



The HERON

Bimonthly Newsletter of the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Wednesday, January 11, 2012

7 pm, Moraine Park Technical College, Room O-104

Wild Cats of Wisconsin

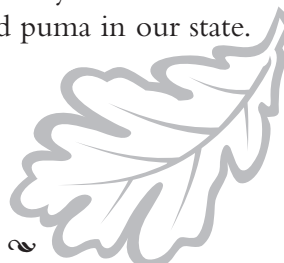
Speaker: John Olson, DNR Ecologist

Wild animals in Wisconsin?

Discover the history and status of
lynx, bobcat, and puma in our state.



free-predator-pics.com



Wednesday, February 8, 2012

7 pm, Moraine Park Technical College, Room O-104

Wisconsin Before Settlement

Speaker: Herman Bender, Researcher and Historian

Find out about the plants and animals that populated
Fond du Lac County before settlement,
as well as the people who used the resources.



Thank You!

Thank you to
Carol Jewett and
Mary and Don Moser
for refreshments at the
December meeting.

Audubon evening programs take place at Moraine Park Technical College. From National Avenue, turn into parking lot O. Enter the door labeled O-1. Classrooms are on your left. Audubon programs are open to the public with no admission charge. Adults, families, and young people with an interest in environmental issues are encouraged to attend.

Visit Us On the Web: www.fdlaudubon.org

Fond du Lac Audubon Donates Sign for Fond du Lac High School Prairie Restoration

In 2009, six acres of land surrounding a water retention pond on Fond du Lac High School's east side were filled with weeds, invasive species, and many erosion gullies. The water retention ponds were created to collect run-off and house the school's geothermal heat exchange system. Mrs. Winter and her Environmental Science class of 2009-2010 saw this as a chance to restore the school's grounds to a more natural and native Wisconsin prairie. Mrs. Winter and four student leaders applied for a State Farm Insurance "Youth Advisory Board" Grant in the Environmental Responsibility category. In February 2010, Fondy High received a grant from State Farm Insurance for \$47,613 in order to fund the large prairie restoration project. The main purpose of the prairie project was to provide an educational experience about taking care of the land, practicing good land stewardship, and how to restore prairies. The grant included funding to correct erosion problems, eliminate invasive species, restore six acres of native prairie, and create an outdoor education center for students at Fond du Lac High School, Lakeshore Elementary School and community members. Aesthetics and recreation are other benefits of restoring the school's grounds.

In the summer and fall of 2010, the land was re-graded and rocks were put in place to control erosion. A trail was created (.6 mile) that encircles the pond and weaves through the prairie restoration.

In October of 2010, Environmental Science students from the 2010-2011 year seeded the prairie restoration with assistance from second and fifth graders at nearby Lakeshore Elementary. Part of the prairie was machine-seeded by Prairie Nursery as well. An amphitheater seating area was installed by students in the school's construction academy and 13 Leopold benches were built and installed by students in a woods class. During the summer of 2011 and for the next few years, the site will be managed with periodic mowing to prevent annual weeds from spreading. Prairie restorations take 3-6 years before the vegetation becomes established and mature. Early growth is planted in order to establish root systems.

The Fond du Lac County Audubon Board voted to give a generous donation of \$2000 toward the purchase of a sign for the prairie restoration. Thank you so much to Fond du Lac Audubon for supporting this education project. Environmental Science students chose to name the prairie the "Mary Fran Merwin Memorial Prairie" in memory of a beloved former principal at Fond du Lac High School who battled with cancer. At a recent school board meeting, the naming was approved by the school board.

The community is invited to attend a Prairie Dedication and Open House event this spring! The date is to be determined, but it will be near Earth Day, the third week of April. Watch the newspaper and the Audubon newsletter for the exact date and time.

—Margie Winter, *Environmental Science teacher at Fond du Lac High School*



Prairie grass – Big bluestem



Erin Kelly plants seed.



Mackenzie Farina and Anna Steberg plant seed.

Notification of Neighborhood Pesticides

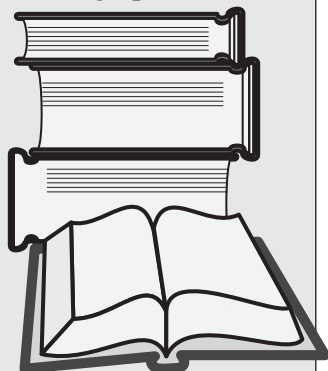
Pesticide application on land nearby can drift onto your property. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection offers a *Landscape Pesticide Advance Notice Registry*. Professional lawn and landscape businesses will inform you at least 12 hours prior to application as to what property is being treated and what chemicals will be applied. This advance warning can be helpful in minimizing exposure by keeping windows closed and not hanging out clothes. To sign up, go to <http://datcp.wi.gov>, click on Environment and search on Landscape Registry. After logging in, enter the addresses of the immediate neighboring properties for which you would like notification. The deadline to join the registry is February 1, 2012.

WINTER READING

John Muir Biographies

On April 28, Fond du Lac County Audubon is sponsoring a field trip to Marquette County's Muir Park and the boyhood haunts of John Muir, often considered the father of our national parks. Leading us on the trip will be Joel Burbach, the same person who led the producers of Yosemite National Park's video on Muir. This will be a rare opportunity to hear about John Muir's Wisconsin life from a well-informed source. To make the most of this field trip and to more fully understand the forces that shaped John Muir's advocacy for wild places, read his autobiography, *The Story of My Boyhood and Youth*. In addition, John Muir's nature descriptions have stood the test of time, and you can select from any of his essays about wild places you have visited or plan to visit. For instance, those who went on the Grand Canyon raft trip might enjoy his essay on the Grand Canyon. There are a host of Muir biographies that explain his life and contributions, and any of these will entertain and enlighten you. When the cold winds of winter are blowing outside, you might enjoy one of my favorites of Muir's writings, *Stickeen*.

—Kathleen Stetter



AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

Yaktrax, Hike, or Snowshoe, on the East Branch of the Fond du Lac River

Thursday, February 2, 1 pm

Don your winter foot gear, and once again meet Diana Beck at the East Greenway on the west side of the Pick N' Save parking lot on Pioneer Road, and explore the river as it meanders south. You will see what Fond du Lac looks like from the river in wintertime and watch for signs of wildlife. If the river isn't safe for walking, Diana will lead a hike along the East Greenway trail.

Snowshoe or Cross-country Ski at Kiekhäfer Park

Saturday, February 11, 1 pm

Join Earl and Carol Jewett for a guided winter exploration of the hilly trails at unique Kiekhäfer Park.

Snowshoes may be reserved for the event courtesy of Attitude Sports.

Please register with Kathleen Stetter to participate or reserve snowshoes at 920-872-2250 or stetter@centurytel.net.

Attitude Sports will be hosting snowshoe demos at Kiekhäfer Park starting at 11 am. Park visitors will be able to try various snowshoes at no charge.

Directions: From Fond du Lac, take Highway 151 north to Kiekhäfer Parkway. Turn right on Kiekhäfer Parkway and go to the parking lot on the north side of the road, 4235 Kiekhäfer Parkway.

Invitation to Audubon Board Meeting

The Audubon Board will meet on Monday, February 6, at 7 pm in the cafeteria at Moraine Park Technical College. The Board meetings are open for all members to attend. Please call Diana Beck if you are interested in attending: 922-7931 or email dbeck7931@charter.net.

Donations for Prairie Sign

Fond du Lac County Audubon Society is accepting donations to be used for the signage at the Mary Fran Memorial Prairie at Fond du Lac High School. Contact Diana Beck 922-7931 or email dbeck7931@charter.net.

Fond du Lac County
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

P.O. Box 84
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-0084

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*Submit articles for the Audubon newsletter
via e-mail to evelyn@mcleancowan.com*

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

THE HERON

Fond du Lac County
AUDUBON
SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP

- ☐ **Yes!** I want to become a member or renew my membership to the National Audubon Society, and the Fond du Lac County Chapter. The annual membership dues of \$40 entitle me to six issues of the Audubon magazine, and all local chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- ☐ I am only interested in being a member and supporting the programs of the Fond du Lac County Audubon. The annual local membership dues of \$20 entitle me to receive the chapter newsletter and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- ☐ I am a new member.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Email

Mail this form with payment to:
Fond du Lac County Audubon, Membership Services
W4148 Kiekhaefer Parkway, Fond du Lac, WI 54937

Join the Great Backyard Bird Count February 17–20, 2012

By participating in this effort to track bird populations, the birds in our area will be included in the count and data. Anyone, from beginner to expert and with access to the internet, can help with the tally. The minimum requirement for counting is 15 minutes on one day, and can be done from the inside of your house. Those who want to contribute more can count for as long as they like on each day of the event.

Check out the web site at www.birdsource.org/gbbc/. There is information on how to participate, help for beginners with regional bird lists and identification tips, and the data forms for entering your count results. Be part of the citizen science effort that may help our bird populations.



Renew Your Audubon Membership

Support the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society by renewing through our local chapter. Please use the form at the left.

Go Green – Sign up for e-News

Be the first to get your Audubon newsletter and save trees. Sign up for the Audubon newsletter via email. Contact Earl Jewett at earl.jewett@charter.net.