

August 2023 News Update

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Upcoming Programs

Pope Farm Conservancy Archaeology Tour **Saturday, August 5th, 2023 (10AM)**

Join Dr. Amy Rosebrough for a walking tour of the archeology and history of Pope Farm Conservancy. Scenes from many episodes of Wisconsin's history have played out at Pope Farm, both uplifting and tragic, leaving traces of forgotten lives behind. This tour is free, family-friendly, and open to the public. No registration required. Amy's talks are always delightful and not to be missed!



Program Details:

- **Date/Time:** Saturday, August 5th, 2023 (10AM)
- **Location:** Pope Farm Conservancy - Meet in the lower parking lot
- **Address:** 7440 Old Sauk Rd, Verona, WI 53593
- **Cost:** Free and open to the public. No registration required. All ages welcome.
- **Event Website:** <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/archaeology-tour/>

Friends Annual Picnic

Wednesday, August 30th, 2023 (5-7PM)



The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy invite you and your family to join us for a picnic at Lakeview Park in Middleton to celebrate your contributions to the conservancy. Without your volunteer work and financial support, our programs and activities throughout the year wouldn't be possible. We greatly appreciate everything you do! Come and meet board members and committee members and other volunteers. We'll share information on future plans and volunteer opportunities.

We will also be announcing and awarding the winners of the 2023 Photo Contest! Judges will select one winner from each photo category and age group, plus one "Best in Show" winner. We'll also have a slideshow of all the photo contest entries. Come and check it out!!

Picnic Details:

- **Date/Time:** Wednesday, August 30th, 2023 (5-7PM)
- **Schedule:**
 - 4:00 PM – Set up (A few volunteers needed)
 - 5:00 PM – Meal (Food and non-alcoholic beverages provided)
 - 6:00 PM – Photo Contest Awards Ceremony (Presented by Ralph Russo, PhotoMidwest Vice President)
 - 6:30 PM – A few words from FOPFC Chair Mel Pope
- **Location:** Lakeview Park, 6300 Mendota Ave, Middleton, WI 53562 (Inside the shelter)
- **What to Bring:** We'll provide food and non-alcoholic beverages. You may bring your own beer or wine if it's in a non-breakable container.
- **Hosted By:** The FOPFC Programs Committee
- **Event Website:** <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/friends-picnic/>

Fall Migration Birding Tour at Pope Farm Conservancy **Saturday, September 2nd, 2023 (7:30AM)**



Come take an early fall hike at Pope Farm Conservancy with birding expert Mike McDowell to observe the behavior of birds who are preparing for or already in the process of migrating south. Mike will share tips and techniques for identifying and observing these birds who stop here for much needed food and rest during their long journey.

Program Details:

- Date/Time: Saturday, Sept. 2nd, 2023 (7:30AM)
- Location: Pope Farm Conservancy - Meet in the lower parking lot
- Address: 7440 Old Sauk Rd, Verona, WI 53593
- Cost: Free and open to the public. No registration required. All ages welcome.
- Event Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/migrating-birds/>

Recap of July Programs

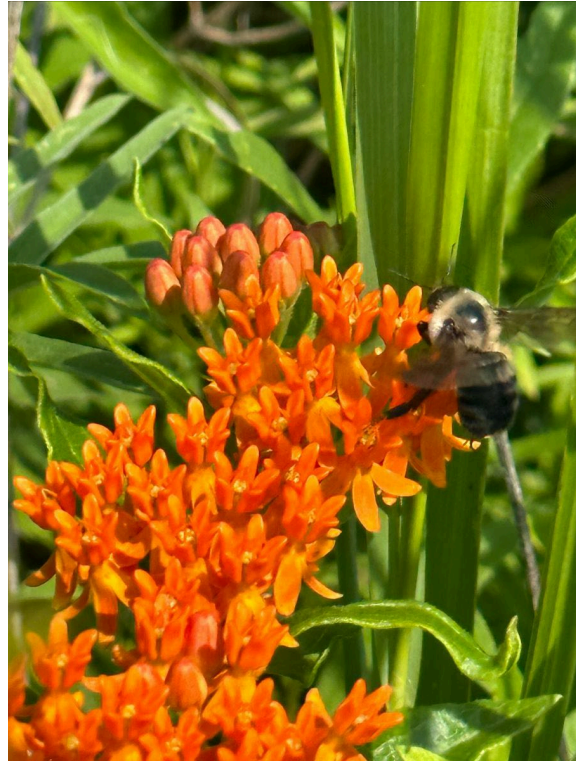
Blooms of the Prairie Walk - July 16th



The FOPFC hosted a "Blooms of the Prairie" event at Pope Farm Conservancy on Sunday, July 16th, which drew around 80 people on a beautiful summer's day! Our tour guides from Wild Ones Madison Chapter were Athena Salzer, the Vice President of Wild Ones' Board of Directors, and Laurie Yahr, also a very knowledgeable prairie advocate and the Newsletter writer for Wild Ones.

Athena, with over 10 years' experience in ecological restoration & sustainable landscaping, started us all out with her favorite recommendation of a reference book: *Wildflowers of Wisconsin*.

Walking around the prairies at Pope Farm Conservancy is an enjoyable experience, the silent, meditative kind. However, learning about the individual plants and their "personalities" is a more exciting and enriching experience altogether! For example, the Butterfly Milkweed blooms earlier than some milkweeds and is an important food source for Monarch caterpillars. Unlike other species, rather than a thick milky sap, it has a watery translucent sap. It's comforting to know, however, that Monarchs will eat every kind of milkweed, and that Wisconsin has 14 native milkweed species!



Above: Some of the wildflowers in bloom on July 16th included purple prairie clover (left) and butterfly weed (right). Photos by Julia Peterson.

One of the tallest late blooming prairie plants we saw was the Iron Weed. With its feet preferring more the wet side, it can get up to 8' tall! Its red or purple flowers appear from midsummer to fall, and it attracts a host of butterflies from monarchs to skippers to swallowtails to eastern tiger swallowtails and more.

Rattlesnake Master was indeed an interesting plant, considered a "perennial forb that grows from a thickened, corm-like crown". Its more common name is "Button Snakeroot". It's definitely a "master" at attracting a variety of insects, including butterflies, bees, flies, and wasps, with its seeds providing food for many birds.

Another perfect native flower to add to your garden that we viewed was Golden Alexander, which is actually a member of the carrot family, featuring bright yellow flowers, which some believe resemble Queen Anne's Lace, and which in time, the seedheads will turn a reddish color.

Several other prairie plants we viewed and learned about were White Wild Indigo, Daisy Fleabane, Canada Tick-Trefoil (native), and a couple of Goldenrods (Grassed and Showy Goldenrods). Wisconsin has around 20 different species of Goldenrods.

We learned an interesting fact about American Goldfinches! They like native thistles! They use the thistledown to line their nests, but in truth, they wait in anticipation for the "energy-packed" seeds of the plant!!

A few tools for gardening/eradicating Wild Parsnip, Queen Ann's Lace, and other invasive native plants were recommended: Parsnip Predator, Hori Hori Garden Knife, and a Spear Head spade.



Above: Athena Salzer of Wild Ones Madison leads the tour of the South Prairie at Pope Farm Conservancy.

Living in a more fragile environment today, the following mission statement of Wild Ones tunes us into our own possibilities for making a difference: "Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities".

For any of your curious questions regarding prairie plants, send an email to madwildones@gmail.com. For other Pope Farm Conservancy events, go to www.popefarmconservancy.org.

A BIG thanks to Wild Ones Madison and our guest speakers: Athena and Laurie. We appreciate you sharing your time and knowledge and love of native plants with all of us. It was a beautiful day, and there was a great turnout for the event. Also, thank you to the FOPFC Programs Committee for organizing and hosting this wonderful program.

News From the Friends

Friends to Propose a Second Project for Improving the Screened Trails at PFC



Proposed Grassy Pavers Trail Improvement Projects



Project 1

The first project involves the Stone Fence Trail that runs uphill from the lower parking lot off Old Sauk Rd. Project 1 will address the problem of screenings eroding after heavy rains. Perhaps you have seen this erosion over the years. Heavy grassy pavers will be put down and compacted which will hold the screenings in place. Project 1 has been approved, and will be completed in the spring of 2024. The Friends will pay for this project.

Project 2

Payment for Project 2 has been approved by the FOPFC Board, and will need to be approved by the Town of Middleton. Project 2 would address the upper portions of the Stone Fence trail, and the screened trails that come off the upper parking area. The same system of grassy pavers would be utilized to prevent erosion. The Friends would like to see this completed in the fall of 2024. Thanks to Jim Bolitho for coordinating this effort. These two projects would complete our erosion control efforts at Pope Farm Conservancy.

Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

Education Team Meeting – VIRTUAL

Next Meeting Date: Monday, September 18th, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Location: We will meet online via Zoom. Email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com) to get the Zoom meeting link.

Topics: We will finalize the new walking tour pamphlets with QR labels, and work on strategy for promoting our video series.

Photo of the Month



Bumblebee in Flight – Photo by Janie Starzewski

Just a reminder... Even though our photo contest is over, you can still share your photos with the Friends group, and we'll feature them here in our monthly news update. Send your favorite pics of Pope Farm Conservancy to janie@popefarmconservancy.org.

Reminders

Renew Your Membership

Just a reminder...you can now renew your membership online at <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/membership>, or you can renew by mail. Please send a check (Payable to FOPFC) 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 send an email to info@popefarmconservancy.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Monarch Tagging:** We invite you to participate in this citizen science project to help search for, capture, tag, and release migrating monarchs in early to mid-September. Learn More!
- **Seed Collection:** The FOPFC Restoration Team is looking for volunteers to help collect prairie plant seeds at Pope Farm Conservancy this fall. Learn More!
- **The PR/Communications Team** needs help writing stories and short articles for our publications. If interested, please email us at info@popefarmconservancy.org.
- **The Programs Committee** is looking for volunteers to help plan our events and educational talks. If you would like to get involved or share your ideas for programs offered at the conservancy, please contact Diane Smidt at diane.smidt@gmail.com.

If there's another activity you'd like to help with, please fill out the Volunteer Interests Form on our website. If there's another activity you'd like to help with, please fill out the Volunteer Interests Form on our website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/volunteer/>

Connect with FOPFC Online

- Website: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org>
- Videos – Stories of the Land: <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/stories-of-the-land/>
- 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!**

