

The Cherokee Marsh News

The newsletter of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh

Madison Parks Restores a Wetland and a Woodland

Jan Axelson

Madison Parks began two restoration projects this year at Cherokee Marsh. The projects target a long-neglected wetland and a wooded area between two prairies.

The wetland restoration is taking place on several acres along N. Sherman Ave., across the street from the Cherokee Golf Course.

For decades, a network of ditches in this area has drained the wetland and funneled stormwater toward the Yahara River. Four of these ditches are now filled with sod scraped from the ditches' banks. Russ Hefty, Conservation Resource Supervisor for Madison Parks, explains, "instead of the ditches flushing stormwater quickly into the Yahara River, the wetland will store the water and release it over a much longer period." In times of heavy rain, the rainfall captured by the wetlands will reduce flooding in the Yahara River and the lakes downstream.

Parks staff and volunteers will seed native grasses and flowers in the project area.

In the second project, Parks aims to restore a diverse,

open oak woodland community that is attractive to wildlife. You can view the restoration area from the entrance road to the Conservation Park's North Unit, about 500 ft. past the gate, on your left, and also along the trail that begins at the SW corner of the main parking lot.

As the project's first step, a forestry mower cut and chipped thickets of buckthorn and honeysuckle, which out-compete native plants. Also removed were small green ash and black cherry trees. (See photo on page 2.) Parks plans to further open the understory by thinning the larger trees that remain.

Next spring, weather permitting, Parks will burn the area to consume the wood chips and prepare the land for seeding with native grasses, sedges, and flowers. The native oaks have evolved to withstand fire.

The restored open woodland will tie together the prairie to the north and the new prairie on the recently acquired park land to the south (the "5th Addition").



Alex Singer's series on public lands will return next time.



The bare ground on the left shows the path of a former ditch that drained the surrounding wetland. The view is looking south toward Lakeview Hill. Photo by Jan Axelson.

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Events Calendar

Collect Prairie Seeds

Wednesday, October 5, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Yahara Heights County Park

Help collect prairie seeds at Yahara Heights County Park. The seeds will help start new acres of prairie at Yahara Heights and other county parks.

Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt and closed toed shoes. A project of Dane County Parks' Adult Conservation Team. Contact Rhea at 224-3601 if you have questions.

Directions: Going north on HWY 113 (Northport Dr.) about 1/4 mile past the intersection with HWY M, turn right on River Rd., then right on Riverview Rd. to "T" intersection with Caton Ln. Turn right, drive into the park, and park on the grass along the path.

Hayrides and Hikes!

Saturday, October 22, 2 – 5:30 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park, North Unit

Ride in a tractor-pulled hay wagon through the park, take a guided trail hike, or do both! Cost for the hayride is \$2/person. No reservations needed. Hayrides and hikes will leave the main parking lot from 2 to 5 pm. Sponsored by Madison Parks and the Friends of Cherokee Marsh

Location: 6098 N. Sherman Ave. Head north on N. Sherman Ave. to the parking lot at the end of the road.

Call for Candidates

At our annual member meeting in January, we'll be electing directors to serve in 2012-2013. The directors are responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating, and managing the Friends' activities.

If you're interested in joining the board of directors, or even if you think you might be interested, please contact us at 241-5828 or info@cherokeemarsh.org.



This oak woodland restoration will open the view to the new prairie to the south. Photo by Jan Axelson.

Keep Up on the News

This newsletter comes out every two months, and that means that events announced on short notice don't always make it into the newsletter. To keep up with the last-minute news, you can "Like" our Facebook page or join our email group. Both options are low-volume; you won't be overwhelmed with messages.

To join the Friends of Cherokee Marsh email group visit:

www.groups.yahoo.com/group/cherokeemarsh

To Like our Facebook page, visit:

www.facebook.com/friends.of.cherokee.marsh

And that's not all! Our Facebook open discussion group is a space where all members can post comments and upload photos. To join, visit:

www.facebook.com/groups/cherokee.marsh

Read past and current issues of this newsletter at www.CherokeeMarsh.org

Friends of Cherokee Marsh

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Madison WI 53704

info@CherokeeMarsh.org

www.CherokeeMarsh.org

To protect, preserve, and restore the beauty, value, and health of the Cherokee Marsh and upper Yahara River watershed.

Directors

Jan Axelson (President)

Timothy Baker

Janet Battista (Vice President)

Dana Erlandsen

Lesleigh Luttrell (Treasurer)

Justin Sargent

Muriel Simms

Dick Walker

Dorothy Wheeler (Secretary)

Advisor (non-voting)

Don Hammes

Membership Form

YES! I want to be a Friend of Cherokee Marsh.

Your contribution of time, talent, or funds will help preserve and restore the crucial wetland ecosystem of Cherokee Marsh.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandhill Crane \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mallard \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron \$500 |

- Additional donation \$ _____
- Additional donation \$ _____ in honor of _____
- Additional donation \$ _____ in memory of _____

Memberships are per calendar year. New memberships paid after June 30 are valid through the current and following year.

In addition to my contribution, I can help with

- Field work Publicity Tours Education Board/Committees

Other _____

Name _____

Family member(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Second Email _____

We won't sell or distribute your email address.

- Don't publicize my financial support.

Please mail this form and payment to:

Friends of Cherokee Marsh, PO Box 3390, Madison WI 53704

Thank you for joining us in our effort to protect this valuable resource!

www.CherokeeMarsh.org

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh are dedicated to protecting, preserving, and restoring the beauty, value, and health of Cherokee Marsh and the upper Yahara River watershed.

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh is a Federal tax-exempt charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.