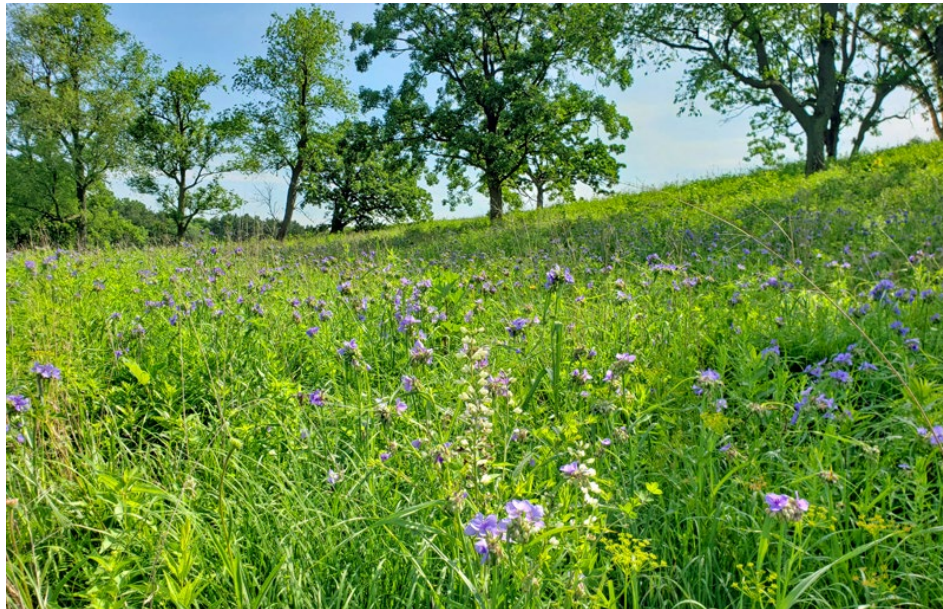




June 2022 News Update

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

– L. M. Montgomery

Upcoming Programs

Spring Migration Tour

Saturday, June 11th, at 7:30 a.m.

Speaker: Mike McDowell, Local Birding Expert and Nature Photographer

Join us on Saturday, June 11th at 7:30 a.m. for a leisurely walk through the conservancy with birding expert Mike McDowell. This is your chance to witness the spring 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. This tour is FREE and open to the public and runs about 60-90 minutes. No registration is necessary.

Visit our event webpage for more info:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/migratory-birding-tour/>

Help us spread the word on Facebook: <https://fb.me/e/3l1M8A2qS>

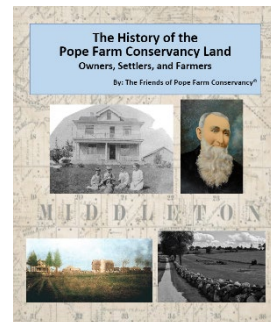
Stories of the Land at Pope Farm Conservancy

Thursday, July 28th, at 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Mel Pope, FOPFC Chair

Mark your calendars and join us on Wednesday, July 28th @ 7pm for Mel Pope's talk about the history of the Pope Farm Conservancy land. This free, 90-minute talk will explore the natural and human history of the land, the Conservancy's unique features, and its stunning panoramic views of Lake Mendota, the State Capitol, Black Earth Creek Valley and the terminal moraine. Mel will also talk about the Conservancy's importance as a natural area for people to connect with the land and as a protected habitat for birds and wildlife.

During the program, you'll also hear stories and remembrances about the people who owned, farmed and settled on this land over the past 150+ years. These stories are all documented in "[The History of the Pope Farm Conservancy Land](#)," now available to read on the FOPFC website. This book is a compilation of research, stories, photos, maps, remembrances, and other tidbits that has been organized by the three farms that once made up the land that is now Pope Farm Conservancy. If you haven't read it yet, you really must check it out!



The annual tour on July 28th is free and open to the public – no registration is necessary. We will meet at the TOP of the hill in the picnic area. Additional parking is available at Pope Farm Elementary school. Don't forget your camera & bug spray.

News from the Friends

Friends New Video Series - Now Available Online!



The “Interesting Birds at Pope Farm Conservancy” video series is now available on the FOPFC website at: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/stories-of-the-land/bird-videos/>

Each of these video stories are about 5 minutes in length and they include:

- The Bluebird
- The Clay-Colored Sparrow
- The Red-Tailed Hawk
- The Indigo Bunting
- The Red-Winged Blackbird
- The Sandhill Crane
- Pope Farm Conservancy Is for The Birds

This video series has already been used for students visiting Pope Farm Conservancy, and will be available within the Conservancy itself. We are very proud of these excellent videos, and we thank the volunteers who made this possible. So far, the Friends have produced 29 short educational videos about the “Stories of the Land”.

New Signage to Help Protect the Blackhawk Prairie

The Blackhawk prairie has had increasing damage each fall due to visitors walking out into the prairie for photo shoots. This results in large areas of grass being trampled in the Blackhawk prairie, causing damage to the vegetation, and disrupting the nesting activities for birds.

The Friends put up new signage around the Blackhawk Prairie (pictured right) that says, “NESTING AREAS - KEEP ON MOWED TRAILS.” We are hopeful that this will make a difference and help protect this beautiful site for the wildlife.



Friends Replace Two Pamphlet Boxes at Pope Farm Conservancy

A big thanks to Bob Wink for rebuilding our two walking-tour pamphlet holders, located by the upper and lower parking lots off Old Sauk Road. The original boxes rotted away and needed to be replaced. There are four different walking tours you can take at the Conservancy:

- Archeology and Native American Life
- Gifts of the Ice: Geology at Pope Farm
- Our Farming Heritage
- The Prairies at Pope Farm Conservancy



If you have not taken these tours, simply take a pamphlet with you and follow along with the information provided. When you are finished, we ask that you return the pamphlet to the box holder. It is a great way to learn as you walk the Conservancy.

Recap of Spring Programs

Forward Garden Tour on April 9th

Story and Photos by Jean Kollasch

Matt Lechmaier, the farm manager of Forward Garden, toured 18 attendees through the garden areas on Saturday April 9th starting at 1PM. The tour included the fields east of the Homestead barn where a strawberry patch and the sprouting garlic greens were visible signs of spring. Matt led the group through the barns storing garden tools and equipment, the large walk-in cooler and the land surrounding destined for future perennial crops and orchards. No plants were onsite at this time, but they are currently being tended in a greenhouse off Airport Rd for the upcoming spring planting at Forward Garden. The process of obtaining, storing and using rainwater for the gardens was explained. He surprised the group with a stack of oak logs which have been inoculated with two different mushroom spores assuring a future crop of mushrooms in addition to the 30 some other planned crops to be used for the Dane County Food Pantries.



Another sign of spring for the group was the viewing of a bluebird visiting the nest in a fence line box and a pair of horned larks on the old carrot patch ground.



Above: Farm Manager Matt Lechmaier (right) points out the green sprouts pushing up in early spring.

Matt encouraged attendees to sign up for the food pantry weekly electronic newsletter or email him at matt@foodpantrygardens.org to be added to this mailing list. Volunteer opportunities will be specified.

FOPFC Participates in "Farm Day" on May 26

Pope Farm Elementary School hosted its 2nd annual "Farm Day" event on May 26th. Kindergarten through 5th grade students participated in science-themed activities that were all within walking distance of the school. Activities included planting pumpkins at Forward Garden, hiking Pope Farm Conservancy and learning about the many different prairies located there, helping students read books to real live farm animals, meeting with the Middleton High School Green Team to play a game about Environmental Education, and watching a demonstration by the UW Physics Department.

Four wonderful volunteers from the Friends of the Pope Farm Conservancy led the students from all five grades on "tours" of the conservancy's prairies and Oak savanna. The students learned about ecology, prairie restoration, and how to identify various prairie plants. The students appeared to be happy, curious, and full of joy being out in the conservancy.

The school staff was very thankful of the volunteers and their time commitment. And a special thanks to Alex Schutz, the science coordinator at the school, for his willingness to work with the Friends and coordinate this event.

Pope Farm Elementary School Tour on May 26

Story by Jean Kollasch, Edited by Alex Schutz

Wow! That was the universal reaction of the 30 attendees that came for an evening tour of the Pope Farm Elementary School on May 26th. Alex Schutz, the Science Specialist and Teacher, stated “the whole building is about student access and community.” He and Principal Jessica Taylor demonstrated that concept to be evident as they toured our group of all ages.



The tour included the first and second level classrooms showing the open design with moving glass walls that open classrooms to adjoining classrooms as well as to open center spaces. The classrooms have an abundance of windows that bring the outside inside. The impressive open library (pictured below) had shelving on wheels to allow quick reconfiguration of the spacious room for alternate usage. The computer room and three Maker Space rooms used for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math extension lessons encourage students to be creative while learning 21st century technology skills.



The Library - Photo by Diane Smidt

The school's interior design is beautiful and so colorful. The ready access to the adjacent Pope Farm Conservancy and the Forward Gardens adds to the concept of “Every kid needs to have a farm.” Along that line, the school has over 140 pairs of mud boots for the students to swap into when doing garden activities. Who wouldn't learn in this stimulating environment? Principal Taylor praised the guidance of the schools “amazing teachers who work collaboratively and who are committed to the students.”

The building supports learning in all areas and in addition it is constructed to heat and cool with geothermal equipment (pictured below) and illuminate rooms and hallways with smart lighting, thus using less energy.



The Geothermal Room - Photo by Diane Smidt

Our BIG THANKS to Jessica and Alex for giving their time to our group especially after a school day when the school had orchestrated a huge all-day “Farm Days” event for the K-4th grade students, complete with multiple farm animals on-site.

Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

Education Team Meeting – VIRTUAL

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 28th, 2022 (6:00 – 7:30 p.m.)

Zoom Link: Email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com) for the meeting link.

Discussion topics: We will be discussing the results of Farm Days, and future possibilities for a program for students and families. We will also be looking at possibilities to begin work on a video featuring Native American stories.

Volunteer Spotlight

We are so excited to honor Kim Patullo in this month's Volunteer Spotlight. Kim is a member of the FOPFC Prairie Restoration Team and has spent countless hours working in the PFC prairies, pulling weeds and doing seed collection. She also maintains the rain garden at the conservancy, and in the fall, she leads seed collection sessions and monarch tagging groups.



Kim's initial connection with Pope Farm was prior to it being designated a conservancy open to the public. "The Popes had sheep that would graze in the fields east of the barn, and I was delighted each and every time I passed while heading to and from my home," said Kim. "My family and I stopped frequently on the roadside just to watch the lambs jump around in the spring and monitor their growth through the season."

Kim joined the Friends group in 2015, and through a Pope Farm newsletter, learned that volunteers were needed for weeding or seed collection. At that time, Kim had recently completed the Master Gardener program through UW-Extension. The program provides research-based horticulture education to individuals, and in turn, they provide horticulture service and education to the community through volunteer efforts. "It was a perfect fit for me and my interests," she recalls.

Kim enjoys playing an important role in prairie restoration at PFC. "It's fun to lead groups of volunteers on a treasure hunt for a particular seed pod for collection or a particular plant that is a bit too aggressive that needs to be curtailed. No matter what age the participant is, they always leave a session with a smile."

Her favorite part about the conservancy is its prairies. "I find the complexity of the prairie totally AMAZING! The variety of plants living together in harmony is inspiring," she remarks. She loves observing the cycle of blooms throughout the season, never knowing what will be on full display on any particular week. "The carefully curated selection of seeds provide a dazzling and ever-changing display of native species of prairie plants," she says. "And in order to ensure the beautiful display remains established and flourishing, the prairie requires consistent oversight and maintenance. I am so grateful to Curt and others that put in that oversight, and I am so happy to help maintain it whenever I can."

Kim visits Pope Farm Conservancy fairly often throughout the year. "It is an excellent place for running or snowshoeing, walking or just sitting to reflect. It is my antidote for coping with the blows of modern-day living. With the constant influx of news and information, the majority of it alarming and negative - it's a necessity to just take a moment to breathe, to rebalance. Pope Farm offers that breathing room, that place to find peace - and often - even joy."

We are so grateful to you, Kim, for your volunteer work at the conservancy and your contributions to the Friends group. Thank you!!

Happenings at the Conservancy

National Trails Day on June 4th



Celebrate National Trails Day at Pope Farm Conservancy! Taking place on the first Saturday in June, National Trails Day is a day that encourages people to discover their local trails, become active concerning trail issues, and share their excitement for the outdoors. Pope Farm Conservancy offers seven miles of trails, surrounded by crops, prairies, and woodlands. [Click Here](#) to download the conservancy trail map, or just follow the trail signs as they guide you along the way.

Photo of the Month



"Shooting Stars" by Barbara Esser

Can you find the Dodecatheon meadia (pictured left) at PFC?

These charming spring wildflowers are typically found in the North Prairie and Oak Savanna this time of year. They have delicate, nodding purple, pink or white flowers that resemble "shooting stars."

Reminders

Renew Your Membership

Just a reminder...you can now renew your membership online here:

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

Or you can renew by mail by sending a check (payable to Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy) to:
FOPFC, 10333 Blackhawk Road, Middleton, WI 53562.

If you have already renewed your membership, THANK YOU! We hope you enjoy being a part of our community. For questions regarding your membership, please email us at info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Connect with FOPFC Online

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

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.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!**