

## November 2019 News Update



The early snowfall made for some truly beautiful scenes at Pope Farm Conservancy. The fall colors were spectacular especially when the sun was shining. But a layer of pure white snow made it ever so much more dramatic.

### Upcoming FOPFC meetings

Looking for ways to volunteer and give back to your community? This is a great time of year to get involved in the FOPFC as we begin planning for our 2020 season. We invite you to attend the following meetings to observe, to offer your viewpoints, or to join one of our committees.

#### **Events Team Meeting**

**When:** Tuesday, November 12th, 2019, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** Middleton Public Library

**Discussion topics:** The Events Team will be discussing what the 2020 season will look like. What topics will we cover, and who will be the speakers? How can we extend these talks into the winter months? We plan to reschedule the two events that were canceled in 2019. In addition, we will hold at least two events indoors during cold weather months in 2020.

The FOPFC Events Team is a group of creative people who work hard and have fun planning and hosting events. If you'd like to help plan events for 2020, please come to the meeting on November 12th. If you can't make the meeting but have ideas for events, please send them via email to Martha Zydowsky ([mzydowsky@charter.net](mailto:mzydowsky@charter.net)) prior to the meeting.

#### **Education Team Meeting**

**When:** Tuesday, November 19th, 2019, 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 additional stories from descendants of the land that is now Pope Farm Conservancy. We will also begin work on the "History of Agriculture and the Environment" at Pope Farm Conservancy. Finally, we will discuss lesson plan ideas for the Middleton Cross Plains Area School District.

## **Summer of 2019**

### **Seed Collection**

Seed Collection in 2019 was a success! There were 5 sessions of seed collection and volunteers logged in approximately 100 hours of collecting seed at the conservancy. Small amounts of a wide variety of seeds were collected to use in Pope Farm Conservancy. The Hillside Prairie in the center portion of the conservancy has a stand of Smooth Brome Grass which will be inter-seeded with the seed that volunteers collected. The goal is to turn this small stand of Brome Grass into native prairie over time.



Above: Thirty students from Monona Grove Liberal Arts Charter School for the 21st Century (MG21) collecting seed at Pope Farm Conservancy on a cool October day. Photo: Janie Starzewski

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## **2019 Events: The Year in Review**

By Martha Zydowsky

This has been a busy year for the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy (FOPFC) Events Team. Twelve events were planned and scheduled, starting with a winter hike in January and ending with a Native American spirituality event in October. Events were scheduled throughout the year to take advantage of the changing landscape and beauty of the conservancy. Rainy weather also necessitated some schedule changes. Those events will be rescheduled in 2020.

Here is a brief overview of events offered in 2019 with a few notes on each:

**January 27: Winter Walk in the Conservancy.** Sunny and 6 degrees! A group of hardy folks showed up with cross-country skis and snowshoes for the walk.

**March 2: Winter Photography in the Conservancy.**

(Pictured right) Volunteers from PhotoMidwest provided tips and guidance on getting the best photos in winter conditions. Cold temps and deep snow covered by ice made this event an adventure!



**April 9: Coyotes and Foxes** presentation by David Drake, UW-Madison professor and wildlife specialist. Best-attended event of 2019. Fascinating review of coyotes and foxes sharing habitat in Dane County.

**April 28: Bluebirds in the Conservancy.** Presentation by Patrick Ready, Director of the Bluebird Restoration Association of WI, and tour of bluebird nesting areas in the conservancy. Event was canceled, rescheduled and canceled again due to snow and cold spring temps. It will be rescheduled in 2020.

**May 18: Starting Your Own Prairie Garden.** Presenters from the Madison Chapter of Wild Ones provided information and free prairie plants to attendees at the event. After the talk, we explored the prairies in the conservancy.

**June 1: Migrating Birds in the Conservancy.** (Pictured below) Perennial favorite event with Mike McDowell leading the way on a birding walk in the conservancy. Dozens of species were sighted and heard!



**June 15: Creating and Maintaining Rain Gardens.**

(Pictured right) Presentation by environmental specialist Roger Bannerman on the benefits of rain gardens. Roger provided information on site selection, choosing the right plants and maintaining the rain garden.



**July 20: Good Bugs and Bad Bugs.**

(Pictured right) Phil Pellitteri, retired UW-Madison entomologist, provided information on insects in the conservancy and the local area. It was an interesting and fun event for the whole family!



**August 17: Geology Fun: Stories in Stone.**

(Pictured right) Another family-friendly event with Brooke Norsted from the UW-Madison Geology Museum. Her presentation included a history of Wisconsin's geological past including volcanoes, tropical seas, and mastodons!



**August 24: Late Summer Photography in the Conservancy.** PhotoMidwest volunteers returned to provide tips and advice on taking great nature photos. It was a beautiful late summer day with early morning light and shadows.

**September 19: Archaeology at the Conservancy.** (Pictured right) Dr. Amy Rosebrough from the Wisconsin State Historical Society led us on a tour of the conservancy to learn how the land was sculpted by the glaciers, settled by native people and then by German immigrants. A late hatch of mosquitoes and an early sunset created a unique ambiance at this event!



**October 5: Native American Spirituality and Care for the Earth.** This presentation by Edgewood College Professor Katherine Heskin was canceled due to rainstorms. It will be rescheduled in 2020.

In addition to the above events, monarch butterfly tagging was held on multiple dates in September and prairie work days were held in August, September and October to collect seeds and remove invasive species.

## **What's New at PFC?**

### **Winter Parking**

Pope Farm Conservancy is open from sunrise to sunset year-round. However, last year the Blackhawk Parking lot off Blackhawk Road was closed.

We suggest that you park the lower parking area off Old Sauk Road during winter months.



The conservancy will be open to hiking, snow shoeing, cross country skiing and sledding.

## Walls going up to enclose Pope Farm Elementary School



Enclosure of Pope Farm Elementary School has begun. The team at J.H. Findorff and Son, Inc. is still about two weeks ahead of schedule, and they are trying to complete enclosure by December 1st. The school is scheduled to open in the fall of 2020.

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## Question of the Month

**Question:** Now that Pope Farm Elementary School is framed, did it impact the view to the lake and the Capitol from the picnic area at the top of the hill in the conservancy?  
*See answer on next page.*



The answer is no. The new school did not impact the view to the lake and the Capitol from the picnic area at the top of the hill. Originally, there was a height restriction on the school property to protect the view to the lake from Pope Farm Conservancy. The school asked the Pope Family if it could raise the height restriction by 10 feet in order to provide easier access for special needs students to the conservancy. In addition, the MCPASD would save approximately \$1 million dollars because it would not require additional grading and a 40-foot retaining wall. After reviewing the projected view given the change, the Pope Family agreed with the height restriction change. Now that the school can be seen, it was a good decision. Folks in the conservancy can still see the lake and the Capitol. The Pope Family and the school district are pleased with the final result.

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## Friend of the Month

### Thank you, Jerry McAdow!

Jerry McAdow has been with the Friends since our inception. Jerry is the legal advisor to the FOPFC as a volunteer. In addition to all the time he has spent advising the FOPFC over the last six years, he has done so much more. Here are just a few of the ways in which Jerry has volunteered for the FOPFC over the years: Seed collecting, helping to control invasive species, parking cars for Sunflower Days, volunteering for Heritage Days, and helping with the MCPASD field trips. His wife Carol has been by his side in many of these volunteer activities and we are thankful for her support as well. Jerry has done so very much for all of us, and truly has made a difference at Pope Farm Conservancy!



**Happy trails to you, Jerry!**

## Photos of the Month

Photos by Jim Stewart



Left: "Autumn Colors with Cooper's Hawk"



Above: "Selecting Seeds"- American Goldfinch



Left: "Leaving Time"  
Red-tailed Hawk

## 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!**

