

madison
AUDUBON



August 2020

Madison Audubon
is your local
Audubon chapter

*Together with our
members, we work to
protect and improve
habitat for birds and
other wildlife through
land acquisition
and management,
education and
advocacy.*

A moment of truth

Reflections on making a brighter future, together

The bird loving community has a long, wonderful history in southern Wisconsin. In a recent search of archival newspapers, I discovered that a “Madison Audubon Society” was operating on and off as long ago as the late 1890s! The Madison Audubon of today, however, was born of the establishment of the Madison Bird Club in 1935 that officially became a National chapter in 1949. Since then, a lot has been accomplished that is worth celebrating.

We’re highlighting a few reasons to celebrate in this issue—all made possible by you. Because of our supporters, Madison Audubon was able to purchase a new addition to our beautiful Otsego Marsh property (page 3). Faville Grove Sanctuary is restoring more than 20 acres this fall (page 4). We are working on updating maps and signs to make all of our properties more accessible. Our education department is touching lives (page 8), and our citizen science programs are making real, tangible change (page 9). Yes, indeed, there is much to celebrate both today and in our past that has benefitted birds and people alike.

Yet we haven’t done nearly enough for all people. We say it, and we mean it, that all are welcome in our sanctuaries and efforts. But how often have we reached beyond our typical community to extend that welcome? How often have we interacted with Black, Indigenous, or People of Color at our sanctuaries or in our citizen science programs? How safe do members of the LGBTQ+ community feel when bird-watching or simply considering visiting outdoor spaces?

These are hard, uncomfortable, provocative questions. Still, we must ask them,

because they are important. Conservation without representation is deeply flawed. People of color are also heirs and stewards to this planet, and without the change needed to embrace that truth, conservation has neither a solid nor just future. We are not truly meeting our mission if some of our fellow community members feel unsafe or unwelcome on the land we hope they will love and protect. Nature is for all—and needs all.

Improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and access is a stated goal in our strategic plan and on our website. That’s a start. But we are holding ourselves accountable to do better—to move beyond statements and intent—to **meaningful action that makes inclusion an intentional, conscious, living, and permanent part of Madison Audubon.**

We are changing things within our organization, working toward fostering a culture of conservation that is diverse in its advocates, participants, and recipients. These changes are often conducted behind the scenes, like where we advertise job and volunteer opportunities, who we partner with, and how we talk about issues relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. But they will result in public-facing shifts. We will be sure to share progress with you as we learn and improve.

This work will be challenging, is essential, and cannot be done without you. Thank you for your partnership in this. Conservation is truly beautiful, thanks to you.



Matt

Matt Reetz, executive director
mreetz@madisonaudubon.org



The future of Otsego Marsh

A new addition will lead to a more vibrant landscape

If you haven't yet visited Otsego Marsh, please put it on your list for this summer! This beautiful natural area, about 15 minutes from Goose Pond Sanctuary, features the lovely wetland called Hawkos Pond, surrounded by woodland.

We're thrilled to share that on June 1, the protected area got even bigger and better due to Madison Audubon's purchase of a parcel adjacent to Hawkos Pond. The overall goal for the 36 acres is to provide habitat for species associated with grassland, wetland, and oak savanna habitats as well as a place for the public to hike and enjoy the plants and animals.

Currently, the parcel contains five acres of wetland habitat, seven acres of farmed wetlands, 19 acres of cropland, and five acres of woodlands that will be converted to beautiful native wetland, mesic prairie, and woodland habitats. Just imagine the transformation, the diversity of wildlife!

Once restored with wetland plants and shrubs, we should see an increase in wetland birds such as wood ducks, willow flycatchers, yellow warblers, and common yellowthroats; grassland birds such

as nesting mallards and blue-winged teal, eastern meadowlarks, clay-colored sparrows, sedge wrens, and dickcissels; and woodland birds like red-headed woodpeckers. Already, pileated and red-headed woodpeckers, barred owls, and scarlet tanagers nest at Otsego Marsh.

There is currently almost no suitable nesting habitat for turtles in the local area. But we are hopeful that restored wetlands will help Blanding's, snapping, and painted turtles, all present but not currently nesting, find safe habitat to lay eggs.

We are also fortunate to have seven species of frogs and the American toad at Otsego Marsh. All of them will benefit from further restoration of the new parcel.

...continued on page 6



MADISON AUDUBON STAFF

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Brenna Marsicek, *communications and outreach director*
John Minnich, *financial manager*
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David Musolf, *volunteer resident manager*

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Graham Steinhauer, *land steward*

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COVER: The prairies are in full bloom and ready for your visit! Madison Audubon
OPPOSITE TOP: You too can paddle around Hawkos Pond—see the Otsego Marsh map for details. Madison Audubon
OPPOSITE BOTTOM: A great blue heron is one of the many birds that enjoy the Otsego Marsh preserve. Richard Armstrong



Madison Audubon is a proud member of the following organizations:



ABOVE: Angelica seeds are delightful to collect and will look lovely when planted and in bloom. *Hannah Sigg*
OPPOSITE: Prairie grasses are a treat to sketch. *Emily Meier*

Faville Grove is calling

Collect seeds or come out for a hike this season

As fall approaches and the days grow shorter, the temperatures cooler, the air drier, and the skies bluer, schedule some prairie time into your calendar. Get away from the mind-numbing barrage of hit-and-run political ads and general craziness that defines so much of our lives these days, for just a bit.

Throughout September and October, we hope you will join us and the goldfinches for the meditative act of collecting seed. We plan to plant more than 20 acres of cropped land to prairie on a parcel that Madison Audubon purchased last year at the north end of Faville Marsh. This restoration will expand habitat for grassland birds, nesting ducks, turtles, badgers, butterflies, and countless other critters, and protect the marsh from agricultural runoff. You can help make a dramatic difference in the way this land looks and functions by collecting the seeds essential to restoration.

There are lots of ways you can participate in this critical, calming activity.

Are Saturdays off-limits so you can

enjoy your precious time with kids and grandkids? Join us Wednesday mornings in September and October for some quiet time in the field.

Do you work during the week and your boss doesn't agree that time in the prairie is job-related? Put Saturday mornings on your calendar.

Not a morning person? Try Saturday afternoons.

None of the above? Drop us a line and we'll work out something to fit your schedule.

Looking for other ways to enjoy some prairie time? We hope to host a tour and introduction to Faville Grove Sanctuary lands along Prairie Lane on Sunday, Sept. 20, 9 AM, with modifications made to ensure safety of participants. We can promise spectacular color in some spectacular prairie restorations. Keep an eye on the website for updates.

You are always welcome to write in your own time to come out and wander independently or with members of your household. There are two primary starting points at Faville Grove, the first at W7480 Prairie Ln.,

Lake Mills. Hike through the grasses to enjoy the view from the Lake Mills Ledge, overlooking the expanse of restored prairie in the Crawfish River floodplain. Or begin at Buddy's Place, an old vacant farmstead on our property, with prairie and wetland surrounding it. The address for Buddy's is N7710 Hwy. 89, Lake Mills. Park along the shoulder, walk around the driveway fence, and explore the path to the floating bog in Faville Marsh, or check out Kettle Pond with its own floating bog. A map is available at madisonaudubon.org/faville-grove.

Faville Grove has only a few mowed trails, but you are also welcome to make your own path through the prairie. Don't worry, the plants will

rebound from your footsteps! Visit frequently and watch the prairies and wetlands turn golden as fall progresses.

How many species of goldenrod can you learn to identify? In flower and in seed? How many species of aster? Gentians? Grasses? Butterflies and birds in migration?

However you choose to enjoy the season, put it on your calendar now before time slips away.

Roger Packard and David Musolf, Faville Grove Sanctuary resident managers
rpackard@uwalumni.com, dmusolf@uwalumni.com

Drew Harry, Faville Grove Sanctuary land steward
faville@madisonaudubon.org

PENCIL IN SOME PRAIRIE TIME THIS FALL

Seed collecting at Faville Grove

Sept. 2 - Oct. 31
Wed. and Sat., 9:30 AM - 12 PM
Sat. 1:30-4 PM
Meet at the kiosk at W7480 Prairie Ln., Lake Mills

(Tentative) Tour Faville Grove Sanctuary east

Sunday, Sept. 20, 9-11 AM
Rain date: *Sept. 27*
RSVP to Brenna at bmarsicek@madisonaudubon.org
Status updates at madisonaudubon.org/field-trips

Advance Madison Audubon's mission safely: Vote absentee

Request your absentee ballot at myvote.wi.gov/en-us/VoteAbsentee. Do it soon and return your ballot promptly to help your municipal clerk deal with the pandemic-related surge in absentee voting and assure that your ballot is counted.

This November's election will likely be the most important ever for restoring the ability of government, now badly damaged, to protect the environment, to manage crises like the ongoing pandemic or the unfolding climate

crisis, to develop policy on the basis of science and sound logic, to guarantee democratic representation, and to assure broad-based prosperity.

Your vote is critical if we are to reclaim the social norms and institutions needed to support a healthy relationship between people and the world we inhabit. Vote safely, but vote.

Roger Packard, board president
rpackard@uwalumni.com





Otsego Marsh expansion, continued from p. 3

As we plant more milkweed, including swamp (red) in the wetland and common in the prairies, monarchs will find more places to lay their eggs. These migratory butterflies will also benefit from fall nectar species in the restored mesic prairie.

Many insect groups, like dragonflies and damselflies, will also benefit from restoration. Recently, Richard Armstrong photographed a horned clubtail dragonfly (shown below) that has not been reported in the past 24 years in Columbia County.

We have observed a few chimneys (burrows) from crayfish—a neat sighting! In dry years when the land was farmed, the crayfish were probably plowed up, but the newly protected area will allow for crayfish to thrive.

The restoration plan calls for over 50 species of mesic prairie plants, including the federally-threatened prairie bush clover, which is found on

nearby land owned by WDNR.

This natural area is truly a gem in southern Wisconsin, and we hope you'll visit soon. To access, type in 3382 Old Co Rd F, Rio WI into your map app. There is a parking lot tucked into the area just south of Hawkos Pond. A hiking trail awaits from the lot, or view the new parcel across the road. Tear out the map included here and bring it with you. Hiking boots are recommended, and binoculars and a camera will add to your fun.

To find out how you can support the purchase and future restoration of this land, check out the article on the next page. We couldn't do any of this without you!

Mark Martin and Sue Foote-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary resident managers
goosep@madisonaudubon.org

Graham Steinhauer, Goose Pond Sanctuary land steward
gsteinhauer@madisonaudubon.org

Your piece of the puzzle

Together, we make the landscape complete

It's a giddy feeling to step onto a piece of land that has just been permanently protected, especially when you know that restoration will bring it back to noisy, colorful life.

This is the feeling I experienced, and that you can have, when exploring the new addition at Otsego Marsh. Its 36 acres are so important to the landscape puzzle that Madison Audubon used valuable reserve funds to purchase the parcel and ensure that it would be restored and protected forever. It may not look like thriving native habitat right now, but in a few short years that land will be humming with diverse native life.

And now, it's time to refill the land acquisition coffers!

Longtime Madison Audubon supporter Jerry Martin donated \$50,000 in hopes of inspiring others to help replenish our funds. This will secure a stronger financial position for Madison Audubon when other critical parcels of land come up for sale near our sanctuaries.

We are celebrating our Otsego Marsh donations by joining in the popular quarantine pastime of working jigsaw puzzles. Each donation reveals a new piece of the puzzle. When the last puzzle piece is added, we will share the completed picture. See the image below for the inspiring progress we've made since June. **You too can help!** Honor your love of birds. Honor a loved one, living or passed. Save valuable lands and waters.

We hope you will donate to this beautiful marsh today. Find your puzzle pieces and track our progress at madisonaudubon.org/puzzle.

And after you have added your piece to the puzzle, be sure to head out to Otsego Marsh. Drop a canoe in Hawkos Pond. Step on to our new parcel. And enjoy that giddy feeling of knowing that you helped protect an important piece of the landscape puzzle.

Forever.

Becky Abel, director of philanthropy
babel@madisonaudubon.org

FIND YOUR PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

madisonaudubon.org/puzzle



“ I donated to the Otsego Marsh puzzle because I can find no better place—now or in the future—to put my heart and soul than in the protection of land and its water. ”
- Dorothy Haines

THIS PAGE: Species tokens are associated with donations over \$10,000. Thank you! Dickcissel. Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren Wood duck. Mick Thompson Scarlet tanager. Doug Greenberg

Just a few of Otsego Marsh's diverse cast of characters are shown here. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: American lotus flower and green sweat bee. Madison Audubon Kingfisher. Richard Armstrong Crayfish chimney. Madison Audubon Swamp milkweed. Madison Audubon Horned clubtail dragonfly. Richard Armstrong Sandhill crane on nest. Richard Armstrong



Now more than ever

Why kids need nature education however they can get it

There are a lot of uncertainties about the upcoming school year. Even between now and when you read this, plans will have changed. One thing I do know, with utter certainty, is that kids will be learning about nature.

In a time like this, when there are so many competing and contradicting priorities and anxieties, where is the space for nature education? When a teacher has to meet the challenges of instructing a classroom of 2nd graders virtually, is including nature education worth the effort?

Oh yes, it's worth it. Here's why.

We are honored to work with an amazing group of teachers who incorporate outdoor education into their curriculum, and who plan to continue this during the 2020-21 school year. I met with a few of them online in early July to chat about what fall might look like. We shared fears and wishes, and lifted each other up. We talked about what worked well this spring and what didn't. We made plans... and planned that those plans might change.

One huge success during those spring months of remote teaching was continuing outdoor education.

Yes, kids were interacting with friends and teachers through screens and exploring solo, but nature held us all together.

Nature was an equalizer: all of the kids had different home lives, stressors, and experiences, but they could all step outside and breathe the fresh air. They could all look for ants on the sidewalk or a crow overhead.

Outdoor education was calming. It was a chance to step back from COVID-19, from the harsh realities of racial injustice, from family struggles. All of those things are absolutely important and deserve persistent, energetic attention—but everyone needs to take breaks and recharge, especially kids. Nature has been there for that all along.

So, this fall, we'll be continuing outdoor education with these teachers, their students, and the many new students we reach online. Together, we planned to make any potential in-person learning days later this fall or winter feel more like fun summer camp, and to capitalize on relationship-building if and when we're face-to-face. We made lists about the materials needed to keep kids comfortable learning outside each week. We brainstormed what kinds of lessons Madison Audubon could create to help with continued distance learning.

This community is a huge part of why we're all successful teachers—we support each other. And even though the plans are all still in pencil, it's reassuring to know that no matter what, we'll create something lovely for our kids this fall.

Carolyn Byers, education director
carolyn.byers@madisonaudubon.org

Clear progress

Small dots mean big benefits for birds

Up to a billion birds die each year as a result of window collisions in the U.S. alone. A billion. Not only are the bird deaths that result from window collisions woeful, they are also preventable, making the search for solutions so very tantalizing.

In spring 2018, Madison Audubon partnered with UW-Madison to launch the Bird Collision Corps (BCC). This citizen science program is designed to study the well-known problem of bird-window collisions at a local level. Each spring and fall migration since then, with the exception of the spring of 2020, dozens of volunteers have surveyed high-priority buildings on campus, looking for evidence of bird collisions. The best days are when they find none, but many days, they and the birds aren't so lucky. The work is challenging and can be disheartening, but we're pleased to report that work is helping make a difference.

Due to the efforts of BCC volunteers, we identified significant bird collision hotspots on campus. One of the biggest problems was at Ogg Residence Hall because it features a six-story glass walkway. These are known to be problematic because birds cannot see the surrounding glass and attempt to fly through the other side. A perfect opportunity for a prevention trial.

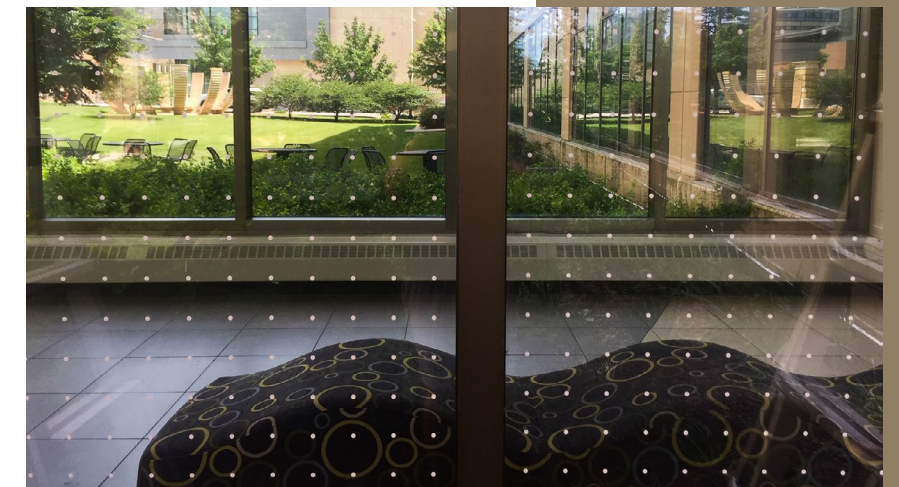
This summer, the glass on both sides of all six stories of the walkway received a retrofit that has been proven to be over 90 percent effective in reducing bird-window strikes in similar settings. The retrofit involves adding small white dot decals to the exterior of the glass, which don't limit views for building

occupants. Plus, the project includes educational signs inside the walkway. The retrofit was pricey, but was generously paid for by University Housing and a Green Fund grant from the Office of Sustainability that was sponsored by the UW Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

Achieving this small victory for birds was no small feat, involving lots of paperwork and persistence. We are grateful to our incredible campus partners who worked diligently with us to move this forward, and to our amazing volunteers who spend so much time and energy helping birds.

We hope to resume BCC surveys again this fall (especially for Ogg!), and to continue the work in the broader community to make bird-friendly building design a standard and a priority. To learn more and volunteer, visit madisonaudubon.org/bcc

Brenna Marsicek, director of communications & outreach
bmarsicek@madisonaudubon.org



ABOVE: A fluffy yellow warbler pauses to recover after colliding with a window. *Crystal Sutheimer*
BELOW TWO: The six-story glass walkway at Ogg Hall has a new look and feel, thanks to the Bird Collision Corps volunteers and partners. *Provided by UW-Madison Facilities Planning and Management*



Thank you to our major education donors:



Theda & Tamblin Clark Smith
FAMILY FOUNDATION



BELOW: A Zoom meeting among Carolyn and an awesome group of teachers is not just productive—it's fun! *Madison Audubon*





KESTREL LEGACY
CIRCLE MEMBERS

Thank you to our Kestrel Legacy Circle members for ensuring that our organization will remain powerful, visionary, and strategic for years to come.

- John Aeschlimann
- Terri Bleck
- Tom and Kathie Brock
- Curt and Arlys Caslavka
- Gary and Jana Funk
- Kay Gabriel and Fiona McTavish
- Dorothy Haines
- Galen and Grace Hasler
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- Lu Kummerow
- Elsie Lapinski
- Marcia MacKenzie and Jerry Borseth
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- Jim and Kathy Shurts
- Susan Slapnick
- Sandy Stark
- Topf Wells and Sally Probasco
- James Young



The Kestrel Legacy Circle

A new name for a long-lasting sentiment

Think of a kestrel.

Small, but powerful. Sharp vision. Expert at hovering and scanning for opportunities, even in the face of strong headwinds. Critical component of southern Wisconsin ecosystems. Patient.

Madison Audubon is excited to announce that our planned giving group, long known as the Legacy Society, has a new and improved title.

The Kestrel Legacy Circle

Our Kestrel Legacy Circle members have made a commitment to name Madison Audubon in their wills or estates. Membership to the Circle is not binding in any way, but members' statements of intent allow us to thank and recognize these loyal donors during their lifetimes. Membership also encourages others to make this important commitment to protecting valuable birds and landscapes during the donors' life and beyond.

By joining the Kestrel Legacy Circle, you create an enduring legacy of protection for the birds and lands that are important to you now. Your gift helps ensure that future bird choruses will include diverse voices, and that Madison Audubon's beautiful sanctuaries will remain protected forever.

Madison Audubon accepts planned gifts, in any amount, in the form of:

- Wills and trusts
- Real estate
- Appreciated stock and other assets
- IRA rollovers or life insurance policies

Speak with your financial advisor about leaving a gift to Madison Audubon or contact Becky Abel, director of philanthropy, at babel@madisonaudubon.org or 608-255-2473.

Additional information is at madisonaudubon.org/legacy

Thank you to our donors!

Our supporters make Madison Audubon tick. We normally like to celebrate our recent donors by printing their names in our newsletter. Thanks to your generosity and general awesomeness, there are simply too many names to (legibly) fit this time! Below is the list of brand-new Madison Audubon donors since our last newsletter, but you can find the full list of June-August donors on our website at madisonaudubon.org/2020-donors.

We will include a complete list of donors in our annual report issue in February. Online or on paper, we greatly appreciate your generous support.

New Madison Audubon donors since June 2020

Liz Abel
Mary Abel
Amy Arntson
Tazia Azarenko
Birgit and Tom Bach
Robert Beck
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Join the Frequent Flyers Club!

Every month, without even lifting a wing, you can help support the work of Madison Audubon. The Frequent Flyers Club is set up for folks like you who want to make regular, ongoing contributions. We can create an automated system for you based on how often, how much, and from which account you'd like to contribute. Thank you to our current FFF members—you help Madison Audubon soar!

More information is available at madisonaudubon.org/give

GIVE TODAY!

Your generosity funds important conservation and education programs throughout south-central Wisconsin

Yes, I'd like to support Madison Audubon, my local chapter

Gift amount: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Check to Madison Audubon enclosed

Pay by Visa MasterCard

Name on card _____

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Three-digit code on card back _____

I would like to find out more about Madison Audubon's Legacy Society. Please contact me!

MEMBERSHIPS

If you are a member of both Madison and National Audubon (One Audubon), please renew at audubon.org/take-action or call 1-844-428-3826. Thanks for your additional gift to Madison Audubon!

If you are a member of Madison Audubon only, your gift of \$20 or more above will renew your membership for one year.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS ON PAGE 12, OR GIVE ONLINE AT madisonaudubon.org

LEFT: A beautiful bobolink is thrilled to welcome our new donors and members.
Arlene Koziol



Broadening our Board

An eye to the future

Consistent with Madison Audubon bylaws, our board of directors is developing a slate of candidates for election to the board next spring. We invite Madison Audubon members to suggest potential candidates for consideration by our board nominating committee. The organization is particularly interested in meaningfully improving representation of diverse voices and experiences in our board governance. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in conservation are essential to our shared mission.

Please send names of individuals who you feel would make a substantive contribution to advancing Madison Audubon's mission to Roger Packard, board president, rpackard@uwalumni.com.

RIGHT: A monarch butterfly soaks up the sun. *Arlene Koziol*
BELOW: Carolyn teaches an online lesson on bird feather structure and color. *Madison Audubon*
BOTTOM: Seeds are ready for planting, thanks to great volunteers like you! *David Musolf*

Fun this fall

Great, safe activities for all ages



VIDEO LESSONS FOR KIDS AND ADULTS

Join Carolyn for regular video lessons, each one sharing great information about birds, mammals, plants, insects, reptiles, and much, much more. Watch via Facebook or YouTube.

SEED COLLECTING AT THE SANCTUARIES

We have a lot of important restoration work to do at both of our sanctuaries this year, and you can help bringing native life back to these landscapes! To sign up for notices, visit madisonaudubon.org/volunteer.



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