

CONTENTS

- 2 Celebrating 50 Years!
- 3 heiknbrew
Chimney Swifts
- 4 Tropical Blast 2024!
- 5 Habitat Management
- 6 Thank You's
- 9 Enchanted Forest
Butterfly Garden
- 10 Events

Nature photography by Nancy Nabak unless otherwise noted.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

James Taylor wrote a lovely song a while back that stated, "The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time." In a goal-focused society, time seems to pass by quickly as we focus on future outcomes. Or rather, it seems to go by slowly, until suddenly you realize how far along in your journey you've come. Then it seems to have flown by in an instant.

This is certainly the case for me, looking back at 32 years here in one role or another. Little did I realize when I stopped in to talk to the guy in the old farmhouse nature center how much it would become a part of me. This wonderful land, its wildlife, and the people here are beyond comparison. But, now it's time for my role here to change. It's time for someone else to guide the place along the path our mission defines.

The beauty is that every time a new person becomes part of this place, as staff or volunteer, they bring something new to our collective effort. And if we're good at incorporating their skills, we become a better, stronger organization. What started with a good and noble idea has turned out to be something of real worth to both the wild and the tame in our community. We've continued to build something that improves lives in many ways, and I'm so happy to be part of that. I can't wait to see what happens next.

But in the near term, we have two big projects taking place. First, we are finally restoring Forget Me Not Creek. Excavation will soon take place transforming the poor little ditch back to the kind of waterway it once was. So much work has

gone into the design of this project by Stantec. This includes the harvesting of dying ash trees from other locations which can provide organic matter and structure for the new stream bottom. After several years of preparation, it's great to be able to make the restoration happen.

Second, we are now preparing to rebuild Cattail Trail.

We'll be working with a contractor to complete the work we started ourselves several years ago—widening and stabilizing our most popular boardwalk trail. We'll be adding more bump-outs with benches for resting and enjoying the wetland, and the boardwalk will be more accessible to all, and easier to navigate for kayakers wanting to

use the launch at the end. This existing trail is more than 40 years old now, and the improvement will be significant. We appreciate the support of the West Foundation, the Wisconsin DNR through a federal Recreational Trails grant, and several private donors who are making this project possible.

The coming year will be filled with opportunities to join us and experience the nature preserve. 2024 will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of Woodland Dunes, and there will be many extra activities going on. Please be watching our calendar and join the fun.

I hope you have a wonderful winter and excellent coming year. I look forward to again seeing you out on the trails.

~ Jim Knickelbine, Executive Director

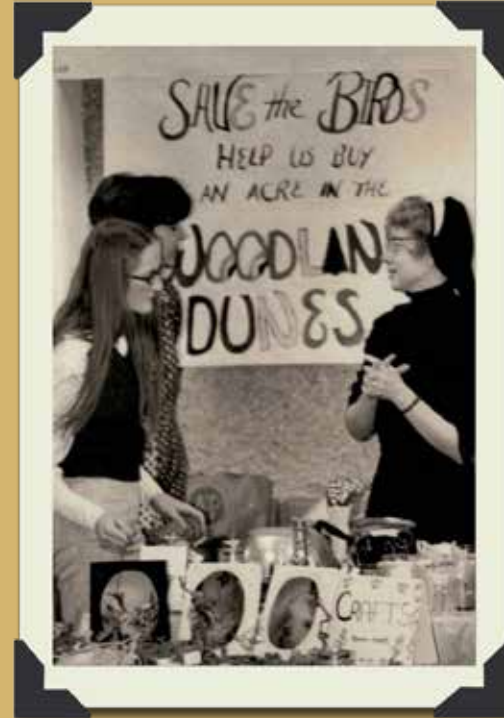




Woodland Dunes founder, Bernie Brouchoud, receiving an award from the Wisconsin Federation of Garden Clubs "for exceptional accomplishment in bird study and teaching of ornithology."



"Don't be a NERD, save a bird!" John Woodcock accepting funds from children who helped with a recycling drive for Woodland Dunes in 1976.



Fundraising booth at Roncalli High School to help Woodland Dunes purchase property.

We're Celebrating 50 Years – Thanks to You! *By Nancy Nabak*

It's time to channel groovy polyester sport suits, thick-framed glasses, and flair-bottomed pants. We're going back 50 years, to 1974, to celebrate the origin of Woodland Dunes, including habitat conservation through recycling drives and bird banding with youngsters.

It's almost impossible to log the time and effort it took from dedicated and passion-filled individuals to make Woodland Dunes what it is today. Starting from virtually nothing, we've preserved 1,500 acres of some of the most precious habitat in the state. We're one of the best birding spots along the lakeshore, and we're home to federally endangered and state-threatened species.

None of this happened by accident and we need to give credit where credit is due. Bernie Brouchoud started it all. In 1965 he began catching, banding, and releasing birds on what is now Woodland Dunes property. It wasn't long before Brouchoud, a federally licensed bird bander, and a small group of interested junior high students were making regular visits to the area. Aware of the value of this land as a bird migration stopover and nesting area, this group established a bird banding research station.



Interest and support grew as bird watchers, hikers, and school children visited the banding station and became intrigued by the valuable experiences the site had to offer.

In 1974 an organizing committee was formed with the plan to preserve approximately 1,200 acres – and a goal of erecting a nature center in the future, one that would serve as an educational resource for local residents, as well as guests from far and wide. In the same year, the first land purchase of 40 acres was made at a cost of \$6,000 dollars. Nature trails were

added as funds permitted, as were educational programs for school children.

In 2004, Jim Knickelbine took over as director and has led the charge since – addressing current conservation issues and educational needs. Today, Woodland Dunes manages over 1,500 acres and is home to more than 400 species of plants, 220 species of both resident and migratory birds, 40 species of mammals, 10 species of amphibians, and thousands of species of invertebrates. And as if that isn't enough to knock your golden anniversary socks off, over 15,000 visitors attend our programs and explore our preserve on an annual basis.

Are we still committed to our youthful learners? You bet we are. Sometime this year we will hit the number 170,000 - the number of children served through our environmental education programs since it all began. Wow!

Thank you for being a part of our past, present, and future. Be watching our website and Facebook for exciting anniversary events and plans throughout the year. Let's celebrate this golden moment together!



First Annual heiknbrew Raises Over \$23,000!

What a spectacular fall evening on our Preserve! Over 250 people enjoyed craft brew and wine tastings on our trails Friday, September 8th during our first heiknbrew event. Music by Glo & Joe filled the air and the weather was gorgeous.

We want to extend a big shout out to Tanya Pautz and Tapped on the Lakeshore for partnering with us on this event and working incredible hours to help make this a huge success. Kudos to the planning committee: Troy Christiansen, Jim Knickelbine, Mary Madison, Jolene McMahon, Tanya Pautz, and Nancy Nabak.

Thank you again to our sponsors who made this happen: Kerry/Red Arrow, TC Energy, 103.1 WOGB Radio, Fricke Printing, Fox Communities Credit Union, KI, Orion, Stecker Machine Co., Carron Net Company, Inc., and Shoreline Credit Union.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NEXT YEAR **SEPTEMBER 6, 2024**

Chimney Swift Research at the Dunes

By Nancy Nabak

Chimney swift populations are in steep decline and are a focal species for recovery by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). According to Mike Wells of the Minnesota USFWS, a major information gap exists where this species resides during the winter months, with only a single confirmed record from the 1940's tracing the birds to somewhere in the Peruvian Amazon.

Wells was at Woodland Dunes, a project partner, in July hoping to deploy small GPS tags on our nesting swifts to record their position during the winter and better define where this species spends its time. "Our goal is to trap Chimney swifts at



nesting locations during the summer, outfit them with tags, then recapture and recover the tags and data the following summer," said Wells.

Photo: It was a nail-biting event here, one swift flew into the trap but then immediately flew back out! So close, but we hope to try again in 2024!

Celebrating 50 Years!

BankFirst PRESENTS

Join us for a night in the Caribbean as we celebrate 50 years of successful habitat conservation and environmental education!

Tropical Blast Fundraiser
to Benefit Woodland Dunes Nature Center & Preserve

Saturday, February 24, 2024 5-9pm

Sepia Chapel, Two Rivers \$90 per person, \$720 table of 8, \$900 table of 10
Caribbean music, Wine & Pick-A-Pineapple Raffles, Unique Auctions & More!

All proceeds support year-round, nature-based education programs at Woodland Dunes Nature Center & Preserve.

WOODLAND DUNES
NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE

For more information or reservations, please contact Nancy at Woodland Dunes: 920-793-4007 or www.woodlanddunes.org

GATHER YOUR FRIENDS AND MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

Tropical Blast Celebrates 50 Years of Dunes' Positive Impact

Cue the steel drums! We're back at Sepia this February and celebrating 50 years of conservation and environmental education at Woodland Dunes!

Join us for a fun night in the Caribbean with a special menu, tropical-themed raffles, unique auction items, and a few new exciting surprises. We'll also take a nostalgic look back to where it all began and celebrate our successes because of your support.

Our goal is to raise \$50,000 to support our quality environmental education programs and to ensure that critical preservation efforts continue on our 1,500- acre preserve. Please check our website for reservations and more information.

Out of towners: Stay at the Village Inn on the Lake, 3310 Memorial Drive, Two Rivers, just two miles from Sepia Chapel, and receive a discount by calling (920) 794-8818!

We can't wait to spend this festive evening with you!

Habitat Management

We witnessed a rare event over the summer here at the Dunes. Our super dry summer enabled us the opportunity to plant trees and shrubs in the wettest of areas. Now we wait with great anticipation for green-up next spring into summer to see how they fared over winter. However, we were not the only ones who took full advantage of a dry spell. If you have not already met, let me introduce you to the native plant known as *Bidens cernua*, where "cernua" is Latin for "face turned toward the earth" or "nodding". This plant goes by many common names: nodding beggar-ticks, nodding bur-marigold and nodding bidens to name a few. Bidens are part of the aster family and nodding beggar-ticks are found across Wisconsin as one of about 15 biden species.

Key identifying characteristics: prefers wet sites, yellow flowers with a small notch on the tips, and as the flower ages it begins to nod. Others include the seeds that stick to just about anything they touch (see fall plant specimen photo); the seeds have tiny barbs that are delicate yet very effective. One other key feature is the opposite narrow leaf base that encircles the stem--this is referred to as perfoliate. Lastly the stem itself may turn a reddish hue and can grow to be 60 inches tall.

Please look at photos to experience this incredible event. In the photos, you see the swale area in spring and then later in mid-August after a dry summer- the nodding bidens absolutely exploded in a breath-taking bloom. Monarchs and bees were enjoying the splendor of this bloom. One could smell the sweetness of the collective.

So, as we are in the midst of winter, one wonders what type of spring and summer we have for 2024? Will it be so dry again that the nodding beggar-ticks put on another show (this year's event was the first anyone here could remember)? Or, will the rains prevail and fill the swales with a foot or more of water that we experience most years. Take a hike often over the Black Cherry/Trillium Trail boardwalk to observe the seasonal progression of an amazing swale.

— Sue Crowley, Land Manager



Swale water levels in May 2023 Photo by Laurie Shavlik



Swale with Bidens Bloom Sept 2023 Photo by Sue Crowley



Monarch on Bidens Bloom Sept 2023 Photo by Laurie Shavlik



Bidens fall plant specimen Nov 2023 Photo by Sue Crowley

Thank You!

Donations are recognized on a quarterly basis. If you don't see your donation on here, it missed the cutoff and will be in the next issue. Thank you.

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THANK YOU, DOMINION

These newly built stairs are a safety addition to our barn where we store lumber, tree cages, signs, and equipment in the loft. Much gratitude to Dominion employees for their time, talent, and donation of the needed materials. Thank you!



THANK YOU, CELLCOM

Thank you to Cellcom for supporting and upgrading our trails with a gift of \$500. Note: Cellcom no longer has a store front in Two Rivers, but if you'd like to drop off a used phone to be recycled, you can bring them to Woodland Dunes.



Visitors from Germany enjoying the Dunes this summer.

The Enchanted Forest

Enchanted Magic!

What a magical night at the Enchanted Forest! Families learned about misunderstood creatures such as bat, turkey vulture, and spider and enjoyed looking for the carved pumpkins in the garden. This was our biggest Enchanted Forest event yet: 220 participants, 15 volunteers, and 3 staff. Thank you, Sunrise Optimists of Manitowoc, for sponsoring this event and thank you to the Two Rivers Octagon Club for carving pumpkins!



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

As we go into the holiday season, we'd like to spotlight and thank all of our volunteers who have helped us throughout the year. We couldn't do it without you! — Woodland Dunes Staff

2023 What a Year!

2023 Volunteer hours: **3,613+**

Number of guests and program attendees: **15,000+**

Out of state visitors (39): **AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DC, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PN, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VE, WA, WV.**

International friends: **Italy, West Indies, Australia, Switzerland, Japan, Germany, India, Ottawa Canada, Spain, Vancouver British Columbia.**

DOROTHY R. STAR Butterfly & Bee Garden



Left to right: Steve Lutzke, Gerry Sisel, Josh Sisel and John Sisel.

The Butterfly & Bee Garden

Our original garden gate welcomed many visitors into the Dorothy Star Butterfly & Bee Garden over the years, but the time came to replace it this fall. A big "thank you" goes to Gerry Sisel, who headed up the gate replacement project. His efforts resulted in an excellent new gate built by Schuette Manufacturing. Installation helpers included Gerry, John Sisel, Josh Sisel, and Steve Lutzke. The sturdy, wheelchair-friendly gate will serve the garden well for many years to come! A big "thank you" also to Jenene Garey, who donated several new plants to the garden and to Marisol Mittnacht, who provided plant stabilizers. And many thanks to all of the volunteers who donated their time and muscles to help beautify the garden. You are all part of its success! Most importantly, we had many bee, bird, butterfly, and human visitors in the garden this year. That's a win for pollination!

— Wendy Lutzke, Butterfly & Bee Garden Coordinator

UPCOMING EVENTS

Unless stated, registration is required for all programs. Please note deadlines and program location. To register, email Jess at jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org or call 920-793-4007.

Adult Owl Prowl

Friday, December 8th
6:30-8:00pm

Learn about the owls that live at Woodland Dunes and about their amazing adaptations. Then head out into the preserve with staff to look and listen for owls. Space is limited, registration required by Wednesday, December 6th. Sponsored by The Winston Group and Next Era. *A family owl prowling is scheduled for Thursday, December 28th.



Raising a Wild Child

Thursday, December 14th: Hibernation
Thursday, January 11th: Deer
Thursday, February 8th: Winter Trees
Session 1: 9:00-10:15am
Session 2: 10:45am-Noon
Members: \$2/child
Non-members: \$3/child

Experience the wonders of nature with your 2-5 year old through nature hikes, play and guided activities. Help your child notice the natural world and ignite their curiosity! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dress for the weather, majority of the program takes place outdoors. Registration required by the Monday before each session, space is limited. Sponsored by Geoffrey & Carla Liban.



Frosty Family Fun

Have a fun adventure at the Dunes over the holiday break! The trails are open dawn to dusk and the Nature Center will be open 9am-4pm Tuesday, December 26th- Friday, December 29th. Stop in and explore the family room, take a hike or join us for one of the programs below.

Family Fun Open House

Wednesday, December 27th
10:00am-2:00pm

Bring the kids to the Nature Center to enjoy special activities like a winter craft, learn about winter animals, explore the family room and get outside for an adventure! Warm up by the fire place and sip on hot cocoa. Stop in anytime during the listed hours. No registration necessary.

Family Owl Prowl

Thursday, December 28th | 6:00-7:15pm
Members: \$10/family
Non-Members: \$15/family

Discover the amazing adaptations owls have in this interactive program. Learn owls calls, dissect an owl pellet, and head outside to listen for owls. Recommended for ages 5 and up. Registration required by Wednesday, December 27th, space is limited.



Blitz 50: Animal Signs

Saturday, January 20th | 9:00am-Noon

As part of our 50th year, we will be offering a "Blitz 50" during each season, which entails identifying 50 things within a specific category in the preserve. To kick off the year, we will be looking for 50 animal signs with DNR Wildlife Biologist Jeff Pritzl. Registration is required by Thursday, January 18th, space is limited. Open to all ages. Be prepared to be outside and walk in winter conditions. Sponsored by The Winston Group and Next Era.

Full Moon Meander

Thursday, January 25th | 5:30-7:30pm



Everyone is welcome to explore the trails near the Nature Center by the light of the full moon! Visit the astronomers to view the moon through a telescope. The Nature Center will be open and if there is snow, adult and kids' snowshoes will be available to rent for \$5/pair. Note: this is a self-guided experience and trails are not groomed. Sponsored by The Winston Group and Next Era.

Candlelight Night

Saturday, February 3rd | 6:00-8:00pm
Members: \$5/person; \$15/family
Non-members: \$8/person; \$20/family



Enjoy a fun, relaxing evening with friends and family! Stroll along a candlelit trail, warm up by the fire with s'mores and hot beverages, and visit our astronomer friends to view winter constellations (weather permitting). If there's snow, snowshoes will be available for use (first come, first served basis) or bring your own. Registration is required and will open Monday, January 22nd.

Beach Combing 101

Tuesday, February 27th | 10:00-11:00am

If you enjoy combing the beach for rocks, this program is for you! Join staff for a hands-on, inside program to learn about common rocks, fossils and other interesting rock-like objects found on local beaches. This is an introductory program great for beginners interested in learning basic identification tips and tricks. Registration required by Friday, February 23rd. Sponsored by The Winston Group and Next Era.



50 Hikes for 50 Years

We're turning 50 in 2024! 50 years old! To celebrate this amazing milestone, we are offering 50 hikes throughout the year to showcase the beautiful preserve. Some hikes will be on a focused topic and others will be open to what Mother Nature presents. All hikes will be guided mostly by staff, but there will be some guest leaders throughout the year. This is your opportunity to experience all of our trails in different seasons and even some areas of the preserve that are not always open to the public.

Registration is required for all hikes as trail conditions and weather will affect the meeting location and space is limited. Register by the Friday before each hike (or sooner so you don't miss out). Unless otherwise noted, all hikes are about 1 mile or less. This is your official invite to celebrate Woodland Dunes - adventure awaits! Sponsored by The Winston Group and Next Era.

#1 New Year's Day Hike

Monday, January 1st
11:00am

Start the new year by stepping into nature! Trail to be determined.

#2 Conifer Trail Guided Hike

Wednesday, January 10th
1:00pm

Look for animal signs and other interesting things along Conifer Trail.

#3 Winter Walk

Friday, January 19th
11:00am

Enjoy a guided winter walk. Trail TBD.

#4 We're Nuts About Hiking!

Sunday, January 21st
11:00am

In honor of National Squirrel Appreciation Day, we will learn all about squirrels. Families welcome, trail to be determined.

#5 Winter Mushroom Hike

Tuesday, January 30th
1:30pm

Mushrooms and winter? You bet! Join Matt Welter and Nancy Nabak on our trails to discover unique fungus in the winter and learn what you might find in early spring.

#6 Mammals of Woodland Dunes

Tuesday, February 6th
2:00pm

Learn about the 43 species of mammals at Woodland Dunes and look for signs on the trail. Trail to be determined.

#7 Valentine's Day Hike

Wednesday, February 14th
3:00pm

Let nature be your Valentine! Meet at Willow Trail.

#8 Great Backyard Bird Count

Monday, February 19th
10:00am

Help staff count birds for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Trail to be determined.

#9 Leap Year Hike

Thursday, February 29th
1:00pm

We've got an extra day this year, so get outside and enjoy a guided walk along Black Cherry Trail.



Snowshoe Rentals

Try using snowshoes on your next winter walk in the preserve! Snowshoes will be available to rent at the front desk for \$5/pair and are for use in the preserve. Please call ahead for availability and to make sure there is adequate snow cover. Adult sizes and children's sizes (fit most kids 4 years and older) are available.



To register for any of our programs, please contact Jess at jessicaj@woodlanddunes.org or call at 920-793-4007.



WOODLAND DUNES

NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE

PO Box 486 | Two Rivers, WI 54241-0486

WOODLAND DUNES NATURE CENTER

Become a member or give a gift membership!

Headquarters & Nature Shop

Hwy 310 West of Two Rivers

Hours

Monday - Friday: 9 am - 4 pm
 Saturday: 9 am - 12 pm (April - October)

Contact

Phone: (920) 793-4007
 Email: nature@woodlanddunes.org
 Website: www.woodlanddunes.org
 Facebook: Look up Woodland Dunes in Two Rivers, WI and like our page!

Staff

<i>Executive Director</i>	Jim Knickelbine
<i>Assistant Director/ Education Coordinator</i>	Jess Johnsrud
<i>Communications & Development Coordinator</i>	Nancy Nabak
<i>Land Manager</i>	Sue Crowley
<i>Naturalist</i>	Kennedy Zittel
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	Jenifer Thompson
<i>Environmental Educator/ Butterfly Garden Coordinator</i>	Wendy Lutzke

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 Bruce Robinson

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Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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Email _____

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 | Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 | Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | Contributor |

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | Conservator | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | Benefactor | contribute to the |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 | Steward | endowment fund. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 | Guardian | Please contact me. |

Please send this form and your tax-deductable membership to Woodland Dunes!