FRIENDS OF
POPE FARM
CONSERVANCY

# October 2023 News Update

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*"Autumn leaves don't fall, they fly.*
*They take their time and wander on this their only chance to soar."*
- Delia Owens

# Recap of Recent Events

## FOPFC Membership Picnic - August 30th

Story by Diane Smidt, Photos by Diane Smidt and Vina Yang

On a cool, summer August evening, 45 Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy met at Lakeview Park in Middleton to enjoy our annual picnic. As always, it's a great time for reacquainting with one another, meeting new members, as well as those interested in becoming more involved with the Conservancy.



Above: FOFPC photo contest winners and the FOPFC Programs Committee

The highlight of the evening was the introduction of the winners for our first FOPFC Photo Contest. This endeavor was shared with PhotoMidwest, who graciously did the judging, as well as the presentation of awards. One of the judges, Kathleen Denning, presented the awards to the four individuals and spoke to each of their photos. The photo categories were for "Landscape" and "Prairie Plants" open to Adults and Youth members of the Friends of Pope Farm Conservancy. Cash awards and certificates were given to each of the winners.

The photo contest winners were as follows:

- 1st Place for Prairie Plants was "False Sunflower" by Carol Van Handel
- 1st Place for Landscape was "Oak Savannah & Prairie at Sunset" by Matthew Ford
- 1st Place Youth was "Blue Birds" by Giovanni Ross
- Best in Show was "Prairie Sunset" by Artace Kelting

We will feature the winning entries in our "Photo of the Month" section below. Each month, we'll showcase one of the winning photographs.

Also that evening, Mel Pope presented an overview of past years' accomplishments and highlights to end a very special evening. Many thanks to all who attended and to all on the Program Committee who coordinated the photo contest with PhotoMidwest and organized the picnic celebration. Until we meet again, stay well, and enjoy the Conservancy!

## Fall Migration Walk with Mike McDowell, September 2nd

Story and Photos by Diane Smidt



Mike led 40 of us around the conservancy on a beautiful, breezy morning before the hot weather arrived. We learned that the fall migration was well underway, and that it may have started earlier than usual during the summer, due to drought, high temps, and fires. Many of the songbirds and shorebirds were already gone.

In spite of few birds, it was a lovely morning for a walk, and Mike provided information about migratory habits of birds and plant identification along the way. Did you know that songbirds do not sing as much in fall because they are saving energy for the migration? Also, interesting to note, they travel mainly during the night because the atmosphere is calmer. In the morning, they eat insects to replenish their body fat and rest up for the next night's flight. One small songbird, the Blackpoll Warbler, migrates from northern Canada to the northeastern coast of the US and then non-stop to South America! Around here, Warblers can be easily spotted at Stricker's Pond. Two other warblers that were spotted were the Chestnut-sided Warbler and the Tennessee Warbler.

Mike always gives us a wealth of information on his bird walks! Two facts to leave you with are: 1) Wisconsin has over 300 species of birds! 2) Catbirds have hundreds of vocalizations, some of which can last up to 10 minutes!

Hope to see you next year for Mike's Spring Migration Walk!

# News From the Friends

## Monarch Tagging 2023: A Better Year

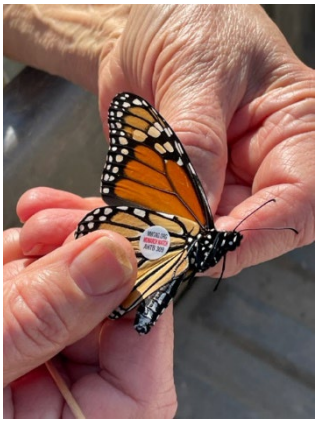
Story: Curt Caslavka



Photo by Cassius J. Callender Photography

The Monarch Tagging Project had a better year than last. FOPFC volunteers were able to capture, tag, and release 127 monarchs during the seven scheduled events at Pope Farm. This represents about double the number of monarchs tagged when compared to 2022. A big thanks goes out to Madison Audubon (Goose Pond Sanctuary) for donating 150 tags to the Friends group.

The overall goal of this project is to assist scientists in studying and monitoring monarch populations and the fall migration. The tagging program helps answer questions about the geographic origins of monarchs that reach Mexico, the timing and pace of the migration, mortality during migration, and changes in geographic distribution.



As the butterflies were tagged, the tag code, tag date, gender of the butterfly and geographic location were recorded and then entered into the Monarch Watch database. If any of the monarchs that we tagged at Pope Farm are recovered and reported, we can see the location of the recovery on the MonarchWatch.org website.

Photo right by Dennis Schenborn

## Curt Caslavka wins BRAW Award

Curt Caslavka won an award as "2023 Facilitator of the Year Award" from The Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW) for his work on bluebird houses at Pope Farm Conservancy. Curt received a plaque for his efforts. Congratulations, Curt!



# Upcoming FOPFC Meetings

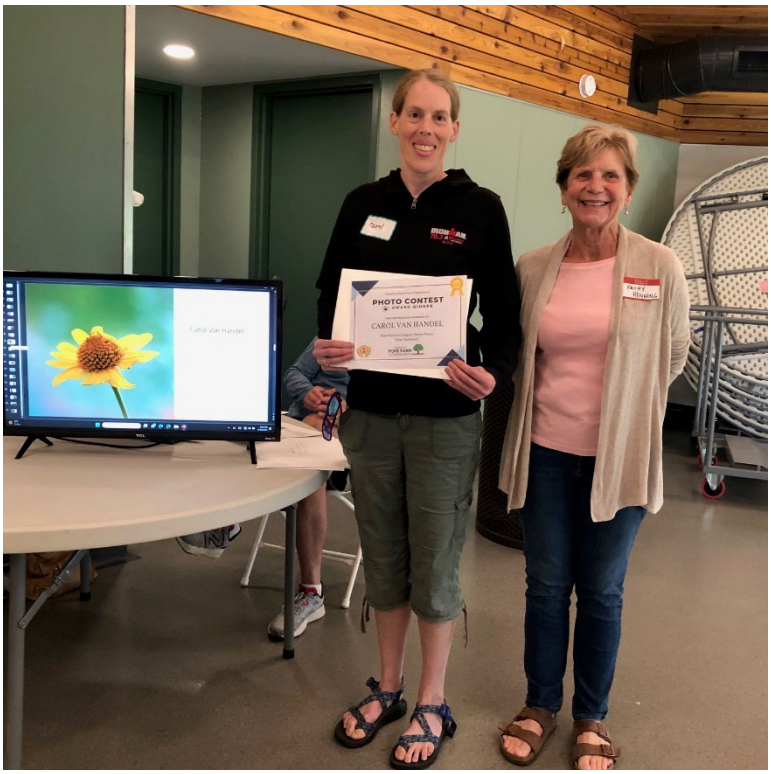
**Education Team Meeting – VIRTUAL**
**Next Meeting Date**: Monday, November 13th, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
**Location**: We will meet online via Zoom. Email Doug Piper (dlpiper0413@gmail.com) to get the Zoom meeting link.
**Topics**: We will finalize the new walking tour pamphlets with QR labels, and work on strategy for promoting our video series.

# Photo of the Month

## Winning Entry from our 2023 Photo Contest



Above: “False Sunflower” by Carol Van Handel won 1st Place in the "Prairie Plant" Category




Above: Kathy Henning from PhotoMidwest presents the award for best Prairie Plant photo to Carol Van Handel at the Members Picnic on August 30th. Congratulations, Carol! And Thank You, Kathy!

Stay tuned for more photos from our Photo Contest in the next News Update!!

## Volunteer Opportunities

- **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/

# 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.

## Share your Photos with the Friends

Send us your photos and we'll feature them here in our e-news. Email your favorite pics of Pope Farm Conservancy to janie@popefarmconservancy.org.

# 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!**

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