

THE BLUE MOUNDS PROJECT

Seeking to Inspire, Inform and Empower Private Landowners in the Southwestern Region of Wisconsin to Enjoy, Protect and Restore Native Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health

Spring 1999

Message From the President

Carroll Schaal

Dear Members,

There have been some changes, once again, to the Blue Mounds Project Board of Directors. Dean Lesser, President, resigned at our April meeting due to overwhelming personal commitments (he's getting married!). He has assured us he is still interested in the Project and would like to return to working with the group when his life has settled down. Good luck and thanks Dean!

As Vice President, I will assume the helm in the interim. The interim being the time between now and hopefully the next annual meeting when we can lay out a more formal board structure for your consideration. Coupled with Ursula Peterson stepping down this winter, our group of project directors and advisors is thinning out. Getting beyond month to month administration is sometimes difficult, but such are the "pains" of a growing volunteer organization.

Despite these changes, I remain *very excited* about the Project. I am encouraged by the large attendance at our annual meeting and workshops. Someone new usually attends our monthly meetings and the mailbox is always full. Interest in the Project and its mission is as strong as ever. We could just use a little more help at the organizational level. If you have an interest or a particular skill (fund raising, record keeping, bylaws development, program development) related to managing nonprofit organizations we would love to hear from you!

For the coming summer, we look forward to having ecologist Bob Wernerehl continue his work

in the field doing the things we all want from the Project – helping landowners understand and manage their land in ecologically sensitive manner. We have a great field trip followed by a pot luck lunch planned for July 24th (see the Events Calendar). We're also writing grants so we can keep Bob around through the Fall and into next year. Foundations and granting agencies remain interested in our work. In my opinion, timing and luck have just not been on our side, but I am confident we'll be successful securing additional funding in the coming year.

What are your plans? I hope they involve lots of time to enjoy and care for our wonderful southwest Wisconsin landscape. Have a great summer and if you have any questions or would like to discuss anything about the Project, please feel free to call me at (608) 437-6247. I hope to hear from you.

Board Meeting Schedule

Your voice is important; this is your organization and we value your input. Please attend a board meeting:

July 6, 7:00 pm, Mt. Horeb Community Ctr.

August 3, 7:00 pm, Mt. Horeb Community Ctr.

Sept. 7, 7:00 pm, Mt. Horeb Community Ctr.

Ecologist's Report

Bob Wernerehl, BMP Ecologist

I've started making 1999 site visits. If you have an outstanding request for a site visit, I'll be contacting you soon to arrange a visit to your property. If you are a new member, or if you're an old member who has not yet requested a site visit, please check-off the "Site Visit Request" portion of the Supporter Information Sheet accompanying this newsletter and return the form to BMP.

Turn A Pest Into Pesto

Reed Cockrell

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is an invasive weed that has plagued many restorationists over the years. It is easy to forget that it was originally introduced to the New World as a garden herb and, as such, has a number of culinary uses. This past April, I had the inspiration that garlic mustard would make a very nice pesto. I gave it a try, substituting garlic mustard leaves for fresh basil and omitting the garlic (for obvious reasons!). It turned out wonderful! My recipe:

- 2 or 3 handfuls of garlic mustard leaves
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 cup parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped walnuts or pine nuts

Puree all ingredients thoroughly in a blender or food processor (or with a mortar and pestle, if you are feeling really traditional). Makes about one pint. I usually use only the leaves, but the entire above-ground portion of the plant may be used, if it is young and tender. Serve tossed in with pasta, or spread on fresh-baked bread. It is also very nice on boiled potatoes.

Garlic mustard pesto is a pleasant alternative to the more traditional basil pesto, and can be made in early spring when fresh basil is not

available. It also makes good use of some of those garlic mustard plants which many of us pull so diligently every spring.

Name Change Update

As you are probably aware, we have been entertaining a name change for the Project. We received numerous good suggestions via email and during the March annual meeting. These suggestions generated several lengthy discussions. For instance, the majority of people present at the annual meeting were in favor of a name change. However, a majority were also in favor of retaining "Blue Mounds" as part of our name.

In the end, we decided to play it safe and keep our current name - for now. Many felt we needed to retain the identity that "Blue Mounds" gives, despite the specific locale it denotes, and we all wanted to drop the transient tag of "project". However, neither the members present at the annual meeting or the board could reach consensus on a better name and felt perhaps the timing just wasn't right. Thanks for all your input and stay tuned for further developments. In the mean time, if inspiration strikes and you come up with the perfect name that says it all, please let us know (BMP, PO Box 332, Mount Horeb, WI 53572 or via email at biologic@chorus.net).

BMP Logo

Now that the name change debate has been laid to rest, it's time to start thinking about our logo. You may have noticed that this issue of the newsletter reinstates the logo developed by Brian Pruka in 1995 (look on the cover).

Do you like this logo? Do you dislike this logo? Is there a concept or idea you'd rather see as BMP's logo? Send us your ideas, comments, and sketches: BMP, PO Box 332, Mount Horeb, WI 53572 or via email at biologic@chorus.net.

Membership Committee Update

Vicki Harris & Jim Zerwick

BMP Grows Like A Weed!

We now have a total of 173 paid members thanks to the 31 new members who have joined so far during 1999. In fact, we are maintaining last years torrid growth rate when we increased our membership 49%. So far in 1999, our 31 new members represent another 22% increase (in only 5 months!). Remember, our goal is at least 200 by 2000, so keep spreading the word.

There are still some of you who have forgotten to renew your membership. Please check your mailing label and if the EXPIRATION DATE in the upper right corner is lower than 99-07, your dues are due! Also, we now have an email list of 129 addresses which we use sparingly for important announcements. The more we can communicate by email, the more efficient and cost-effective we can be, so if you're not sure that we have your email address, please send it to jz212@aol.com. Thanks!

Once again, we have received donations from many of you beyond the \$25 per year dues level. We want to especially thank those of you who have donated since our last acknowledgment, (please let us know if we left you off the list):

Evelyn Batchelor, Blue Mounds
Helen & Irv Bruner, Verona
Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve, Mt. Horeb
John Coffin, Blue Mounds
Lyman and Margaret Crittenden, Cross Plains
Sarah Crittenden and Alex Gemrich, Cross Plains
Reed Cockrell, Darlington
William Deronne, Elmhurst, IL
Vern & Betty Drape, Mt Horeb
Julie Hayward & Don D'Alessio, Blue Mounds
Brende Hofer, Madison
Richard & Judy Kelly, McFarland
Pam & Randy Laufenberg, Mt Horeb
Bo Monroe and Mary Romolino, Barneveld
Mound Vue Garden Club, Mt Horeb
Dan & Calico Schmidt, Monticello
Ruth Ann Schmitt & Steve Jensen, Mineral Point
James Van Deurzen, Mazomanie
Laura Wierzbicki & Greg Griswold, Cross Plains
Tom & Bonnie Wise, Verona
Meagan Yost & Tony Karls, Poynette
Hyuk & Gail Yu, Blue Mounds

Thanks one and all for your generosity!

Websites of Interest to Conservationists

Wired? Want information? Then check out the following web sites, just don't forget to get out-of-doors and enjoy the real thing.

The Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Endangered Resources website offers information about Wisconsin's endangered resources, resource related events, current State and Federal legislation, fact sheets providing natural history information for many of Wisconsin's rare species, invasive (exotic) plants species control, and much more. Find them at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er>.

The Grant-Platte and Sugar-Pecatonica River basins are located in southwestern Wisconsin. Many of you reside or own land in this area. The **UW-Extension, Grant-Platt/Sugar-Pecatonica River Basin** website provides information about the activities and events, conservation and natural resource clubs (including BMP), and agency personnel active in the basin. Find them at <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/gpsp/partners.htm>.

Hopefully, the **Prairie Enthusiasts** are already familiar to you. If not, they are a nonprofit, Wisconsin-born, grass roots organization devoted to the protection, management, and restoration of native prairies and savannas in the upper Midwest. Their website contains information about the organization and its chapters, an events calendar, book reviews, informative articles, entertaining stories, and links to other like-minded sites. Find them at www.prairie.presenter.com.

Day-Flying Woodland and Prairie Moths

Wendell Burkholder, Entomologist

The Eight-spotted Forester, *Alypia octomaculata*, is a day-flying moth that lives in or near woodlands in southern Wisconsin. The adults that I saw in recent years were flying on sunny days at mid-day above clumps of grape vine near my cabin in Iowa county. They have a fast-darting flight, typical for this genus.

The moths are small (1.0 to 1.5 inches), but easily recognized. They are black with two large spots on each of the four wings (see illustration). The spots are mostly white with some pale yellow coloring in those on the front wings. There are also some orange or yellow markings on the abdomen and legs. The adult moths visit flowers.

The larvae are whitish lavender with narrow black lines and a wide orange band on the segments. The head is orange and the body has small black tubercles. There are also white spots in the abdominal area. They feed on grape (*Vitis*) and Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus*).

A related species, *Alypia langtoni*, (Langton's forester) also flies in the daytime and feeds on fireweed, (*Epilobium angustifolium*). This moth species is not common in Wisconsin, occurring only in a small area in the northern part of the state.

Other species in this genus are even more colorful. The most brilliant is the California Forester, *Alypia mariposa*, found along the Pacific coast.

Calendar of Events

Program and Education Committee

Mike Anderson, Wendell Burkholder, Marie Wilhelm

Reptiles and Amphibians of South Central Wisconsin and BMP Summer Pot Luck

July 24, Saturday

10 am to 12 noon (reptiles and amphibians)

12 noon to ?? (BMP summer pot luck)

Lake Marion Park, Mazomanie

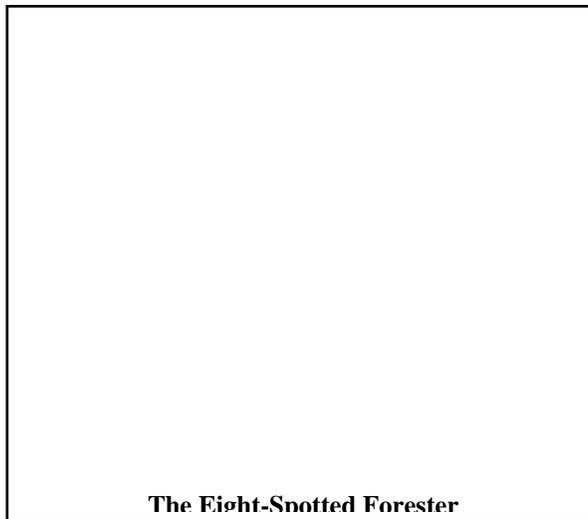
Join trip leader Rebecca Christoffel at the Lake Marion park shelter near Mazomanie at 10 am on

July 24th to learn more about local herptiles (reptiles and amphibians). The program will start with a general introduction to herptiles, local species identification and natural histories, and conservation and management recommendations. Live specimens will acquaint you with the frogs, salamanders, turtles, and snakes that live in our area.

Following the introduction at the park shelter we will adjourn to the field to put our new-found knowledge to use. First, we'll search Lake Marion and its shoreline for turtles, salamanders, and frogs. Then, we'll move to the nearby Mazo Bluff Prairie to search for snakes and other reptiles.

After searching the Mazo Bluff Prairie, we'll return to the Lake Marion park shelter at about noon for a pot luck lunch. Please bring a dish to pass and your own eating equipment. BMP will supply burgers/brats, buns, condiments, and beverages.

Rebecca is a Wildlife Outreach Specialist at the University of Wisconsin. She has had a lifelong interest in animals, and has been presenting programs on reptiles and amphibians of Wisconsin to the public since 1992.



The Eight-Spotted Forester

Directions: Lake Marion Park is located near Mazomanie on County Hwy. KP about 1/2 mile south of Hwy. 14. Call (608) 795-4244 for more information.

Calendar of Events, continued

Prairie 2000 Benefit Concert

July 31, Saturday, 8 pm

Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve (near Barneveld)

Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve is engaged in a variety of environmental preservation, restoration, and educational endeavors. This Summer, work continues on Prairie 2000, a prairie restoration project coordinated by naturalist Reed Cockrell. A Prairie 2000 benefit concert will be held at Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve on Saturday evening, July 31 beginning at 8 pm. Acclaimed Celtic singer and storyteller Celia Farran will perform songs and tales inspired by her love of Nature and visits to ancient sites in Ireland. Tickets are \$10/adult; \$5/youth. For more information about this event or for a schedule of prairie walks and work parties, contact Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve, PO Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572; (608) 924-2216; by email at circle@circlesanctuary.org; or visit their website at <http://www.circlesanctuary.org/nature/preserve>.

1999 Wisconsin Farm Progress Days

July 13-15

Grant County, Southwest of Lancaster

Can't tell a cultivator from a combine? It doesn't matter, Farm Progress Days has something for everyone. Held on a Grant County century farm, this year's show offers in-the-field machinery demonstrations, tours of a 20-stall computerized milking parlor, varietal plots, a rotational grazing demonstration, and more than 600 commercial exhibitors showcasing their equipment, machinery, facilities, and services. Exhibits and displays staffed by state and federal agricultural and natural resource agency personnel

and UW Extension/Madison specialists will give you an opportunity to have your questions answered.

For more information contact: Glenn Thompson, General Manager, WI Farm Progress Days, Inc., 146 Agricultural Hall, Univ. of WI, Madison, WI 53706 or by phone at (608) 262-2966.

From the Journal of James Colhoun, July 23, 1823: James Colhoun was an astronomer with the 1823 expedition of Major Stephen Long as it ascended the Mississippi River. This extract was written while the expedition was in western Minnesota on the Minnesota river.

“Annual fires remove all vegetable deposit. The Indian sets fire to the prairie behind him to distract pursuit by the smoke and by destroying all trace of his passage; to keep the country open and thus invite the buffalo, and enable him to see and chase his game; to give notice to his friends of his approach or to warn them of the presence of the enemy; the traders by the same means bring to them the Indians; the prairies are often burnt by the spreading of the fires of encampments. By the operation of these numerous causes, we may safely say that all the prairies of the continent, with little exception, are burnt every year. Places that have had respite of only a few months are covered with dense thickets. Observation and reflection, so far has, as I have capacity in viewing a subject interesting to me, have convinced me that fire is the cause of the existence of the prairies.”

Your Advertisement Here

Beginning with the next newsletter we will be accepting advertisements for inclusion in the newsletter. The revenue generated will help defray the cost of publishing this newsletter and allow our grant money to be used for other purposes more directly beneficial to our members. If you or someone you know would like to advertise in the newsletter, please contact The Blue Mounds Project, c/o M. Anderson, 2505 Richardson Street, Fitchburg, WI 53711-5474, or call (608) 277-9960.

Our 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:

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.

The Blue Mounds Project is sponsored by Community Conservation Consultants (CCC), a nonprofit organization.

The Blue Mounds Project Newsletter is published quarterly. Send your comments, suggestions, and submissions to Mike Anderson, editor, BMP, PO Box 332, Mount Horeb, WI 53572.

**The Blue Mounds Project
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