

June 2021 News Update



I wonder what it would be like to live in a world where it was always June.

-Lucy Maud Montgomery

June is a generous month with her many splendid gifts. The days are sunny and warm. The roses and peonies are in bloom. Fresh strawberries are in season and the farmers markets expand their bounty. School is over, summer camp begins and visions of long anticipated vacations dance in our heads. Although this June finds us in the uncharted territory of half in/half out, we're reawakening to the delights of the warmer months ahead and rediscovering life's simple pleasures.

Outdoor Programs Are Back at the Conservancy!

Mark your calendars! The FOPFC Programs Committee are excited to announce five summer and early fall outdoor programs that have been planned for visitors to the Conservancy. These programs are FREE and open to the public.

Here's a snapshot of what's on the docket.

National Trails Day Hike at Pope Farm Conservancy

Saturday, June 5th, 10am-Noon

Celebrate “National Trails Day” with a hike at Pope Farm Conservancy! Follow the signs along the trails to learn about the history of the land while enjoying nature and getting some exercise. Members of the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy will provide trail maps in the lower parking lot from 10:00 – 11:00 am. After your hike, join us for light refreshments at the top of the hill from 11:00 am until noon.



Bird Watching in Late Spring with Mike McDowell

Saturday, June 19th, 7:30 AM

Bird-watchers and nature lovers, grab your binoculars and join Mike McDowell on an exciting birding excursion through Pope Farm Conservancy. Come see how the prairies and restored oak savanna at Pope Farm Conservancy provide habitat for numerous bird species. Bring binoculars, wear comfortable walking shoes, and dress for the weather.



More Upcoming Programs:

- [History of the Conservancy Tour with Mel Pope](#)
Wednesday, July 21, 6:00pm
Join Mel Pope for a talk about Pope Farm Conservancy. Learn about the history of the land and the conservancy's importance as a natural area for people to connect with the land and as a protected habitat for birds and wildlife.
- [Wildflowers in the Conservancy with Jeff Steele \(Wild Ones\)](#)
Saturday, August 14, 10:00 AM
Jeff Steele from the Madison Chapter of the Wild Ones will lead us on a one-hour guided tour of the restored prairies of Pope Farm Conservancy. This pleasant walk will serve as an introduction to prairie ecology and plant identification.
- [Fall Migrating Birds at the Conservancy with Mike McDowell](#)
Saturday, September 11, 7:30 AM
Join Mike McDowell and other birding enthusiasts on a hike through Pope Farm Conservancy to observe the behavior of birds preparing for or already involved in fall migration.

- **Monarch Butterfly Tagging**
Early September (Dates TBD)
Join in this citizen science project to help scientists better understand the dynamics of the monarch's spectacular fall migration through mark and recapture. More details to come!
- **Prairie Seed Collection**
September - October (Dates TBD)
Help the Friends collect prairie plant seeds at Pope Farm Conservancy. The collected seed will help to increase the diversity of prairie plant species at PFC and to improve the overall quality of the prairies.

Although this past year has been a challenging one for event planners of all kinds, with the help of Zoom the year for Pope Farm wasn't a total wash. Au contraire! Even though the original 2020 calendar had to be scrapped, several fresh and fun programs were made possible. All of our virtual presentations from this past year were recorded and are now available to watch on FOPFC's YouTube Channel.

FOPFC's Covid-19 Safety Guidelines

CDC and Dane County safety restrictions related to Covid-19 have been modified. As of June 2, 2021, masks and social distancing are no longer required at Pope Farm programs and there is no limit on group size. However, if you have recently been exposed to someone with Covid-19 or are feeling unwell on the day of a program, please do not attend to ensure the safety of other attendees. We will continue to monitor Covid-19 safety guidelines and update our website as needed.

Please Share Your Feedback!

The Programs Committee has put together a quick survey to help them better understand what kinds of programming worked this past year and what you would like to see in the future. Won't you please take a few moments to share your thoughts? Click the button below to fill out the short survey. Answers are anonymous.



Thank you in advance for your time and feedback!

Take the Online Survey here: <https://forms.gle/BA6iErY17e6kkeuM6>

Property & Operations Update



The picnic area is looking fresh and vibrant with a new layer of mulch.

If you've visited the Conservancy this spring you may have noticed a few areas looking a bit forlorn. Chalk up this wear and tear to increased foot traffic. But things are looking up, thanks to efforts of the Town of Middleton and Pope Farms Friend, Jim Bolitho. The Conservancy is looking pretty spiffy these days with fresh mulch, the return of the interpretive signage, and the in-need areas on the trails have been carefully staked out for reseeding. Friend Bob Wink even gave the pamphlet holders a new coat of paint. Kudos and cheers to the Town and Friends for making the Conservancy shine!



Members of the Pinnacle Landscaping crew lay fresh mulch around the signs posts and trees in May.

Do you know what gas, chicken wings, lumber, cars, chlorine, and ketchup have in common? Yep, they are all in short supply these days. A weird combination of factors including the pandemic (of course), severe winter storms and a hacking incident are to blame and even the Conservancy has been impacted.

If you've noticed fewer bluebirds and tree swallows on your hikes, you aren't imagining things. The big storm that hit Texas in February that knocked out the power grid as well as a late ice and snowstorm in southern Illinois have seriously affected some bird populations here in the Midwest. In fact, these storms may have hurt some bird populations by as much as 50%. Finding food this year has been problematic and a few spring cold snaps have taken their toll. As a result, there have been some casualties within the Conservancy. So, this year especially, celebrate the birds you see and welcome them back!

Forward Garden in Full Swing



Volunteers help plant vegetables at Forward Garden in May. Photo courtesy of MAFPG.

There's lots going on at the Forward Garden so if you're itching to get your hands dirty, check out the Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens events calendar to see when volunteer opportunities are available.

Please bring gardening gloves and a water bottle to each session if you have them. Bring a mask, wash your hands before and after volunteering, maintain 6-foot distance from others, and stay home if you aren't feeling 100% healthy. Extra gloves, hand sanitizer and hand-washing station will always be available at Forward Garden.

You can text or email Matt Lechmaier, Forward Garden Farm Manager at 530-650-5301 or Matt@foodpantrygardens.org to let him know you plan to participate.

Pope Farm Elementary School's Farm Day

On Tuesday, June 1st, K-4th grade students from Pope Farm Elementary School celebrated 'Farm Day' by participating in activities at Pope Farm Conservancy, Forward Garden and on site at Pope Farm Elementary. There was even a farm animal zoo (provided by Lucky Dog Farm, Hillenmeyer Farm and Willow Ridge Homestead) with goats, sheep, peacocks, ducks and chickens.



Right: Students learned about the different crops growing at Forward Garden.



First grade students read to and visit with various farm animals.

Students did engineering and technology challenges, went on a "Sounds of Nature" scavenger hunt, toured Forward Garden and planted pumpkins for the fall, held farm-themed obstacle courses, read a book to the farm animals, made nature-themed headbands, and had picnics outside.



Students helped plant this year's pumpkin patch and will be back in October to help harvest the pumpkins.

Later this week, the 4th graders will be planting the Native American Display garden with Alex Schutz, Pope Farm Elementary School's Science Specialist. Thank you to all PFE teachers and staff and to Forward Garden's volunteers and Farm Manager Matt Lechmaier for making "Farm Day" a huge success.

What a fun day and great learning opportunities all around!

Education Team Update

Members of the FOPCF Education Team will be meeting with staff from Pope Farm Elementary School in early June to discuss how to revamp some of the existing lesson plans pertaining to features of the Conservancy as well as creative, practical ways to incorporate the Conservancy into the curriculum. Although the Elementary school was physically completed last July, the past school year has been anything but typical. So, the specific interface between the Friends group and the school is definitely a work in progress as the entire MCP school district regroupes from the disruption of the pandemic. Stay tuned.

In the meantime, the show must go on! Two new videos are in the works related to the existing German Immigration Tour. One pertains to a new segment on schools and how they once functioned. The other features the cabin site first unearthed at the Conservancy in 2008. Once these videos are completed the current signage on the property will be updated to reflect the new material.

The History of the Land video production is also in progress. Several scripts have been prepared to accompany the photos and graphics featured as part of the videos, each of them weaving in the stories of those who settled and cared for the land that is now Pope Farm Conservancy. The video topics include:

- Pioneer Farmers
- Clearing the Land and Building the Stone Fence (Complete)
- How the Land was Used over Time (Complete)
- Modern Era; Living on the Farm
- The Pope Family (Complete)
- How the Pope Farm became a Conservancy (Complete)

The Geology Interactive Tour Video Project is in progress as well. We hope to complete the content on 6 different stories on Geology by the end of the summer.

The Self-Guided Tour Pamphlets available at the entrance of the Conservancy and the upper parking area will be restocked. They had been previously removed with the onset of covid last year.

FOPFC Team Meetings

Programs Committee Meeting – Tuesday, June 29, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. at Pope Farm Conservancy, Picnic Area

Education Team Meeting – Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., Online via Zoom - Email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com) to get the meeting link.

Support the Friends with a FOPFC Shirt!

Show your support for the FOPFC and order a t-shirt from our online store! A portion of every sale goes directly to the Friends. Orders typically arrive within 10-14 business days.

Visit our Online Store here: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/fopfc>

Please contact the Friends if you have any questions regarding your order: info@popefarmconservancy.org.



Photos of the Month



Shooting Stars in the North Prairie



Eastern tiger swallowtail butterfly in the oak savanna



A pair of coyote pups venture out onto the walking path near the Oak Savanna.



Have you seen the new bottle art sculpture and banner at Forward Garden?!



National Trails Day is on Saturday, June 5th! Grab a friend and come enjoy the trails at Pope Farm Conservancy. Maps and light refreshments provided by the Friends from 10am-Noon THIS Saturday.

Connect with FOPFC Online

Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfPopeFarmConservancy>
Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/fopfc-photos>

Renew Your Membership: <http://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership>

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

