

July 2023 News Update

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Photo Contest Entries Due July 15th!

Now that summer is upon us, it's a great time to head out to the conservancy to walk the trails and see the prairies in bloom. But don't forget your camera! Our 2023 Photo Contest is open to amateur photographers of all ages who are members of the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy (FOPFC). This year's themes are "Landscape" and "Prairie Plants." Judging of the photos will be done by our partners at PhotoMidwest, and winners will be announced and awarded on August 30th the Friends' annual summer picnic.

The deadline to participate in the 2023 Photo Contest is July 15th.

Submit your entries online at:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/nature-photography-contest/>



Upcoming Programs

Blooms of the Prairie Walk

Sunday, July 16th, 2023 (10AM)

Join the Madison Chapter of the Wild Ones on this one-hour guided tour of Pope Farm Conservancy's restored prairies. July is a great time to experience the prairies at peak bloom! This pleasant walk will serve as an introduction to identifying the 100+ species of flowering prairie plants present. Those who attend can learn from restoration experts how to incorporate native plants into their home landscaping.



Program Details:

- **Date/Time:** Sunday, July 16, 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/prairie-walk/>

Pope Farm Conservancy Archaeology Tour

Saturday, August 5th, 2023 (10AM)

Join Wisconsin Historical Society archaeologist 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.



Program Details:

- **Date/Time:** Sunday, July 16, 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 of Pope Farm Conservancy Picnic

Wednesday, August 30th, 2023 (4-8PM)



To All FOPFC Members, Volunteers, Supporters, and Photo Contest Participants:

The Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy invite you 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. Not a member? Join online and come celebrate with us on August 30th.

We will also be announcing and awarding the winners of the 2023 Photo Contest. All entries are due by July 15th. Judges will select one winner from each photo category and age group, plus one "Best in Show" winner. Submit your photos now!

Program Details:

- **Date/Time:** Wednesday, August 30th, 2023 (4:00 – 8:00 p.m.)
- **Location:** Lakeview Park, 6300 Mendota Ave, Middleton, WI 53562
- **What to Bring:** We'll provide food and non-alcoholic beverages. (Note: You may bring your own beer or wine if it's in a non-breakable container.) We recommend bringing lawn chairs and sunscreen.
- **Hosted By:** The FOPFC Program Committee
- **Event Website:** <https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/friends-picnic/>

Recap of June Programs

Spring Migration Birding Tour - June 3rd

Story: Jean Kollasch, Photos: Janie Starzewski



Mike McDowell marched 27 attendees up and down the conservancy woodland terrain, along the spillway and through the open prairies listening for bird songs. The rules were clearly stated: “stay quiet and stay behind him”. Mike continuously pointed out various bird calls and the bird’s whereabouts. Though he believes there are close to 200 bird species residing in the conservancy, this year he noted several have been absent. The 80+ degree heat this day apparently kept many birds less active. Birds do not nest in the prairies but feed in them while nesting in the woodlands.

The brightly colored Eastern bluebirds, Indigo bunting and the Baltimore Oriole and Orchard Oriole were great finds for the attendees to view. Mike claimed to have learned bird identification on his own with frequent observation field trips. Identification is done primarily through song, sighting, time of day and year and general impression of size, shape, flight pattern, habitat where found and the elimination process. Mike challenged the Merlin app to be as quick and accurate as he in identifying birds. He referenced ornithology reference books and shared ornithology research findings made from recording bird songs. Tree swallows, for example, share a complex repertory of songs with fellow tree swallows within their gang that are used to test newcomers to the gang. The newcomers have to pass singing the repertory before they can be accepted. Another example are the Chickadees who regularly pass along specific alerts of danger to other chickadees. Other birds may pick up on these alerts as well. The Birds of North America resource book is available online.

A High school-age attendee said he was “amazed that Mike was so knowledgeable about birds”.

Some birds present and identified by Mike during the 2 hour tour included: Common yellowthroat, Song sparrow, Killdeer, Barn swallow, Tree swallow, Red-wing blackbird, House finch, Blue jay, Hummingbird, Eastern bluebird, Robin, Crow, Clay colored sparrow, Eastern kingbird, Starlings, Baltimore and orchard orioles, Field sparrow, Grackle, Meadowlark, Eastern wood pewee, House wren, Catbird, Red tailed Hawk, Brown thrasher, Cowbird, Indigo bunting, Gnatcatcher, Cedar waxwing, Red-bellied woodpecker, Goldfinch, Chickadee and Cardinal.



News From the Friends

CCC Spillway Maintenance is Complete



Above: CCC Spillway 1938

The spillway maintenance project has now been completed. The cracks have been filled, the spalling repaired, and the spillway has been resealed. This spillway was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1938 and is the topic of several educational lessons at the conservancy. The structure is designed to reduce the velocity of water run-off from the surrounding fields. Built 85 years ago, the spillway works very effectively to this day. This maintenance effort will help preserve this historical structure into the future. The Friends and the Town of Middleton split the cost of this project.

Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

Education Team Meeting – VIRTUAL

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 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 Contest 2023



Photo by Kathleen Henning

LAST CALL!! It's time to submit your entries for our 2023 Nature Photography Contest. The deadline to submit photos is July 15, 2023.

This year's themes are spring and summer "Landscape" and "Prairie Plants." The contest is open to amateur photographers of all ages who are members of the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy (FOPFC).

We are looking forward to seeing all the entries! Visit our website for more information:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/nature-photography-contest/>

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

- The **PR/Communications Team** needs help writing stories and short articles for our publications. We are also looking for photo submissions for the "Photo of the Month" feature. If interested, please email us at info@popefarmconservancy.org.
- The **Programs Committee** is currently planning events and educational talks for late 2023. If you would like to get involved or share your ideas for programs offered at the conservancy, please contact Diane Smidt (diane.smidt@gmail.com) or come to the Programs Committee meeting on April 14th.

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>
- 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!**

