



September 2018 News Update

Pope Farm Conservancy damaged by record rainfall

On Monday, August 20th, Pope Farm Conservancy was inundated with approximately 15 inches of rainfall. The grass trail system held, but significant damage was done to the screened trail, the ravine and the drainage system crossing Blackhawk Road.

Ravine mudslides (pictured right)

There were significant mudslides along the eastern banks of the ravine, one of which actually took out a small piece of the trail system. There was a slide on the west side of the ravine as well. Part of the ravine prairie restoration project was destroyed. A large amount of sediment was carried all the way down the culvert system through the Blackhawk Ski Area toward Black Earth Creek. At some point the culvert system was plugged by debris and sediment, and water flowed over the walking berm at the bottom of the ravine.



Sediment and debris closed the drainage system from the ravine along Blackhawk Rd.

The water coming west down Blackhawk Road caused some erosion damage in the Blackhawk parking area, and as the water gained momentum, it caused serious erosion as it entered the culvert system at the bottom of the ravine.



Erosion along Blackhawk Road

The screened trail that runs from the lower parking lot on Old Sauk Road to the top picnic area was wiped out. This area has been a problem for years, and hopefully a more permanent fix will be developed later this year. However, it is questionable whether any fix could have withstood the record rainfall from this storm.



Screened trail damage

The power of this storm will be evident for some time and much work needs to be done to get PFC back into shape. Meanwhile, the Conservancy will remain open, but the damaged areas will be closed off. We thank you for your understanding.

Upcoming Talk/Tour

Migratory Birding Tour



Sunday, September 9th, 2018, 7:00 – 8:30 am

**** Meet near the lower parking lot ****

Host: Mike McDowell, Photographer and Birding Expert

We invite you along on a leisurely walk through the Conservancy with birding expert Mike McDowell. This is your chance to witness the fall flight behaviors of the bird population at the Conservancy. You will learn techniques to help you enjoy identifying and observing birds in their preferred habitats. Please bring binoculars if you have them, wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress for the weather. If you are in need of binoculars, contact Mike at (800) 289-1132 or mmcdowell@eagleoptics.com.

About the Speaker: Michael Allen McDowell has been observing and documenting the avifauna in the Middleton area since the early 1990s. He began leading field trips for Madison Audubon in the spring of 2002 and has observed almost 300 bird species in Dane County. Mike is probably best known for his AMAZING bird photography which can be found on the web at www.birddigiscoper.com. His photographs have appeared in newspapers, magazines, calendars, and were even featured on a Wisconsin state license plate and a local beer label!

Hope to see you there!

Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

There is no shortage of ways to get involved with the FOPFC. We welcome everyone to attend the following meetings to observe, offer your viewpoints, or to join our committees if you are interested.

Events Team Meeting

When: Tuesday, September 11th, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: 3731 Pioneer Rd., Verona, WI

The Events Team will review 2018 events, and begin working on opportunities for 2019. This is a great chance to offer your thoughts, and see how the team works. Consider joining this great group of people who have fun giving back to the community.

Education Team Meeting

When: Thursday, September 20th, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: West Middleton Lutheran Church, 3763 Pioneer Rd, Verona, WI 53593

Discussion topics: The Education Team will work on the “history of the land” interactive tour project and review initial drafts of those stories. Review upcoming MCPASD field trips this fall, and review how we can interact with the new Soils on the Move project.

Volunteer opportunities

Fall Seed Collection

Registration is now open for summer and fall prairie seed collection sessions. We need your help to increase the diversity of prairie plant species at Pope Farm Conservancy and improve the overall quality of our prairies. All seed collection sessions are open to the public and will take place at Pope Farm Conservancy. No experience is necessary, but we ask that you register in advance.

Please e-mail Curt Caslavka at curt@popfarmconservancy.org and let him know which session(s) you will be attending.



Upcoming sessions:

- Saturday, September 15th, 2018 (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.)
- Wednesday, September 26th, 2018 (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.)
- Wednesday, October 10th, 2018 (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.)

More information can be found on our website:

<https://www.popfarmconservancy.org/events/prairie-seed-collection/>

Monarch Tagging Project 2018

Volunteers are needed for the Monarch Tagging Project at Pope Farm Conservancy. This is a fun way to get involved with the Friends group and a fun way to give back. We have 9 tagging sessions, Sept 8th-18th, and we need up to 5 volunteers per session. This volunteer opportunity is open to the public but we are giving FOPFC members a chance to sign up first.



Sign Up Online:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044daeac22a5fe3-monarch>

Monarch tagging will take place at Pope Farm Conservancy on the following dates/times:

- Saturday, Sept 8th @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Kim Patullo)
- Sunday, Sept 9th @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Kim Patullo)
- Monday, Sept 10th @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Beth Rahko)
- Tuesday, Sept 11th @ 8:30-10:30am (Supervisor: Janie Starzewski)
- Wednesday, Sept 12th @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Valerie Hoch)
- Thursday, Sept 13th @ 8:30-10:30am (Supervisor: Janie Starzewski)
- Friday, Sept 14th @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Beth Rahko)
- Monday, Sept 17 @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Mike Anderson)
- Tuesday, Sept 18 @ 1-3pm (Supervisor: Mike Anderson)

If you have trouble signing up, please email Janie Starzewski at janie@popefarmconservancy.org and let her know which session(s) you are interested in. If the weather is questionable, the supervisor for that session will let you know if the session is cancelled.

Information about this project can be found on our website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/monarch-tagging/>

Fall 4th Grade Field Trips

October 3rd, 4th, and 5th ** We Need Help! **

We need assistance from our membership with the fall field trips at PFC. These trips involve teaching 4th grade students about Native Americans' contribution to agriculture, and other important lessons in history. **These field trips are too important to discontinue!** The fall trip lasts for 3 days, and we are asking volunteers to help out during one morning or afternoon for 2–3 hours.

Please contact Mel at mel@popefarmconservancy.org to sign up or request more info.

Duties will include assisting in presenting, or helping to direct students and chaperones between the stations. Over the 3 days (weather permitting), we'll hold sessions in the morning and mid-day. Students will rotate through a series of stations between the Gardens on Old Sauk Road (each lasting 10-15 minutes) before participating in a role-playing "survival" game during a hike through the Conservancy.

Work stations include: "Harvesting the Garden and Storing Food for Winter" and "Ancient Technology and Survival." Volunteers will be given training materials prior to the event and the opportunity to observe and learn about the stations and activities during the event itself. If we can get **8 volunteers** to help, each can work a day in the fall.

Don't miss this opportunity to work with children and teach at our educational Conservancy!

Recent Events

Annual Tour of Pope Farm Conservancy

Tuesday, August 7th, 2018

Photo and article by Janie Starzewski

The Pope Farm Conservancy Annual Tour took place on August 7, 2018. It was led by Dr. Amy Rosebrough, an archaeologist in the Division of Historic Preservation and Public History at the Wisconsin Historical Society. This was Amy's first time leading the annual tour, and she did a magnificent job!



As we walked around the conservancy, we heard stories about how the glaciers shaped the rolling hills and how Native American hunters once stood at the top of the hill to watch for game. And as we viewed a magnificent crop display, we learned about the various agricultural practices that took place at Pope Farm over the years, and how the stone wall was once used as fencing for the sheep herds. Amy went on to explain how, in the 1930s and 1940s, this land provided jobs for the Civilian Conservation Corps workers. And she told the infamous tale of how Pope Farm became a park in the year 2000, and then later an educational conservancy.

Amy is certainly no stranger to Pope Farm Conservancy. Every year for the past 5 years, she has led one or more public tours on Native American History at PFC, and she has taught countless 4th graders during the spring and fall field trips at the Conservancy since 2005. Amy was a wonderful tour guide, and we all came away with a stronger understanding of the Conservancy's historical significance and educational mission.

Nature Photography Hike

Saturday, August 18th, 2018

Photo and article by Martha Zydowsky

Almost 50 people showed up in the dense fog for the Nature Photography Talk and Hike. Kathleen Henning, an avid nature photographer who lives in Middleton, gave the group a primer on photographing nature—best practices, tips and resources, including websites.

She started her talk with a definition of the word “photography.” It comes from two Greek words—

“photo” which means “light” and “graph” which means “painting.” When we do photography, we are painting (or being creative) with light. Participants brought cameras of all kinds, from digital cameras with 500mm lenses to smart phones—even a Polaroid! The group dispersed along the trails and spent hours photographing the beauty of the Conservancy. With the rapid climate change and ecological destruction occurring around the world, we were all reminded of the importance of places like Pope Farm Conservancy.



FOPFC Annual Brunch

Saturday, August 18th, 2018

Photo and article by Martha Zydowsky



The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy (FOPFC) Annual Meeting on August 18 featured an update from Mel Pope on the events of the last year and a sneak peek of the new interactive education initiative to be rolled out in the near future.

Mel talked about the decision-making process which resulted in the FOPFC Board decision to cancel Sunflower Days in 2018. After much discussion, the Board made the decision in the interest of safety. After several years of rapid growth, the Board decided it could no longer ensure Sunflower Days would be safe for the huge crowds that came to see the sunflowers. Too many visitors, and not enough parking and volunteers, created a safety issue.

The mission of Pope Farm Conservancy has always been education, and the Board is putting significant resources towards this mission. A new interactive education program that allows visitors to access online information via their smart phones when they are at the Conservancy is under development. Some of the first modules are completed and the attendees at the FOPFC Annual Meeting got a sneak peek of this new initiative. The modules will also be available on the FOPFC website. It may be the first use of this type of interactive technology in a nature setting. Stay tuned for more details on the launch of this new initiative.

Question of the Month

Question: What is the impact of the recent rain damage to PFC?

Answer: This storm was historic in nature, and the Town of Middleton has declared a state of emergency. Obviously, the town has an incredible amount of work to do, and safety and road issues are a top priority. In the short term, some of the damage at PFC will need to wait until some of these immediate issues are addressed. At some point, the sides of the ravine will need to be analyzed because long-term erosion could continue in an east-west orientation and become an issue in the Blackhawk Prairie and the trail systems surrounding the ravine. Ironically the CCC Spillway at the head of the ravine handled the water coming directly to it very efficiently. The earthen berms directed the water to the spillway and no damage was done there. We will continue to give you updates as repairs are put in place.

If you have any additional questions/concerns, please email us at info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Friend of the Month

Thank you, Sally Andrews!

Sally Andrews has been involved with the Conservancy for a number of years. Sally has worked with the Prairie Restoration volunteers, both collecting seed and helping to control weeds. During Sunflower Days, Sally participated in helping with information, retail, and donation stations. She was there when needed and worked multiple shifts. Sally also is on the Education Team and has helped on the interactive tour project. In addition, she is the person in charge of the walking tour pamphlets that have become very popular with the Conservancy visitors. Sally monitors the inventory of those pamphlets and their condition throughout the summer season. If that were not enough, Sally volunteers to help with the MCPASD field trips held at Pope Farm Conservancy every fall where she helps teach 4th grade students about Native American agriculture. Sally has helped make the Friends who we are, and has helped make PFC what it is.



Happy Trails to you, Sally!

Photos of the Month

If you would like to share a picture from your visit to Pope Farm Conservancy, please email your photo(s) to janie@popefarmconservancy.org.



Photo by Kathleen Henning



Photo by Kathleen Henning

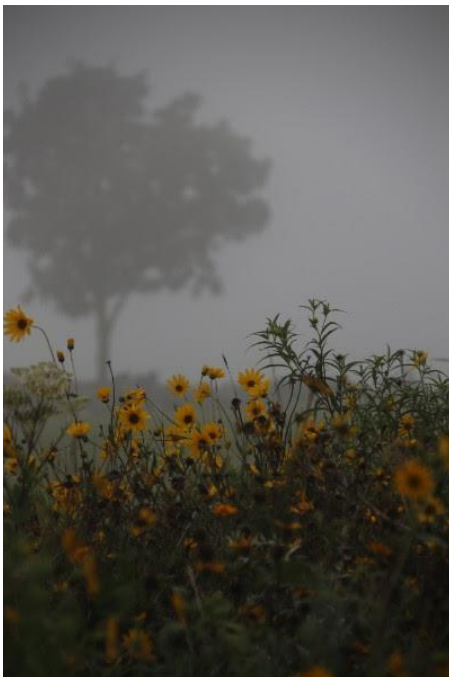


Photo by Nancy Meier



Photo by Kathleen Henning



Photo by Courtney Kramer

Connect with FOPFC online

Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfPopeFarmConservancy>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/fopfc-photos>

**Thank you for supporting the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy!
Our journey is ongoing, and you are part of it!**

