



# THE BLUE MOUNDS AREA PROJECT

*Promoting Ecological Restoration and Stewardship of Native Habitats*

Fall 2002 Vol. 5 No. 4

## Pine Relics and Pioneer Families – the Conclusion

Carroll Schaal, President

*This is the second of a two-part series of excerpts from correspondence from Wayne Iverson. Wayne conducted vegetation surveys and research in Iowa County while he was a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the 1950s. Some of the information Wayne shared with us is from a paper he authored called "The Bluffs Around Daleyville."*

*This paper explored the history and unique ecology of the Daleyville area sandstone bluffs which Wayne described as "technically referred to as white pine relics . . . that are small islands of 5 to 10 acres of northern plant species in the midst of the prairie ridgetops and deciduous forest hillsides of southwest Wisconsin."*

The Retrum Bluffs were about 3 to 4 miles south of Daleyville on the Conrad Retrum farm. This was an Iverson family picnic and a swimming spot. On very hot summer days our mother would drive us down the Retrum Hill, cross the bridge, and park the car on the roadside. Then we would get out inner tubes, and often picnic makings. After negotiating the barbwire fence, we'd pass by a small cattail swamp filled with excited red-winged blackbirds. The creek was fairly shallow and we would feel our toes being nibbled by small fish as we floated on inner tubes or waded. Beyond the creek were the bluffs covered with white pine. At the base of the cliffs was a patch of Equisetum (Horsetail), an ancient, leafless plant standing 1 to 3 feet tall with a stem that has numerous joints. We would collect some of them and make tiny "fish poles," like brother Donald's steel fishing rod made up of sections connected at ferrules.

The Thompson Bluffs were a mile or two upstream from the Retrum Bluff. The meadow adjacent to it was sometimes used for the Daleyville School's "Play Day" when the five township schools would meet in May to have contests of foot races, broad jumping and long jumping, gunny sack races, three legged races where two children would race with one leg of each tied together with a rag, and softball games, followed by a picnic lunch. Tiny colored ribbons would be given out to the top 3 to 4 winners. Points would be totaled at day's end to see which school had won. Apparently it was held there because the Daleyville's school ground had too much slope and had no

adjacent meadow, as had most other schools.

Special places such as the pine relics really deserve to be preserved, not only for future generations to study and enjoy, but primarily to assure that these unique micro-ecosystems continue to survive. Unfortunately, the new county road built to replace the old Clay Hill Road in the 1940s seriously damaged the setting of the Grimstad Bluffs. It cut through a low bluff on the northeast, cut off a scenic section of the creek at the base of the bluffs, and cut deeply into the far west end of



Bob Wernerehl

the bluff. The cutoff section of the creek became stagnant, while the rerouted creek was a straight, 20 foot wide, raw-sided "ditch" about 6 to 8 feet deep paralleling the new road. The only fish that survived in the cutoff section were bullheads, whereas there was previously an excellent trout fishery there with one really nice, deep hole under a huge willow tree that was a favorite fishing spot for many.

To top it off, for a few years the upper end of the cutoff creek became a junk and trash dump, replacing three other dumps in ravines along Clay Hill Road. Sadly, my family and I contributed trash to that dump, as it was the only one in the Daleyville area. However, a bit later farm owner David Grimstad requested I paint and install a metal "No Dumping Allowed" sign, and that seemed to be effective. I have heard that the

vegetation on these (Anderson) bluffs has been severely damaged by the overuse of people in the past few years.

*Mr. Iverson concluded his correspondence by stating that he hoped BMAP "could expand [its service area] to the south of the Old Military Ridge to preserve such relics. Those to the south are on the fringes of the white pine relics and may be the most fragile and maybe even more interesting."*

*Mr. Iverson – we're happy to report that this area is included within BMAP's service area, that we have several member-landowners in this area, and that we share your appreciation of, and concern for, the bluffs.*

*If your curiosity has been aroused and you'd like to see a white pine relic, a good example of one of the relics described by Mr. Iverson is easily viewed at the DNR Gordon Creek Fishery Area located just south of Daleyville along County Highway A. \**

## Message From the Board

Carroll Schall, President

Much of the Board's discussions this year have centered on reinforcing our education mission and our membership. While we considered the prospects of becoming more active in actual land management, buying equipment and organizing work groups, we've concluded to focus more on what we do best: providing information and advocating for native ecosystems.

We've been giving a lot of thought to the organization, our mission, and how it best fits the needs of the community. We think you'll see that reflected in the newsletter with a full schedule of educational events, references to membership, and a thoughtful revisiting of our landowner site visit policy.

Landowner site visits have been discussed quite a bit. They educate, help initiate management and, based on your feedback, are the main reason most people become members. As a result, the Board felt it was important to develop a site visit policy that not only defines the level of service but also provides adequate funding so that site visits will be consistently available. While the new policy has been officially adopted, we recognize that it will likely change over time.

Lately, our education and outreach efforts have emphasized water and water quality. Near the end of the second installment of the *Pine Relics and Pioneer Families* article on page 1, contributor Wayne Iverson describes the destruction of a segment of the stream and worries about the future protection of these areas. He can be assured that continued degradation has not necessarily been the case when it comes to the health of our local streams. In fact, the quality of our streams is improving, as we heard from Dr. John Lyons during his BMAP-sponsored talk on October 30.

It's been 30 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act which helped control end-of-pipe discharges of contaminants known as "point" source pollution. In the last decade high participation rates in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and better farming practices have provided additional water quality improvements by addressing "nonpoint" sources of polluted runoff. Through CRP, thousands of acres of highly erodible farm fields have been converted to a continuous cover of grass and trees that slows runoff, traps sediment, and allows water to soak into the ground and recharge natural springs. What's more, our area streams have the potential for even greater improvement with a little more help.

With funding from the DNR, the BMAP is helping by promoting an understanding of the link between water quality and land use through events such as Dr. Lyon's talk and by directly working with landowners interested in protecting streams. Our ecologist, Bob Wernerehl, is contacting landowners, explaining how activities on their land affect stream health and providing them with information on programs like CRP and others that can assist them in making the necessary improvements. Contact Bob at 608-795-4244 for more information about our stream protection initiative.

The stream protection work is a good example of taking advantage of a funding opportunity that allows us to implement

our core mission of education and direct landowner outreach while addressing a community need. Our new site visit policy will allow us to continue to provide a broader-based service to members uncompromised by the particulars of shorter-term projects.

As always, we're interested in your feedback. One way to do that is to attend our Annual Meeting on March 8, 2003 where we'll discuss our activities, policies, plans, and budgets with you. Or how about becoming a board member or serving on the Nomination Committee? The term for half of the board members expires next spring and their replacements will need to be selected at the Annual Meeting. Our bylaws call for the Nominating Committee to include two people from the membership at large. If you are interested in serving on the Board or the Nominating Committee, please contact Carroll Schaal at 608-261-6423. \*

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## A Birthday is Honored by a Gift to BMAP

Mary Michal

Recently, when my husband David celebrated his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, we had a small gathering of friends at our home. David asked our friends not to bring presents as "their friendship was the true gift." We experienced a lovely surprise: a friend who really wanted to mark the occasion asked what would be a meaningful charity, as she wanted to make a donation in David's honor. Of course, we responded that the Blue Mounds Area Project, with its important mission of education and land stewardship, would be the charity of David's choice.

That got me thinking: with the holidays approaching and with many of us choosing to live more simple lives, wouldn't this be a perfect opportunity to gently suggest to our friends and family that the gift of a donation to an important organization would be a most meaningful gift? I've spoken with many friends who have begun this practice within their families and share joyful stories of learning about their families through the charitable giving choices that people make. What a wonderful way to honor the earth and each other!

For those of you who don't need any more "stuff," please consider a gift membership as the holidays approach. It's as easy as checking the Gift Membership box on the BMAP Membership Form found on page 9. Of course, it's wonderful to honor and remember those we love through charitable giving for any occasion or at any time of year. Please remember BMAP when your friends and family ask you for your holiday or birthday "wish list," or to honor or remember a special person in your life. \*



## A Shocking Success

Bob Wernerehl

On a beautiful autumn day in early October, 25 area residents attended a stream shocking demonstration led by fisheries expert Dave Marshall from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Dave was aided by a three-person crew. The event was sponsored by the Blue Mounds Area Project and the Iowa County chapter of Trout Unlimited.



Dave Marshall, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right, and the stream shocking crew explaining their equipment and techniques.

The event was held just south of Daleyville on Gordon Creek, which feeds into the Pecatonica River above Blanchardville. Gordon Creek flows through land owned on one side by Jim McCauley, head of the Land Conservation Department in Dodgeville, and on the other side by BMAP members Peter and Mary Rathbun.

Mr. McCauley removed box elder trees from this stretch of the creek last year, and now a dense cover of grass holds the soil. This has helped turn this part of the stream into a clear, fast flowing brook with a hard bottom. Other land use changes in the watershed, especially replacing cropland with semi-permanent grass cover through the Conservation Reserve Program, have helped to stabilize the soil and increase year-round spring flow, thereby improving the water quality and fish habitat of area streams.

Dave explained how his equipment worked. “Wearing waders, the crew walks alongside our five-foot long boat containing a small tank and a portable generator,” Dave said. “Hand-held electrodes are waved back and forth in the stream. The electrical current is enough to stun the fish in the immediate vicinity of the electrode. They wiggle to the surface for a moment, and we capture them with a small net, and place them in a tank for measuring.”

Participants watched with great curiosity as trout after trout was caught and placed in the tank. There were several fishers in the group who seemed to know each location along the stream, and expressed some surprise at what they had missed. When the tank is full, the fish are removed one by one, measured quickly on a board that looks like a piece of white plastic, and returned unharmed to the stream. One of the crew stays on the bank to record the measurements as they are shouted-out by the measurer. As the shimmering beauty of each foot-long fish brought an “ooh” from the crowd, a fisher

jokingly commented “looked like 16 inches to me.” Overall, 154 brown trout were recorded in a stretch of stream about 200 yards long.

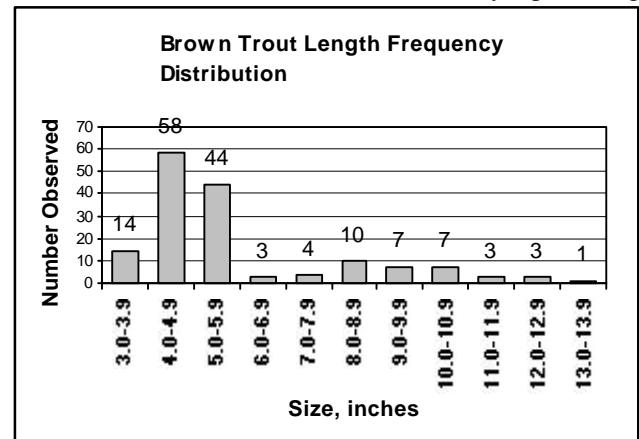
Dave was particularly interested in finding a small minnow called the mottled sculpin (see photo). This minnow is difficult to find and regularly under-reported by the fisheries crew, yet its population is often the key to the health of the stream. It is highly intolerant of pollution and siltation, and is an important food source for the larger trout. Sixty-seven mottled sculpin were found, a level indicating stream conditions that are well above average. In addition to the sculpin, one American Brook Lamprey was found. This native, migratory, non-parasitic eel is another indicator of a high quality stream.



A mottled sculpin, a minnow species found in higher quality, coldwater streams.

Another key link in the trout food chain are invertebrates, which most of us know more simply as “bugs.” Streams that are choked with silt from soil erosion are often nearly devoid of invertebrates. However, this stretch of Gordon Creek has a rocky bottom and many areas covered with underwater plants thriving in the sunlit, clear water un-muddied by clouds of silt. These rocks and plants are perfect habitat for invertebrates known as scuds or amphipods. We know their close relatives as sow bugs, the dark-colored flattened critters found in abundance under the bark of rotting logs, or beneath a damp board in your basement! The larvae of an insect called the caddis fly lives on the rocks, making small tubular homes out of stones and bits of leaves or twigs. These scuds and caddis flies are relished by trout.

The shocking revealed that Gordon Creek has an age-diverse brown trout population that includes many young fish (see graph). The presence of the young fish is important because it indicates the brown trout are naturally reproducing.



The amphipods and caddis flies are recorded by their taxonomic family and the tally is used to derive a numeric score called the “biotic index” that is a measure of the health of the stream. Based on its biotic index, Dave pronounced this stretch of Gordon Creek “excellent.” \*

## BMAP Board Adopts New Site Visit Policy

David Haskin

A site visit by the Blue Mounds Area Project's ecologist long has been one of the most important and enjoyed benefits of a BMAP membership. The BMAP board believes that site visits are an essential way for BMAP to fulfill its mission, which the mission statement describes as being "to inspire, inform and empower private landowners ... to enjoy, protect and restore native biodiversity and ecosystem health."

To date, site visits have been free for BMAP members. However, after reviewing our budgets for the last two years, it became apparent that membership fees and intermittent grant funds were not covering the full cost of providing site visits. Faced with the conflicting desire to continue offering site visits and the need to work within a limited budget, the board has agreed to begin charging a \$100 fee for a site visit. While we regret having to make this change, the board felt that BMAP was unable to continue providing site visits without charging a fee. We believe the fee is highly competitive.

Under the revised site visit policy, site visits will last up to three hours, including the time required to create a written report. The report will include a description of the site and its native plant communities, including presettlement conditions, a brief inventory of native and invasive species, management suggestions, and a list of helpful resources. Members living outside of a 30-mile radius from Blue Mounds may be charged an extra fee to cover travel time.

If you requested a site visit prior to the implementation of the site visit fee, you will still receive a site visit with verbal information and management suggestions at no charge. At your discretion, you have the option of upgrading to the three-hour visit and written report by paying the \$100 fee.

If you're planning to manage or restore native biodiversity to your land, or if you just want to know more about your land, the BMAP site visit remains an excellent perk of BMAP membership. If you are a BMAP member and would like a site visit next season, please contact BMAP ecologist Bob Wernerehl as soon as possible at 608-795-4244 or by email at [rww@tds.net](mailto:rww@tds.net). \*

### What Our Members Say About Their Site Visit

"Before our site visit, we weren't sure how best to steward our land. But [during the site visit] we learned what native species we had and received tips about how to proceed. That really motivated us to start our restoration project."

"...the catalyst that inspired the present restoration work on our 100+ acres in western Dane County."

"...an enjoyable and informative visit . . . an excellent job of telling me what was already on my property and making suggestions for future improvements."

## Seeking Nominations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bur Oak Award for Outstanding Land Stewardship

Do you know someone who has gone the extra distance, planted the extra acre, nurtured the natives, or successfully turned back waves of invading weeds? If so, we hope you will nominate him or her for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bur Oak Award for Outstanding Land Stewardship, which is presented to a BMAP member who exemplifies our mission to protect and restore native habitats.

Send your nominations to us at PO Box 332, Mount Horeb, WI 53572 or via email to [schaal1@mhtc.net](mailto:schaal1@mhtc.net). We'll announce the recipient during the Annual Meeting on March 8, 2003. \*

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## Maybe Next Year. . . .

You may recall that last spring BMAP was nominated for the Virginia M. Kline Award for Excellence in Community-Based Restoration. The purpose of the award, which is sponsored by the Aldo Leopold Foundation and the Friends of the Arboretum, Inc., is to "recognize a group of individuals who have dedicated their collective time, skill, and efforts for community-based ecological restoration, utilizing the human community's role in the restoration of ecological communities."

Unfortunately, while we were a strong contender, we did not receive the award. Fortunately, the award went to the very deserving Sisters of St. Benedict in Middleton for their efforts to restore land in the Lake Mendota Priority Watershed, thereby significantly improving the quality of water flowing into Lake Mendota. Congratulations! \*

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## Do You Own a Walk-behind Mower?

Do you own a walk-behind mower other than the DR Field and Brush Mower sold by Country Home Products? If so, the editor of this newsletter would like to talk with you.

I'm working on a user-review of different brands of walk-behind mowers for the next BMAP newsletter. I already have a review of the DR mower, now I'm seeking comments on other brands. I promise to make it quick and easy for you. Our readers will appreciate it and so will I.

Please contact Mike Anderson at 608-277-9960 or by email at [biologic@chorus.net](mailto:biologic@chorus.net). It will be easier and quicker than mowing a firebreak. \*



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## We Appreciate Your Membership and Donations

The Blue Mounds Area Project would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our current members, who are listed below. Members whose name is followed by an \* made a donation to BMAP during 2002, in addition to their membership. They deserve an extra big thank you. We'd also like to thank our members who have been kind enough to give a friend a gift membership. See "A Birthday is Honored" on page 2 for more information on gift memberships and how to give one. We apologize for any incorrect or missing information and hope you'll correct the mistake.

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### Current Members

Andrew Anderson  
Michael Anderson\*  
Deane Army  
John Asmuth  
Jim and Barbara Ballard  
John Barnes and K. Mattice  
Evelyn Batchelor\*  
Chuck Bauer\*  
Robert C. Becker  
Alan and Sandy Bemis\*  
Trudy and Stephen Bernsten  
John and Barbara Bird  
Merel Black  
Klebba Bob\*  
Dan Bohlin  
Barbara Borns  
Earl and Shirley Brandt\*  
Beatrice Briggs\*  
Kathy and Tom Brock\*  
Marc Brody  
Wendell Burkholder  
Sandra Cannon\*  
Rebecca Christoffel and Andrew Williams  
Barbara and Theodore Cochrane  
John and Christine Coffin  
Hope Conley  
Guerdon Coombs  
Kate Cooper  
Howard and Susan Cosgrove\*  
Steve Cowan  
Nanci Cremer and Michael Bowman  
Lyman and Margaret Crittenden  
William Deronne  
Vern and Betty Drape  
Cynthia and James Dries  
Eric and Nicole Espe  
Lee Fahrney  
A. Fairchild and B. Cupps  
Linda Farmer and C. Learned  
Hildy Feen  
Mike Foy\*  
Fern Frame  
Catherine Franks  
Heidi Fritz and Chris Watson

Barbara Glass  
Jane and Seth Goodman  
Dianne Greenley  
Doug and Janet Haag  
Wayne Hakes  
Larry and Judy Hale  
Patrick Handrick  
Vicki Harris  
Laurie Hartjes  
Marcia Hartwig  
Julie Hayward and Donn D'Alessio\*  
Rich and Kathy Henderson  
Andrea Hoerr  
Brende Hofer  
Rob Horwich  
Douglas and Janet Huebner  
Harriet Irwin  
Maggie Jones  
Paul Kaarakka  
Duane Kaufman  
Jane and Vincent Kavaloski  
Richard and Judy Kelly\*  
Jan Ketelle  
Pete and Jan Kiel  
Lynn and Linda Knutson\*  
Mark A. Koeppl\*  
Randy Kohl  
Kevin Kuntz  
Barbara Larson  
Dean Lesser\*  
Bill and Darlene Liebrock  
Douglas Lloyd and L. Derse  
Diane Lorenz  
Vern and Sylvia Lowell  
Wanda and Tom Marling  
Kent Mayfield and Jack Ford  
Paul and Cindy McIntosh\*  
Myrna and Dobbin McNatt  
Mary Michal and David Haskin\*  
Tom and Nancy Mohs\*  
Madeline and Steve Morgan\*  
Carol and Jack Naughton  
John A. Noreika  
Jon Norris and R. Ravetta  
Bill Olson

Dan Olson  
David and Gretchen Pearson  
Ursula Petersen  
Kathleen Piper\*  
Roger and Marina Post\*  
John and Julie Raasch\*  
Beth Rahko  
Nick Rahn  
Mary Lou Rashke  
Ron and Eda Rassner  
Doug and Kathy Robichaud  
Betty and Max Rosenbaum\*  
Michael Rosenthal\*  
Roland Rueckert  
Jack Saltes  
Carroll and Pam Schaal  
Dan and Calico Schmidt  
Ruth Ann Schmitt and S. Jensen  
Barbara Sheldon  
Joe Sigg  
Mary and Joe Skupniewitz  
Ron and Paulette Smith  
David and Collette Sorgel  
Sue Steinmann and Bill Weege  
Richard and Lenore Taubert  
Nancy Thomas and Mike Samuel  
Margaret Van Alstyne  
James Van Deurzen  
Ken Wade and Pat Trochlell\*  
Barb and Dennis Wanless  
Scott Weber\*  
Peter and Lynne Weil  
Percy Werner\*  
Scott Wiener  
Paul and Coe Williams\*  
Anne Woodson\*  
Meagan Yost and T. Karls\*  
Wayne and Bev Young  
James Zerwick\*

### Gift Memberships

Jon Becker from Mary Michal  
Kristen Westad and Kurt Lifka from Jan  
Ketelle

*Thank you members and donors for your generous support*

## USRWA Update

Frank Fetter, Executive Director USRWA

As 2002 draws to a close, we at the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association (USRWA) are beginning to reflect on a full year. In 2002, we finally got a permanent home, received two awards, and most importantly, continued to work for the preservation and enhancement of the Upper Sugar River Watershed.

For the third year in a row, the USRWA teamed up with the Dane County Land Conservation Department, the Deer Creek Sportsman's Club, the Dane County Conservation League, and other groups and individuals to restore more stream bank in the watershed. Volunteers from USRWA and other groups built and installed 243 LUNKERS along the West Branch of the Sugar River upstream from County Highway U. To date over 800 LUNKERS and over nine miles of stream bank have been restored along the West Branch and Frye's Feeder.

We sponsored a private well testing program in which we subsidized the cost of the test kits, and then held a public forum on the results. The results were generally favorable, but there were some small areas of concern.

I was hired as Executive Director, and we moved into our new office at 207 East Main Street in Mt. Horeb. If you happen to find yourself strolling the downtown "Trollway" in Mt. Horeb some Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, please stop in and visit. We have a wealth of information about the Upper Sugar River Watershed, and water resources in general.

Finally, we were recognized twice for our achievements in 2002. The Dane County Lakes and Watersheds Commission recognized us as one of four inaugural "Dane County Water Champions." The Natural Heritage Land Trust also recognized us as a recipient of the 2002 Stewardship award for nonprofits.

We feel the USRWA needs to live up to these accolades, and we have big plans for 2003. Our first public forum of the new year will be on the 2002 Farm Bill, and what it means to landowners. We will be assembling a panel of experts to give a brief explanation of the changes to the various programs, and then open the meeting for questions and discussion (date and location TBA).

We are also planning to finalize and implement our information and education plan, which will help municipalities in the watershed educate their citizens on the importance of their water resources, and how they can protect them.

We welcome your questions, input, and comments. If you'd like to contact the USRWA, you can reach us by phone at 608-437-7707, by email at [execdr@usrwa.org](mailto:execdr@usrwa.org), or by "snail mail" at PO Box 314, Mount Horeb, WI 53572. \*

## Websites of Interest to Conservationists

If you spend any amount of time outdoors, sooner or later, and it will probably be sooner, you'll find a caterpillar. After admiring their beauty, you may wonder what butterfly or moth it will eventually become. Well, look no further than the *Caterpillars of Eastern Forests* website at [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2000/cateast/cateast.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2000/cateast/cateast.htm).

According to the website, the purpose of the guide is to enable forest managers, extension entomologists, and nonspecialists to identify many of the eastern region's most frequently encountered caterpillars. The authors also hope the guide will "promote a greater appreciation for the remarkable caterpillar biodiversity of eastern forest and woodland ecosystems." You'll find information on the caterpillar life cycle, morphology, species descriptions, and clear photos to help you identify your latest find.

The Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center has put *Managing Habitat for Grassland Birds - A Guide For Wisconsin*, the WDNR publication authored by David Sample and Michael Mossman, online as a HTML document. If you own or manage grassland, you will want to browse this comprehensive and easy to understand reference. Look for it at: [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2002/wiscbird/wiscbird.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2002/wiscbird/wiscbird.htm).

If you're looking for species-specific information on the effects of management practices on grassland birds, click on the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center's website where you'll find a document entitled *Effects of Management Practices on Grassland Birds*. The site has a wealth of information on 33 grassland bird species, including range information, habitat preferences, area requirements, breeding season phenology, and management recommendations. You can also download their extensive grassland bird bibliography with 4,446 entries. You'll find it at: [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/literatr/grasbird/grasbird.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/literatr/grasbird/grasbird.htm).

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, has released a significantly revised and very useful brochure entitled *New Tree Planting*. The heavily illustrated two-page brochure covers tree selection, including bare root verses balled and burlapped nursery stock, the seven steps of proper tree planting, and post-planting care, including pruning. Available in PDF format from [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/publications/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/publications/). Look for the New Tree Planting brochure link under the Urban and Community Forestry heading. \*



# BMAP Winter Lecture Series

Prairie, economics, grazing, oak savanna, land use, water quality, private lands, air photos, and restoration. What do these concepts have in common? Find out by attending the following BMAP-sponsored talks. All talks are free and the public is encouraged to attend—please bring a friend. Directions are at the bottom of the page.

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## Discovering and Sustaining Prairies and Savannas on Private Lands

Steve Swenson, ecologist for the Aldo Leopold Foundation (ALF), and his team digitized aerial photographs of bluff prairies dating back to 1937. Using Geographic Information Systems technology, the team compared the prairie acreage present historically to today's acreage. The result? Some prairies shrank up to 72 percent in less than 60 years.

In addition to presenting the startling results of his study, Steve will discuss the reasons behind these losses and what is being done to turn the clock back for these prairies. Steve will also describe what private landowners can do to document losses on their own land and to restore prairies and oak savanna.

In addition to being the ecologist for ALF, Steve manages the Blufflands Project, a joint effort of the ALF and The Prairie Enthusiasts. The Blufflands Project, like BMAP, works directly with private landowners to preserve native biodiversity. Although the Blufflands Project's primary geographic focus is north of the Wisconsin River, while BMAP's is south of the River, the two organizations share many attributes and some members. As part of his talk, Steve will tell us about the Blufflands Project, share some of the Project's successes, and discuss the challenges private landowners face in restoring their land.

Please join us on **Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Mount Horeb Public Library.

## Exploring Options to Restore Wisconsin's Degraded Oak Savannas

The goal of many land managers is to restore and conserve degraded savannas, while private landowners often need to utilize these areas for economic gain. Rotational grazing using livestock that browse woody species may reduce the aggressive woody species that often choke unmanaged savannas, with minimal impact to the herbaceous layer. Thus, if grazing can be used as a tool to restore oak savannas it will offer a win-win alternative for livestock producers and land managers.

Join us when Emily Kathol discusses a long-term project begun in 2000 to explore the feasibility of using rotational grazing and prescribed burning to restore Wisconsin's oak savannas. The project is investigating the effects of various combinations of rotational grazing and prescribed burning on shrub density, vegetative structure and composition, light levels, and soil characteristics. On the economic side, the study also evaluates the potential for increased forage production by comparing the impacts and sustainability of different stocking densities.

Emily Kathol is a 4<sup>th</sup> year graduate student in the Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development program of the Institute for Environmental Studies at UW-Madison. Her Master's thesis, which will be completed in May 2003, is based on this study.

Please join us on **Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Mount Horeb Public Library.

## Effects of Land Use on Streams and Water Resource Quality

There is an intimate relationship between water resources and the land. Changes in land use can be directly linked to changes in the condition of our area's water resources, especially our fragile cold water streams. Human population growth and changes in land use are increasingly impacting aquatic environments. Protecting not only streams and rivers, but also groundwater, lakes, and wetlands requires wise land use.

Michael Miller, a stream ecologist and stream monitoring specialist with the DNR will talk about some of the effects land use has on streams and other water resources, and the ways land management practices can protect these resources. Land owners, public officials, and individuals interested in learning about how land management and land use decision-making can degrade or protect our water resources will find Mike's talk enlightening and useful.

Mike Miller has been a biologist with the Department of Natural Resources for 12 years. For the last 4 years Mike has served as a stream monitoring specialist with the Bureau of Fisheries Management and Habitat Protection.

Please join us on **Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>**, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Amcore Bank. \*  
\* \* \*

### Directions

The **Mt. Horeb Library** is located at 105 Perimeter Road on the east side of town. From the stop light intersection of Hwy 92 and Hwy 78 on the east side of Mt. Horeb (there is a Kwik Trip gas station on this corner), go east on County ID (also Business 18/151) to Perimeter Road (there is a McDonalds restaurant on the corner). Turn right (south) on Perimeter Road, the unmarked library driveway is on the left side of Perimeter Road, just past the end of the Karakahl Country Inn.

The **Amcore Bank** is located at 100 S. 1<sup>st</sup> St. in downtown Mt. Horeb, at the corner of Main St. and 1<sup>st</sup> St. one block west of the stop light.

## Calendar of Events

### Discovering and Sustaining Prairies and Savannas on Private Lands

December 4, Wednesday, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

See "BMAP Winter Lecture Series" on page 7 for the details of this BMAP sponsored talk.

### Exploring Options to Restore Wisconsin's Degraded Oak Savannas

January 21, 2003, Tuesday, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

See "BMAP Winter Lecture Series" on page 7 for the details of this BMAP sponsored talk.

### 8th Annual Wetland Science Forum

January 24-25, 2003, Saturday and Sunday

La Crosse

A joint endeavor of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association and The Prairie Enthusiasts, this forum will focus on the science of wetland-prairie interactions and the restoration and management of wetland-prairie landscapes. For more information:

[www.wiscwetlands.org/](http://www.wiscwetlands.org/).

### Effects of Land Use on Streams and Water Resource Quality

February 19, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

See "BMAP Winter Lecture Series" on page 7 for the details of this BMAP sponsored talk.

### BMAP Annual Meeting\*\*\*

March 8, Saturday, 10 a.m. to noon

Location TBA

Save the date now. Check the February newsletter for full details.



Great selection of local genotype plants including Wood Lilies, Marsh Marigolds, and Blue-Eyed Grass

We've started to branch out...into tree and shrub seedlings (just a few)

Come and see us at the Dane County Farmers' Market in Madison in May and June

bluestem\_farm@juno.com  
S5920 Lehman Road  
Baraboo WI 53913  
608-356-0179

### Your Advertisement Here

BMP is now accepting advertisements for inclusion in our newsletter. The revenue generated helps defray publishing costs, which allows our grant monies to be used for other purposes more directly beneficial to our members.

If you would like to advertise in the newsletter, please contact:

The Blue Mounds Area Project  
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**Our Mission:**

The Blue Mounds Area 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.

<b>BMAP Board of Directors</b>	<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Staff Ecologist</b>
President – Carroll Schaal	Donn D’Alessio	Bob Wernerehl
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The Blue Mounds Area Project Newsletter is published quarterly.  
 We welcome your comments, submissions, and advertisements. Send them to the Editor:  
 Michael Anderson, Blue Mounds Area Project, PO Box 332, Mount Horeb, WI 53572 or by email to [biologic@chorus.net](mailto:biologic@chorus.net).

## Blue Mounds Area Project Membership Form

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

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP STATUS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New member \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Membership for \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:**

General (individual or family) \$25.00 / Year \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Other contribution to further the BMAP mission** \_\_\_\_\_

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

\*\*All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law\*\*

**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE AND RETURN TO:**  
**BLUE MOUNDS AREA PROJECT, PO BOX 332, MT. HOREB, WI 53572**

**"As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country, as the water is the sea. The red of the grass made all the great prairie the colour of wine-stains...And there was so much motion in it; the whole country seemed, somehow, to be running."**

From the novel *My Antonia*, by Willa Cather. The book's narrator describes what it was like to arrive and live in Nebraska during the early days of Euro-American settlement. The quote comes from one of the first chapters, describing his reaction as a boy when seeing the Nebraska landscape for the first time after arriving from Virginia.



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**HAVE YOU EXPIRED??**

**Please check the address label for your membership expiration date.  
If you're receiving a complimentary copy, please consider joining.**