



Preserve!

FRIENDS OF THE LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE

SPRING 2025

KEYNOTE TALK AT ANNUAL MEETING

Wiggly Worms Under Our Feet: *Population Dynamics, Ecological Effects and Control of Non-Native, Invasive Jumping Worms*

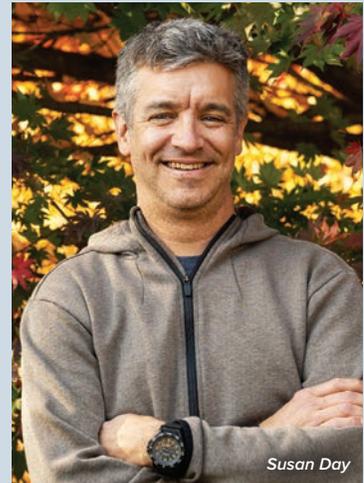
Brad Herrick, Director of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve

Most earthworms, including the common nightcrawler, are not native to Wisconsin or any landscape that was glaciated during the last ice age. These species were introduced to the New World during European settlement. Jumping worms are a new group of earthworms from parts of Asia that have recently started to spread throughout North America, hitching rides on horticultural products such as compost, mulch and potted plants. Through their feeding and burrowing behaviors, jumping worms have potentially profound implications for soil and plant health and the green industry, setting them apart from their European counterparts. My

talk will share the latest research on the distribution, impacts and control options for jumping worms across natural habitats and garden settings. I will also discuss what factors drive the spread of jumping worms and European earthworms across urban and rural habitats in Dane County.



Susan Day



Susan Day

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

BRAD HERRICK

I am the Director of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, taking up my position in the fall of 2024. I hold a bachelor's degree in biology from Luther College, a master's degree in ecosystems studies from UW–Green Bay, and I am a PhD candidate in the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. From 2007-2024 I was the ecologist and research program manager at the UW–Madison Arboretum. My research interests include the effect of disturbance on native plant communities, the effects of invasive earthworms on ecosystem processes and the outcomes and challenges of urban restoration.



Elise Mahon

Adult jumping worms can reach four to six inches in length. Learning about them in the field is good strategy.



23RD ANNUAL FRIENDS MEETING

Wednesday,
April 2, 2025
7:00 p.m.

In-person at the UW Arboretum

Join us at 6:30 p.m. for refreshments and socializing. The public is welcome. Please bring a friend.



Glenda Denniston

President's Invitation to the FLNP Annual Meeting

Tom Zinnen, president

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am delighted to invite you and any interested friends and family members to the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Wednesday, April 2 at 7:00 PM. Free and open to the public, the meeting is once again at the UW Arboretum Visitor Center. Doors open for snacks and socializing at 6:30.

This year is coalescing into a pivotal period in the history of the waters and lands - 300 acres, 4.3 miles of shoreline -- of the UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve. The well-being of, and public access to, this special place is at the heart of the Friends. Through our programs, including field trips, workdays and citizen science projects as well as through our gifts of funds, we work to fulfill our mission: "to inspire people to connect to and care for the UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve."

I'd like to give you at least five reasons to attend the FLNP Annual Meeting.

1. A chance to meet new Preserve Director Brad Herrick, who will provide

his report on the state of the Preserve and who will also be our featured speaker sharing his research on invasive jumping worms.

2. Discussion of the continuation of the years-long planning process of the \$16.8 million outreach center, christened in February 2024 as the Frautschi Center.

3. Conversation on the plan commissioned by UW Transportation and produced by Damon Farber landscape architects on the possibility of paving and lighting the Howard Temin Lakeshore Path from the Center for Limnology to Elm Drive.

4. Updates on the Strategic Planning process the Friends board launched in December 2024 to help us lay out a plan of action for the coming years.

5. Nominations and election by FLNP members present of six new members to the Board of Directors!

We will also express our gratitude to members who will be rotating off the

board: Yara AL-Rayyan, Logan Dachel, Reba Luiken, MJ Morgan, Diana Tapia Ramon and Josh Sulman, as well as to former board president Ingrid Jordon-Thaden, who moved from Madison to take a professorship at Murray State University in Kentucky.

The board is also eager to encourage and engage you as a volunteer on any of our committees -- you don't have to be a board member to serve. The annual meeting is a splendid way for members to talk face-to-face with committee volunteers, finding good matches between your interests and our needs. That synergy of action is essential to the best possible work of the Friends.

It's been five years since COVID first crashed our in-person annual meetings, and I'm looking forward to seeing you and to cultivating the connections and camaraderie so vital to the vibrant functioning of the Friends. I hope you'll mark your calendar and plan to join us on April 2.

BOARD CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHIES

Nominees to the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve Board

The chair of the Friends nominating committee, Diana Tapia Ramon, and committee member Steve Holtzman recommend the following candidates, endorsed by the board. Other candidates may be nominated at the annual meeting; all members present on April 2 are eligible to vote. Board members are elected for three-year terms; one or two student board members are elected for one-year terms. The board also supports the second term of Tom Zinnen.

**SCOTT HERSHBERGER**

Scott works for UW–Madison Extension on a team that empowers individual and family woodland owners to manage their forests sustainably. His many hats include strategic communicator, social scientist and science writer. Scott helps coordinate an Extension community of practice on forestry and climate change across the Midwest and Northeast. With an M.S. in science communication, he has written for *Scientific American*, *Fermilab*, *SciShow*, *TED-Ed* and more. He grew up in Kansas but is grateful that life brought him to Madison in 2022. As a resident of Eagle Heights, Scott frequently visits the Preserve, a truly special place that has connected him more deeply to nature than anywhere else he has ever lived.

**MAKEELA MAGOMOLLA**

Makeela grew up in Duluth, Minnesota and moved to Madison her junior year of college. She received her BS in zoology and is pursuing an MS in Wildlife Ecology with a strong focus on bats. She completed an internship at the International Crane Foundation and got the amazing opportunity to shadow a survey on the endangered Hill's Horseshoe bat with the Rwandan Wildlife Conservation Association, reinforcing her desire for a career in urban bat ecology. Currently, she is a wildlife rehabilitation volunteer at the Dane County Humane Society and has been studying bat distributions in the Lakeshore Nature Preserve with the Biocore Bat Brigade. Makeela is excited to join the Friends to increase her engagement in the Madison community and involvement in the Preserve.

**MARGARET MURPHY**

Margaret is the Learning and Development Program Manager at the Charter Street Heating and Cooling Plant at UW–Madison. With an MS in Educational Leadership and an MA in Library Science, Margaret brings a unique perspective to her role. She is also an Associate in the Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE), bringing a deep commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. She is thrilled to offer her skills and enthusiasm to the Friends, supporting its mission to connect people with the Preserve's unique ecological and cultural treasures.

**DON SANFORD**

A lover of Lake Mendota and its stories, Don Sanford is the author of *On Fourth Lake: A Social History of Lake Mendota*. He graduated from the University of New York at Oswego and the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. In addition to a thirty-year career with PBS Wisconsin, Don has served Madison in many ways: Commodore of the Mendota Yacht Club, International Nite Ice Yacht Association and the International Skeeter Ice Yacht Association; and he has been a Madison election official since 2008. In 2022, Don was recognized as a Friend of Preservation by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation for his contributions to preserving Madison's history through his work as an author, storyteller and filmmaker.

**TAYLOR STOFFLET**

Taylor grew up in DeForest, Wisconsin and now lives in Madison. Many of his most cherished childhood memories are of walking along the Lakeshore Path while his grandma, a bird lover, pointed out the birds she could see and hear nearby. After studying biology and sustainability at Edgewood College, he eventually began his career in fundraising at The Nature Conservancy's Wisconsin Chapter. Today, he serves as Director of Development for Scholarships and Student Support with the Wisconsin Foundation & Alumni Association and, weather permitting, starts each day by walking through the Preserve on his way to work.

**DON WYLIE**

Don grew up on a dairy farm near Wisconsin Rapids. His interest in nature started early with an older brother who explained why the marsh held water and why some of the pine trees turned yellow. After a career at UW's Space Science and Engineering Center (SSEC), Don began guiding nature tours at the Madison School Forest and is currently an Outdoor Guide for the Madison School Community Recreation (MSCR) department. As a student and young scientist, he also spent many years jogging from his office in the Atmosphere, Ocean and Space Science building to the end of Picnic Point. He also conducts pontoon boat tours on Madison's lakes for MSCR; in the winter he is a skiing instructor at the Blackhawk Ski Club and Cascade Mountain. He enjoys passing the joy of his childhood to children and their parents.



FRIENDS OF THE LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE

2025 Spring & Summer Field Trips



Glenda Denniston

Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, in collaboration with the Friends of Urban Nature and the UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve

Notice: Unless otherwise noted, field trips are on Sundays and start at 1:30 pm from the kiosk at the stone gate entry to Picnic Point, 2000 University Bay Drive. Public parking is free on weekends in Lot 130, 2003 University Bay Drive. The entry point is served by Metro Bus Stops #2938 outbound and #2881 inbound. See map.wisc.edu.

March 23

EARLY MIGRATING BIRDS

Sunday, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Please check the Friends website in March for more information. With Paul Noeldner and Chuck Henrikson.

April 6

UW SCIENCE EXPEDITIONS: LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE: "A DESTINATION FOR EXPLORATION"

Sunday, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Featuring four Exploration Stations on Picnic Point: geology of the stone wall, trees, birds and effigy mounds. Also offering information on the new Lakeshore Nature Preserve Frautschi Center, a warm fire and hot chocolate. Perfect for young and older learners alike. Co-led by Doris Dubielzig and UW Preserve staff.

April 19

SPRING BOTANICAL STROLL TO EAGLE HEIGHTS WOODS

Saturday, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Join botanist and long-time FLNP member Josh Sulman to spot early emerging spring blooms such as bloodroot. Reflect on 27 years of change since his botanical inventory of Eagle Heights

Woods in 1998. With Josh Sulman. Meet at Frautschi Point parking lot, 2662 Lake Mendota Drive.

April 27

SPRING WILDFLOWERS

Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Join UW botanist Eve Emshwiller and Preserve Steward Glenda Denniston on a walk through Bill's Woods, following winding trails south in a pleasant loop back to the Picnic Point Preserve entrance. See many spring ephemerals, some tiny and hard to spot, and learn about typical growing environments. With with Eve Emshwiller and Glenda Denniston.

May 3

UW FAMILY GARDENING DAY

Saturday, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Featuring FLNP Exploration Stations at the Steenbock Library Plaza, 550 Babcock Drive. With Tom Zinnen.

May 4

GARLIC MUSTARD PULL WORKDAY

Sunday, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

This is a great chance to get out and enjoy the Preserve in spring. Help to support natural communities by pulling invasive garlic mustard together with other Friends and volunteers. No experience is needed, and this volunteer party is appropriate for all ages. Botanists will be on hand to provide training on garlic mustard and other plant identification. Hope to see you there! With Josh Sulman and UW Preserve staff. Meet at Frautschi Point parking lot, 2662 Lake Mendota Drive. Wear good shoes or boots and bring water. Work gloves may also be useful.

May TBD

SPRING SONGBIRD MIGRATION

Wednesday, time TBD.

Please check the Friends website in late April. With Jill Feldkamp and Roma Lenahan.

May 25

FROG WALK

Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Join Mary Campbell with UW Hua Labs for a fun, family-friendly walk to learn about and look for frogs and toads along the trails, shoreline and marsh at the Lakeshore Nature Preserve! Find out how Friends of Amphibians Citizen Science volunteers are collecting important data by listening to frog and toad calls at spots all over Madison. Learn how we can all help our amphibians! See <http://tinyurl.com/MadisonFUNAdventures> for Fun Facts about Amphibians. With Mary Campbell from the Jessica Hua Amphibian Lab.

June 22

BLUEBIRDS AND PURPLE MARTINS

Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Join Friends board member Jeff Koziol, long-time Citizen Science caretaker/researcher on the Blue Bird Trail. The purple martin house and Bluebird Trail at the Biocore Prairie were installed by the Friends to entice these birds to nest in the Preserve. Field trip leaders will describe the appearance, habits and nesting behaviors of these two species. Leaders will also describe the Friends' efforts to protect birds from their enemies. Hopefully you'll get a peek at some baby birds, too! With Jeff Koziol. Meet at the Picnic Point kiosk.

June 29

SUMMER INSECTS OF THE BIOCORE PRAIRIE

Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Summer has officially arrived. What early summer insects are busy in the Preserve? What are their ecological roles in the Biocore Prairie? Join retired entomologist Tom Morgan to learn how insects evade predators through thanatosis or "playing dead." Bring a small umbrella or parasol to capture falling



insects as we explore the edges of the prairie and nearby woodland. Meet at the entrance to Picnic Point by the kiosk. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring drinking water.

July 27

CLASS OF 1918 MARSH TOUR Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Walk to the beautiful, small marsh and pond hidden in plain sight; along the way, we'll stop at the boardwalk lookout providing a view of the pond hidden behind the cattails! Continuing along the trail, we'll look for sedges and flowering wetland plants and use the Seek app or a nature guidebook to identify some birds, plants and flowers. Learn more about the Class of 1918 Marsh and find a trail map and self-guided walk activity

prepared by Professor John Magnuson on the UW Lakeshore Nature Facebook page. No pets, please. With Professor Emeritus and Limnology Director John Magnuson. Meet at the kiosk. Wear good shoes as it may be muddy in spots.

August 10

ALDO LEOPOLD AND THE LAKESHORE NATURE PRESERVE Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

MJ Morgan, longtime Friends member and retired environmental historian, will lead a walk along Picnic Point Trail using both University Bay and niches along the way to discuss Leopold's impact on the Preserve. Although there was no named Lakeshore Nature Preserve at the time Leopold was at UW, he knew the land and water, and

he shaped policy as well as proposing innovative curriculum based on nature and place. Meet at the Picnic Point entrance kiosk.

August 24

EFFIGY MOUNDS OF THE PRESERVE Sunday, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Join State Archaeologist Amy Rosebrough for a fascinating nature walk to see and learn about effigy mounds and other Native American history at the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Her talk will include the discoveries in the past several years of ancient canoes. Meet at the Picnic Point entrance kiosk.

President's Letter

Tom Zinnen, President

Dear Friends,

Over the past three years I have had the pleasure to visit many colleges as my children were approaching the age of matriculation to campuses vying to become their alma mater.

I have been struck by the lack of lake most places suffer from. For example, UMN Twin Cities has only a river; UMN Duluth and Cornell University have only lake views. To their credit, Northwestern has one great lake (but not a great lakeshore) and the University of Washington has two freshwater lakes and a great view of a mountain. UC San Diego has an ocean, and as the Romans might write: IMNVS.

In many ways, Dorothy Gale nailed it: there's no place like home. Our own UW-Madison lies along a limnological gem. From my point of view, the lakeside Memorial Union Terrace serves as the front door to the U while the Lakeshore Preserve serves as the back door for people coming to visit Wisconsin's public land-grant university.

Where I grew up, the back door was the open portal of informal hospitality. It's where our friends and cousins came into the house and where we all headed out into the backyard to play.

While nearly every college has a student union for its front door, we are uniquely blessed to have a metaphorical backdoor of 300 acres of woods, prairies and wetlands, along with 4.3 miles of lakeshore. The Preserve is a precious place to welcome all to this splendid institution of learning, research and public service.

The lakeshore is also a place with an archeological record of human habitation dating back ten millennia or more. For context, this past year as the UW was commemorating its 175th anniversary, people across Wisconsin were still being amazed by a series of recent discoveries at the bottom of Lake Mendota of ancient canoes dating as far back as 4000 years.

If the English examples of Oxford and Cambridge hold, then we can expect there will still be a university along the shores of Lake Mendota in 100 years, in 300 years, even in 900 years. Thus, the Lakeshore Nature Preserve gives us, if not a sense of timelessness, then perhaps a kind of *timefulness*, to the past but also to the future. As Friends, we are happy to embrace the knowledge that the mindsets, decisions and actions we embrace today will long be in play.

– Tom

2024

Annual Financial Report

Steve Holtzman, Treasurer

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$113,339
Income	\$29,000
Memberships, Donations & Gifts	\$26,688
Dividends and interest	\$2,312
Expenses	-\$19,903
Prairie Partners Summer Interns	-\$9,000
Gift to UW Preserve Stewardship Fund	-\$6,000
Special Projects and Citizen Science	-\$135
Newsletter and website	-\$2,223
Postage and PO Box	-\$833
Annual Meeting	-\$751
Insurance	-\$450
Membership Management Software	-\$486
Other Expenses	-\$25
ENDING BALANCE	\$122,436



Thank you, Friends volunteers!

Anne Pearce, Volunteer Coordinator

In 2024, 57 people volunteered their time to support all aspects of the Friends' work toward our mission to inspire people to connect to and care for the UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve. At the foundation of our organization are volunteers who help keep the Friends going by serving on the board or committees, managing memberships and contributing to the newsletter.

Our longstanding field trip program is entirely supported by volunteer coordinators, hosts and trip leaders. Throughout the year, field trips introduce some attendees to the Preserve for the first time, sparking their interest in this special place. Even for long-time Preserve visitors and supporters, the field trips share new ways of experiencing the Preserve.

Several dedicated people continue to care for the land through stewardship and citizen science monitoring. The Friends, with Preserve staff, co-hosted a garlic mustard pull in the spring and seed collecting in the fall. Volunteers also continued monitoring the Biocore Bluebird Trail, purple martin house and lake water quality in University Bay.

If you are interested in lending your time to Friends' efforts, please reach out! Opportunities include the following:

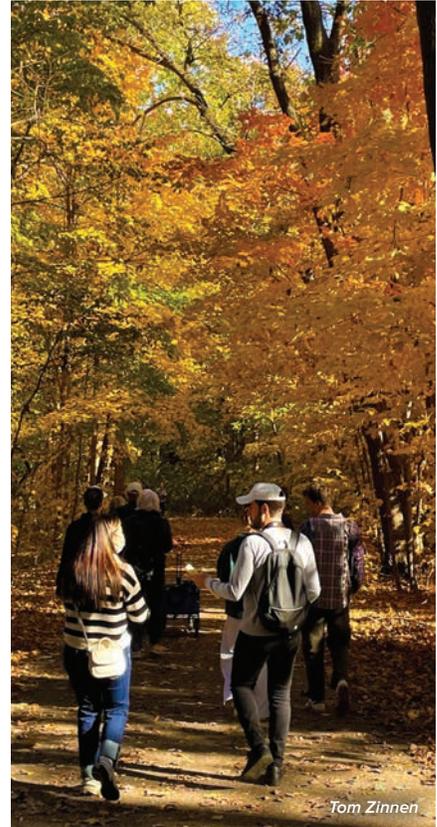
- **Citizen Science:** Bluebird Trail, purple martin house, Lake Mendota water quality and more!
- **Friends' committee work** in communication, membership or outreach
- Contributions to the **newsletter**
- **Field work**, such as removal of invasive plants or planting wildflowers
- **Field trips**, including offering suggestions for topics and leaders

Contact Anne Pearce (anne.pearce@wisc.edu) if you are interested in any volunteer opportunities or to submit corrections to our list of volunteers.

2024 FRIENDS VOLUNTEERS

We couldn't do it without you!

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Becky Abel | Arlene Koziol |
| Yara AL-Rayyan | Jeff Koziol |
| Samantha Anglemyer | Hans Kuttner |
| Laura Berger | Roma Lenehan |
| Mary Campbell | Reba Luiken |
| Matt Chotlos | John Magnuson |
| Maggi Christianson | MJ Morgan |
| Lauren Cortright | Thomas Morgan |
| Ava Cummins | Genevieve Murtaugh |
| Logan Dachel | Jamie Nack |
| Andrea Debbink | Paul Noeldner |
| Glenda Denniston | Ashley Olah |
| Doris Dubielzig | Anne Pearce |
| Jill Feldkamp | Mason Polencheck |
| Pam Fornell | Marjorie Rhine |
| Carlos Haeckel | Amy Rosebrough |
| Victor Haeckel | Jackie Sandberg |
| Chuck Henrikson | Marcia Schmidt |
| Scott Hershberger | Jenn Schneiderman |
| Signe Holtz | Bryn Scriver |
| Steve Hotzman | Steve Sellwood |
| Jessica Hua | Susan Slapnick |
| Thomas Jilk | Josh Sulman |
| Edie Joh | Diana Tapia Ramon |
| Ingrid Jordon-Thaden | Marie Trest |
| Sirapop | Katie Umhoefer |
| Kiatchaipat | Will Vuyk |
| Leslie Kim | Susan Will-Wolf |
| | Laura Wyatt |
| | Tom Zinnen |



Tom Zinnen



Josh Sulman



Paul Noeldner

Volunteering in the Preserve happens in all seasons, small work groups or large.

CHANGEABLE SURVIVORS

Gray Treefrogs in the Lakeshore Nature Preserve

MJ Morgan

Caught by Adam Gundlach's phone snap, a gray treefrog gazes out at bright green spring. The large hickory leaf he sits on says it is likely late spring in the Preserve, and Adam, UW Preserve Field Projects Manager, was lucky to spot him. Gray treefrogs, *Dryophytes versicolor*, are usually nocturnal; when out in the day, their skin color alters to a flush of leafy green. Night or day, while hunting their favorite foods – beetles, ants and other insects -- treefrogs must be wary of their own predators: herons, turtles, raccoons, salamanders and other frogs. So when exposed on the side of a tree, a treefrog's skin changes to a mottled bark-gray. With broad suction pads on his feet -- coated with a special mucous -- this frog scampers up the smoothest bark, color-changing as he goes.

gray treefrog motionless against an oak trunk snaps up insects with his sticky tongue. Of course, these frogs hunt in other tree species as well, but the Preserve not only has white oak; it has white oak near water in some choice locales. Two significant ones are the shoreline areas of Care Takers Woods and Frautschi Point Woods, although white oak is also growing in Bill's Woods, Big Woods and the base of Picnic Point, near its marsh.* Treefrogs are more likely to choose trees and understory near water.

Frog call surveys conducted by the Jessica Hua lab and Friends of Amphibians have revealed an interesting resurgence of gray treefrogs in 2024. These data are not just for the Preserve; information comes from all over Dane County, especially near

the 2024 jump? Frogs are sensitive to droughts, as they breed in ponds and marshes. One theory coming from research into other frog species shows an aggressive resurgence in numbers in the year following a drought or extremely dry year. Dane County in 2023 was significantly dry, even entering drought levels. In 2024, however, generous spring and early summer rains were boons to amphibians. The gray treefrog trills came back. According to the Jessica Hua lab, "Conducting frog and toad surveys that document resurgences like this highlights the strength that comes from collaboration between UW researchers and our community."

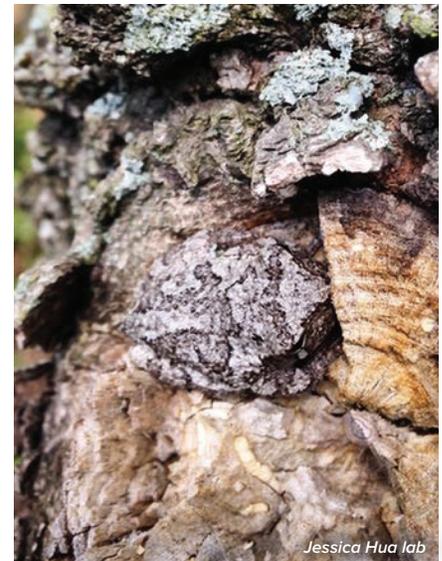
The male frog's trill has been described as "melodious," an immediate response to another male calling.



Could these two photos really be the same species? Amazingly, yes.

Even a small amphibian knows where he is better off, and gray treefrogs greatly prefer American beech trees, because against the gray-brown bark, these frogs almost disappear. Most beech grow in eastern or northeastern Wisconsin, so in the Preserve, treefrogs like white oak. A

ponds where peak breeding trills occur. But gray treefrogs appear marked on the Preserve for the final call map of the season, and Dane County has 28 verified gray treefrog calls or sightings. Yet in 2023, *no* gray treefrog calls were recorded or identified. What could have contributed to



Lichen on heavy bark shields a hunting gray treefrog.

Females choose mates based on the robustness of their calls. When the male trills, he forces air over his vocal chords, inflating his bubble-like sound sack. Some images of these excitedly-trilling frogs show sound sacks ballooning out larger than their heads! And they persevere. A



common predator is the bullfrog, yet experiments with bullfrog calls artificially introduced into treefrog evening trilling reveal no hesitancy or stopping by the frogs. Males are determined to out-trill their rivals in late April and May. It is these calls that have sounded again in the Preserve.

So what happens in winter? The image of a treefrog frozen solid is unsettling, yet all over Wisconsin, ice cube frogs make it through sub-zero weeks and months. They freeze hidden in tree knotholes, under old logs, stuffed down into autumn debris and in tree root caverns.

Their frozen state is called brumation. Frogs survive it through secreting an anti-freeze like chemical made by their livers. In the warmth of early spring, they thaw out, flex their legs and experimentally call once more. Revived vocal chords bring on a resurgence of trills for gray treefrogs. It is time to find a mate.

**Adam Gundlach provided the information on the location of white oak in the Preserve. Many thanks to the Jessica Hua lab, especially Mary Campbell, for helpful review of this article.*

Interested in helping to document amphibian populations in the Preserve and Dane County?



Plan on attending the first Friends of Amphibian meeting in early March.

Contact Mary Campbell at mcampbell32@wisc.edu or Jessica Hua at hua23@wisc.edu. Train your ears to distinguish frog and toad calls and contribute to some important research questions, such as, "Are amphibian communities changing over time? How are they impacted by their environments?"

SHOWCASING STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS

The Lasting Impact of Board Service

Yara AL-Rayyan

The Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve have long benefited from the energy, innovative ideas and passion for nature that student board members bring to the table. Many of us go on to pursue careers in conservation, community engagement and leadership nurtured during our time on the board. Four former student board members, Olympia, Will, Diana and Matt recently shared with me how their experiences with the Friends shaped their paths. Their stories, along with my own, highlight the profound and lasting impact of serving on the board.

OLYMPIA MATHIAPARANAM

Olympia joined the board through Biocore and an introduction from Seth McGee. Starting as a prairie intern, they served four years, including a term as president. During their tenure, Olympia focused on education, outreach and organizing the annual meeting. Now pursuing a graduate degree in Brain and Cognitive Sciences at the University of Rochester, Olympia studies how children learn biological concepts. Their time on the board strengthened their science skills in educational and informal learning environments. One of Olympia's favorite achievements was co-founding the "It's in Our Nature" open mic poetry series with Lillian Tong. Olympia shared, "Together, we brought the event to life, hosting it for three years, beginning in 2020. We were moved by the beautiful, charismatic poetry shared by many, creating a heartwarming celebration of

creativity and nature in the cozy setting of a UW library...I treasure the memories of working alongside Lil and the joy this event brought to our community."

WILL VUYK

Will's connection to the Preserve also began in Biocore, thanks to an introduction from Seth McGee. As a board member, he contributed by writing for the newsletter, leading field trips and expanding the open mic series to include recorded poetry on the Preserve's audio trail; in addition, for two years he generously served as our board president in a time of need. He noted that his most impactful project was launching the Friends of Amphibians citizen science initiative in collaboration with the Jessica Hua Lab. "I learned a lot about administration and leadership during my time on the Friends board," Will shared. "More important, however, are all of

the personal and professional connections I have made through the Friends." Now a graduate student in Penn State's Ecology Program, Will continues to explore the intersection of human and ecological perspectives, a passion shaped by his work with the Friends.

DIANA TAPIA RAMON

For Diana, the Preserve sparked a love for birdwatching, including her first bald eagle sighting. "As I strolled along the paths, it became an opportunity to unwind and enjoy the view of the lake," she recalls. "I wasn't sure how I could give back to this special place — until I received an email from Kelly Kearns nominating me for the board. That was my chance!" As a board member, Diana chaired the nominating committee and served on the field trip committee as a host. "I enjoyed seeing how

people from all over would come to visit. I remember meeting someone who had driven an hour just to attend that day’s field trip.” Now a graduate student in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy at the University of Minnesota, Diana continues her commitment to stewardship and environmental engagement.

MATT CHOTLOS

Matt joined the Friends board five years ago as a UW undergraduate, where he assisted with research at the Center for Limnology. Though he often walked the Lakeshore Path, he was new to the Friends organization. The board introduced him to a group united by a passion for local urban nature, and Matt found a unique opportunity to translate his ideas into action: “Serving on the board was my first experience where I felt that if I could articulate my ideas and back them up by volunteering, I could have a tangible impact on something as beautiful as the Preserve.” While his academic work often felt abstract, the hands-on experiences of hiking, birdwatching and contributing to lake water summer monitoring grounded him. Now a graduate student at Penn State studying PFAS contamination in fish and aquatic ecosystems, Matt continues to draw on the confidence and collaborative skills he developed with the Friends. “Discovering the power of cooperative effort has been profoundly important for me,” Matt reflected. “It’s shaped how I approach my research and my commitment to making a difference in the world.”

YARA AL-RAYYAN

As for me, I have lived in Shorewood Hills for a long time, and the Preserve has been a constant presence in my life. During the pandemic, it became more than just a familiar place—it was a refuge. I reconnected there when I conducted my Biocore ecology research. I was then recommended to the board by, you guessed it, Seth McGee, and Diana and the nominating committee brought me on. On the board, I managed membership mailings and



Ruba Al Smadi

Yara in winter, 2023



Tom Zinnen

Will Vuyk and toadstool, 2023

wrote for the newsletter. I also introduced several new software systems and helped revise, update and professionalize our website. Being part of a small nonprofit taught me the power of teamwork. I never fully understood how much work went into keeping a nonprofit running until I was part of it. After completing my studies in Biochemistry and Global Health, with certificates in Environmental Studies and Biocore this coming spring, I will be pursuing a medical degree. My time with the Friends has reinforced my passion for environmental health and its intersections

with community health and well-being. This ultimately influenced my decision to pursue a career in medicine, where I hope to address these critical connections.

For Olympia, Will, Diana, Matt and me, the Friends will leave a lasting impact. Though our paths have taken us in different directions, the lessons we learned from Friends and the Preserve—of teamwork, advocacy and a deep respect for nature—continue to influence how we engage with the world around us.

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WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Join the Friends!

BECOME A MEMBER OR DONATE

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visit www.friendslakeshorepreserve.com
and click "Join / Renew / Donate"
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Friends of the
Lakeshore Nature Preserve

P.O. Box 5534
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Ideas and *Friends* announcements for our newsletter and website are welcome. If you'd prefer to go paperless and receive your newsletter electronically, please email us at **preserve-Friends@gmail.com**

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..... Fall Native Seed Harvest a Success!

Josh Sulman

On the sunny and warm afternoon of Sept. 29, FLNP volunteers headed out to BioCore Prairie for a fall harvest work party: native seed collecting. There were

eight of us, including two Lakeshore Nature Preserve staff (thanks Bryn and Vang), and together we collected along the sunny slopes and woods edges where prairie and savanna wildflowers thrive. Using simple garden clippers or gloved hands, we stuffed buckets and sacks full of seeds from native plants. Timing is everything – the majority of prairie seeds ripen in fall and naturally disperse by wind, so we timed the event to make seed collecting both easy and productive. Our rich harvest included prairie dock, rosinweed, compass plant, rattlesnake master, tall bellflower and purple Joe Pye Weed—wildflower

species that support pollinators and birds and will support restoration efforts in the Preserve, too. A few species collected themselves– by sticking tightly onto our clothes (among them, the showy tick trefoil and the aptly-named stickseed).

Warm weather, ripe seeds and sun combined to produce a bumper crop and easy picking: we filled the bed of the Preserve ATV to overflowing with bags and buckets loaded with pounds of valuable seed that will all go toward restoring native plant diversity within the Preserve. Each species was bagged separately, and the harvested seed will be cleaned by Preserve staff. The general consensus was that Friends don't let friends pass up a good opportunity to conduct stewardship on the Preserve!

Join us on May 4 for the annual Garlic Mustard Pull!



Bags of seeds!