & Management

Lakeshore Nature Preserve

E-Newsletter

November 2026
Volume 20
Issue 5

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Director's Note

By Brad Herrick, Lakeshore Nature Preserve Director

The Preserve's mission is to support research, teaching, education, and outreach through science-based land management. Several recent initiatives and milestones support and highlight our mission.

First, construction of the Frautschi Center, our new office and visitor center, will help us engage students and the community with our mission. If you've been on the west side of campus recently, you've undoubtedly noticed the first phase of building construction has begun! University Bay Drive and the Howard Temin Lakeshore Path have been rerouted through what used to be Lot 130. In the coming weeks, construction on the Frautschi Center itself will begin. Thank you for your patience with the temporary disruption, and we look forward to welcoming you soon to the new front door of the Preserve!

Second, as you'll read later in this newsletter, we held our second Preserve Bioblitz in September. Together with last year's event, this encapsulates every aspect of our mission and provides a model for highlighting biodiversity in urban natural areas.

Third, we recently toured the Preserve with UW-Madison Extension Natural Resource Institute educators from across the state. We exchanged ideas on effective education and outreach, materials, and collaboration. This budding partnership will strengthen our mission by creating new opportunities to connect people with the natural world, share resources and expertise, and inspire meaningful engagement in natural resource conservation throughout our communities.

Finally, thank you to everyone who supported the Preserve through "Fill the Hill"! Through your generosity, we raised almost $8,000 from 104 gifts! These gifts will directly support our mission of stewarding the Preserve now and into the future.

Thank you for your support of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. I wish you all a wonderful holiday season!



Adam Gundlach

Picnic Point Parking

By Jeff Kirchman, Community Police Officer & University Natural Areas Police Liaison Officer

If you visited the Picnic Point area lately, you've noticed that big changes are underway. Lot 130 has been removed, and the road has been realigned, in preparation for construction on the new Frautschi Center. Parking is at a premium.

Planning a late-autumn visit to the Point? Two designated parking areas are available:

- Monday-Friday, 7:00 AM–4:30 PM, use Lot 76 (University Bay Drive Parking Ramp), 2501 University Bay Drive. Pull a ticket on entry and pay at exit.
- Monday-Friday, 4:30 PM–7:00 AM, and all day on weekends, Lot 60 (801 Walnut Street) is free unless reserved for a special event, in which case charges apply.

For safety, parking is not allowed on University Bay Drive in the Lot 130 area. Violators may be ticketed or towed.

The good news is that the Frautschi Center will have parking immediately adjacent to the facility, ending the need for visitors to cross University Bay Drive on foot.

To get regular updates on parking, visit the Preserve website.

You can reach Officer Kirchman at jkirchman@wisc.edu or 608-264-2677.







Bryn Scriver

Wisconsin Master Naturalists Train with Preserve and UW Arboretum

By Bryn Scriver, Preserve Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator

This fall, 20 participants explored Wisconsin's natural world in a 40-hour Wisconsin Master Naturalist course co-hosted by the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and UW Arboretum. Mild autumn weather made for ideal outdoor learning.

The UW–Madison Division of Extension's statewide program turns motivated adults into informed volunteers. To maintain certification, participants complete 40 hours of service and 8 hours of advanced training each year.

Guided by instructors and guest experts, participants explored Wisconsin's natural history, ecology, geology, wildlife, climate, and human connections to the land. Across both campus sites, they gained hands-on experience identifying plants, sampling lake water, collecting prairie seeds, using prescribed fire tools, and more.

From novice nature lovers to seasoned environmental professionals, participants of all backgrounds found plenty to discover. Want to join us next fall? Watch for registration to open in January!



Sky Hershberger

Visit wimasternaturalist.org for more information.

Restoring Fire's Story: Ecological Restoration in Practice

By Adam Gundlach, Preserve Field Projects Coordinator

On Sunday November 1, 2026, Kristina Weld, Training Coordinator for the Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Council (WPFC), joined by a cadre of experienced volunteer mentors, led a day-long immersion in prescribed fire planning and implementation at Biocore Prairie. Groups of students from Cooper Rosin's Ecological Restoration in Practice course rotated between stations to review common tools on the fire line, safety and logistical considerations, and ignition techniques. It was the first year such training had been included in the course, and the blazing student enthusiasm likely sparked a permanent spot for fire training in the curriculum.





Photos by Lucas LoBreglio

Community Documents Biodiversity During Preserve Bioblitz

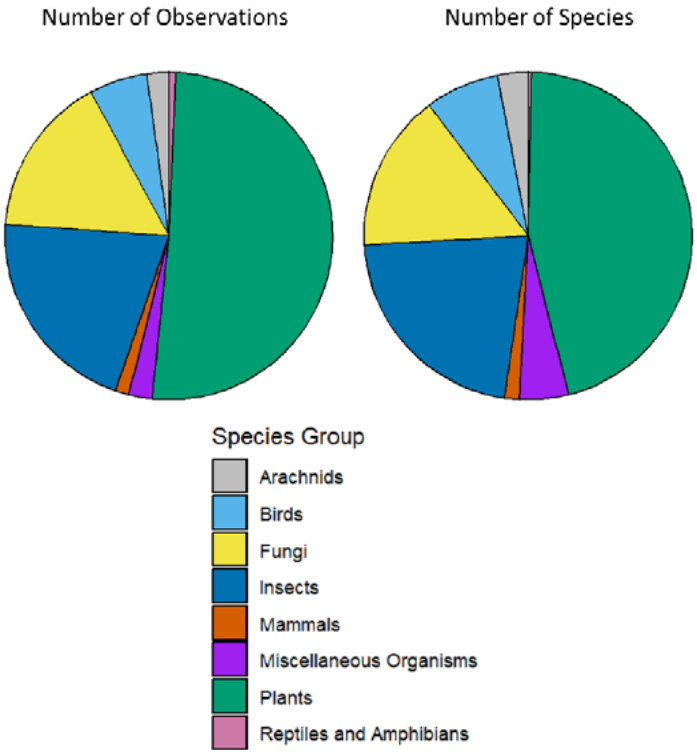
By C. Warneke, Ph.D, Post Doctoral Researcher, Damschen Lab; and Bryn Scriver, Preserve Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator

The second UW–Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve Bioblitz was a tremendous success, bringing together approximately 350 participants for 15 hours of exploring and documenting local biodiversity. Together, participants recorded nearly 4,500 observations representing 1,205 species, including 243 species documented in the Preserve for the first time and four species previously unknown to science!

Plants accounted for nearly half of all observations, followed by insects. Recent rainfall contributed to an impressive variety of fungi, while fall bird migration helped bring the bird count to 87 species. Participants also documented bacteria and even a virus, covering almost all major groups of life.

The discoveries included nine globally threatened species and another 29 considered threatened in Wisconsin. Bioblitz results will help guide future conservation and habitat management efforts. The Bioblitz also highlighted the ecological importance of Eagle Heights Community Gardens, where cultivated plants and additional surveys contributed 101 species to the overall count.

Beyond the impressive numbers, one of the greatest successes was seeing so many people come together to learn about and document local nature. The Preserve extends its heartfelt thanks to all participants and local experts who made the event possible. To see more photos check out the UW News photo essay, *The life at the preserve*.







Top: An expert demonstrates how to sample for ticks. Bottom: Participants learn how to use the iNaturalist app to make bioblitz observations.



A young participant looks at algae under a microscope.



Undergraduate plant pathology students lead a bioblitz walk.



Entomology students shine flashlights on a tree trunk to search for nocturnal insects.

Photos by Bryn Scriver

FRIENDS OF THE LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE

2026 Fall-Winter Field Trips

Preserve trees in Winter
Sunday, December 13, 2026 - 1:30 to 3:00 pm
Friends President Tom Zinnen delves into ways to ID different trees even as the deciduous ones stand leafless against the winter sky, using clues from their form, bark, and buds.

Friends Favorite Places
Sunday, December 27, 2026 - 1:30 to 3:00 pm
Cruise the Preserve with Naturalist Paul Noeldner to visit your favorite hibernal destinations near the solstice.

Testing for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, including Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer
Sunday, January 10, 2027 - 1:30 to 3:00 pm
Friends member Ben Johnson of the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab shares insights into the diagnosis and distribution of Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, including CWD, which infects deer and affects Wisconsin's deer-hunting culture. Indoor Location: Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, 445 Easterday Ln, Madison, WI

Unless otherwise noted, field trips meet at the Picnic Point entrance kiosk.

Due to construction, UW Lot 130 is closed. Free weekend parking is available in UW Lot 60 (801 Walnut St).

Please visit the Preserve website at lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu for more information.


Althea Dotzour

GIVE BACK TO THE PRESERVE THIS YEAR-END

As the year ends, consider giving to the Lakeshore Nature Preserve—a cherished place for generations of students, alumni, and community members.

Your gift supports stewardship of the Preserve's woodlands, prairies, wetlands, shoreline, and trails, keeping this special place healthy and welcoming. You may also direct your gift to the Frautschi Center, helping people connect with the natural world.

Every gift helps protect the Preserve for the future. Give online, or contact Brad Herrick at the Preserve or Shannon Ghere at the UW Foundation to learn more.

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