

## Calendar of Events

### Trees of Wisconsin

#### Sauk County

**June 20, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon**

Learn to identify and appreciate the larger members of Wisconsin's diverse flora with BMP board member and botanist Bob Wernerehl during this Nature Conservancy field trip. We will seek out 40 of Wisconsin's 50 or more native tree species. The trip will begin along the Wisconsin River and end with a look at the interesting diversity of trees at Baxter's Hollow in the Baraboo hills. Walking will be on easy paths and roads. Seniors and children are welcome. Call Bob at (608) 795-4244 if you have questions. **Directions:** From Hwy. 12 in Sauk City, just west of the Wisconsin River bridge, turn north on Water Street and proceed through downtown Sauk City for about four blocks. One half block north of the Ace Hardware store on the right hand side of the street is the entrance to August Derleth Park. Meet in the parking lot in order to carpool to the other sites.

### Ecology Walk

#### Dane County

**July 12, Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

The land has many stories to tell you once you are able to speak its language. Join Mike Anderson, BMP board member and consulting ecologist, on this visit to Tom and Kathy Brock's land near Black Earth and you will begin to learn the language of the land. During this field trip we will observe and experience first hand how: current vegetation can indicate historical vegetation and prior land use history and predict future vegetation; how soil moisture and light conditions influence which plant species are able to grow at a site; and, how the plants growing at a site influence the types of wildlife you'll find. We'll also observe and discuss numerous restoration activities and management strategies designed to create and enhance a more diverse, native landscape. Call Mike at (608) 277-9960 if you have questions. **Directions:** From Mt. Horeb, go north on Hwy. 78 to Cty. Hwy. J. Turn left (west) onto J and follow until you meet Cty. Hwy. F. Turn right (north) onto F and follow to Pleasant Valley Road, which is the first road on the right after you pass Cty. Hwy. FF. Turn right (south) onto Pleasant Valley Road and go about 1/4 mile to a driveway on the right side. Park here along the road.

### Wildflower Walk

#### Dane County

**July 13, Monday, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

See roadside remnant oak savanna/woodland ferns and flowers. We will look for the beautiful Poke Milkweed, as well as New Jersey Tea, and many other woodland plants that grow in abundance along this road in Brigham Township. The walk will be lead by botanist and BMP board member Bob Wernerehl. The pace will be slow and easy, but will include a moderately steep hill. Call Bob with questions at 608-795-4244. **Directions:** Meet at the corner of Ridgeview Road and Iowa County K, about 4 miles north of Barneveld. Park along the north side of Ridgeview Road.

### Land Management Tips and Techniques

#### Dane County

**September 19, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

Overwhelmed by buckthorn? Swimming in honeysuckle? This field trip, led by BMP ecologist ??, will give you needed answers on how to achieve maximum control of exotic species with minimum effort. You'll learn about mechanical control methods, such as cutting, girdling and pulling, how to safely and effectively use chemical methods, and the benefits of prescribed fire. And, you'll learn which of these many methods is the most appropriate for your situation. Call ?? with questions at ??. **Directions:** Take U.S. Hwy. 18 / 151 west from Mt. Horeb for approximately one mile to Cty. Hwy. E. Turn left (south) onto E and follow approximately 1.3 miles to the fifth driveway on the left (east), 2402 Cty. Hwy. E.

## President's Report

Dear Members,

This is an exciting time for the Blue Mounds Project. Some of our goals and *??can't read the word* are beginning to flower. What was an exacting seed of an idea is beginning to take on a clear form. The interim board is very

inspired by the wonderful attendance at the March 7th Prairie Restoration talk (see ?title? in this newsletter). We thank all of you who were there for your support. It is very much appreciated.

The BMP has received grant money and is now in a position to hire a part time ecologist who will conduct site visits. In fact, we expect to have hired the ecologist by the time you receive this newsletter. The focus of the site visits will be to help land owners identify plant and animal species and to learn about the ecosystems that exist on their land. We will also be offering a series of field trips lead by BMP board members and our ecologist. Check the calendar of events in this newsletter for trip details.

We encourage members to contact the interim board and **become involved**. We are, after all, your organization. A large part of our vision is to have landowners -and other friends of the land -help each other in our joint stewardship. We look forward to the growth our *local* efforts to nurture, care for, and help heal southern Wisconsin's truly beautiful landscape.

## **BMP GROWS**

### **Membership Committee Report**

The number of dues paying members of the Blue Mounds Project has grown to 120. This is an increase of 22% since the beginning of the year. In addition to our paying members, we also have over 600 people and organizations on our mailing list and are confident that as our programs develop, many of these folks will become members.

We hope to begin sending out newsletters and notices by EMAIL soon and are glad to report that fully 75 of you have provided us with your email address. If you have email but don't know if we have your address, please send a note to [jz212@aol.com](mailto:jz212@aol.com).

Finally, we would all like to see BMP continue to grow and you can help out by asking a friend or neighbor to consider joining. Thanks!

### **Mailing List Update--Important**

If you are a paid BMP member you automatically receive our newsletter and special events announcements. If you are not a paid BMP member and wish to continue to receive complimentary mailings, you must let us know by filling out the Mailing List Update form found in this newsletter and returning it to us. **If we don't hear from you, you will be removed from our mailing list.** We want all interested parties to receive our mailings regardless of their financial ability to become a member, so please take the time to fill out and return the form. Mailing costs are one of our largest expenses; returning the Mailing List Update will save us money that will then be available for other programs.

### **Prairie Ants**

Because of the large mounds it builds to shelter its nests, the prairie ant, *Formica montana*, is regarded as one of the most important biotic forces in the prairie environment. The mounds and excavated soil may occupy up to 1.7% of the surface area of a prairie. In southern Wisconsin, the ants build mounds in sedge meadows, prairies, savannas and old fields. Some of these nests remain active for over thirty years. One study reported that a decline in the population of the ants may have been due to a reduced burn schedule for the prairie. It was apparent that reduced burning allowed the growth of woody plants with the result there was increased shade on the mounds and reduced prairie plant growth. The native prairie plants harbor insects such as aphids, whose honeydew provides food for the ants.

More information on these ants and other large, small and very small wildlife will be presented at a future BMP meeting. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

### **Nancy, here is a quote Bob W. provided for "color". Use as you see fit.**

From the 1831 expedition of Henry R. Schoolcraft: "We ascended into the open plain country, which appears in every direction around the town, and directed our course to Gratiot's Grove (now in Lafayette County). In this distance a lively idea of the formation and the character of the country is given. The eye is feasted with the boundlessness of its range. Grass and flowers spread before and beside the traveler, and on looking back, they fill up the vista behind him. He soon finds himself in the midst of a sylvan scene. Groves fringe the tops of the most distant elevations, and clusters of trees -more rarely, open forests- are occasionally presented. The trees appear to be almost exclusively of the species of white oak, probably also bur oak, and rough bark hickory. Among the flowers, the plant called rosin-weed, attracts attention by its gigantic stature, and it is accompanied, as certainly as substance by shadow, by the wild indigo."

### **BMP Starts Library**

The BMP is proud to announce the start of our very own library. In cooperation with the Prairie Bookshop, 117 East Main Street, Mt. Horeb, the BMP will stock and maintain a selection of books designed to assist our members in making informed land management decisions, identifying flora and fauna, conducting restoration activities, and learning about natural history topics. If possible, we will also have newsletters from local conservation and environmental groups such as The Nature Conservancy, The Prairie Enthusiasts, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Madison Audubon Society. Materials may not be removed from the Bookshop, but there are plenty of comfortable chairs for your browsing convenience. And, all of the books on our shelf may be ordered from the Bookshop if something arouses your interest. We expect to have a complete list of titles available for our next newsletter. In the meantime, stop into the Prairie Bookstore and ask for the BMP shelf. We welcome your contributions and suggestions.

### **Prairie Talk a Big Success**

Nearly one hundred people attended Mike Anderson's March 7th talk entitled "The A-B-C's of Prairie Restoration". Mike is a BMP board member and the owner of BioLogic Consulting. During the talk, Mike presented tips and techniques for recreating prairie, illustrated his talk with numerous, colorful slides and answered many how do I? questions. This talk was the first in an on going series of BMP sponsored talks, field trips, and workshops designed to provide BMP members and the public with practical, timely information on land management and restoration (see calendar of events).

The talk also gave BMP members a chance to meet each other and for nonmembers to learn about the BMP. ?? *waiting for this # from Jim* people were inspired to become BMP members and many others renewed their membership. Many thanks to the Mt. Horeb McDonalds for their generous donation of coffee and juice and Schubert's Restaurant, also of Mt. Horeb, for donating the yummy cookies.

### **The Blue Mounds Project's Mission:**

The Blue Mounds Project is a community based organization that seeks to inspire, inform and empower private landowners in the Southwestern Wisconsin region to enjoy, protect and restore native biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Our objectives are:

- 1) Promote understanding, appreciation and conservation of native woodlands, prairies, wetlands and savannas and their special species in an economically viable manner, through community outreach programs and private contacts.
- 2) Act as a clearing house for information from people and organizations involved in preserving native biodiversity including information about plant, animal and habitat identification, management, restoration, seed sources, native plant nurseries and invasive, non-native species.
- 3) Encourage cooperative, volunteer restoration and management activities.
- 4) Identify public and private land use changes that may affect ecosystem health and promote community-based stewardship of the unique natural heritage of the Blue Mounds and the Southwestern region of Wisconsin.

**MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT**

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Check if you would like to receive the newsletter and announcements via email.

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you a land owner? If so, in what county and township? \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

Please check if this is a renewal \_\_\_\_\_

General (individual or family); \$25.00 / YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

Student/limited income (individual or family); \$15.00 / YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

Additional contribution to further the BMP mission \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Membership fee and all contributions are tax deductible\*\**

**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: THE BLUE MOUNDS PROJECT**

**RETURN TO: THE BLUE MOUNDS PROJECT, P. O. BOX 332, MT. HOREB, WI 53572**

**MAILING LIST UPDATE**

\_\_\_\_\_ I can't provide financial support at this time but, please keep me on your mailing list.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please drop me from your mailing list.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please correct my mailing address. The problem is:

\_\_\_\_\_ duplicate mailings \_\_\_\_\_ typo

**Please provide your name and address exactly as it appears on your mailing label, or tape the mailing label to this form.**

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NO. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Check if you would like to receive the newsletter and announcements via email.

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you a land owner? If so, in what county and township? \_\_\_\_\_

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