



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 10, Issue 3

November 2014

"Fall Family Festival" On Grandparents' Day



A fun time was had on September 7th when families came out to the Mead Wildlife Area to celebrate "Grandparents' Day". Highlights of the event included getting to see a live animal presentation by Dino Talchac of "Nature's Niche", and a Wildflower and Butterfly walk on the Audubon Trail.

Participants got to create their own animal and wildflower crafts, build their own seed feeders and enjoy a scavenger hunt using the historical display. Visitors also could go outside and enjoy walking on the various trails and new boardwalk.

Several university students in Dr. Perry Cook's Science Methods class also helped interact with the 200 people who attended.

The free event is co-sponsored by the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society and the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association.



Graham Hobson
holding a lizard

Friends of the Mead/McMillan

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Please Note: We are currently looking for people to fill the vacancies on the Board. If interested please contact Jeremiah Smith for an application.

DNR Staff on board:

- *Brian Peters,
Project Manager*
- *Pam Resech, Educator
Office 457-6771 ext. 2*

Webmasters:

- *Malcolm Gold*
- *Kaylee Lietz*

Newsletter Editor:

- *Dave Grabski
dgrabski@charter.net*



Habitat Happenings & Facility Features

By Property Supervisor-Brian Peters

Wetlands: Consistent rainfall in late summer and fall has been beneficial for the wetland habitat although in some cases we had more water than was desired. The wetness also prevented us from finishing some dike and trail maintenance projects, but work is progressing as weather allows. Waterfowl numbers using the property have been excellent and hunting success has been very good. The need for pumping water into flowages is less than last year. We have done some pumping into North Townline and Honey Island flowages to supplement water levels there.

Forests: DNR Forestry is working on setting up several timber sales to be offered for bidding in early winter. The annual goal for new forest management through harvest is approximately 200 acres.

Facilities: Thanks to all the volunteers who worked on observation decks, boardwalk, parking lots, gates, signs, grounds and all other facility-related needs! Your assistance is highly valued!

Miscellaneous Happenings: Information panels about aquatic invasive species were placed at several boat landings/parking areas specifically for waterfowl hunters at Mead and McMillan. Patrice Eysers initiated the idea and was involved with panel design. This was a pilot project that may be implemented state-wide at some point.

Assistance Appreciated: Thanks to the Friends of the Mead/McMillan for being a partner/donor for our North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant application to extensively refurbish Teal flowage dike! Other partners on the application include: Bill Cook Chapter Izaak Walton League; Wetlands Conservation League, Inc.; Marion Batina Memorial Fund; Central Wisconsin Sportsman's Club. We appreciate the cooperation and will anticipate a positive response from the grant administrators.

Former LTE Alex Linton and Patrice Eysers applied for and received a Besadny Grant of \$500 for wild rice establishment. Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin grants were also awarded for the Learn to Hunt Waterfowl (\$1,000) and Wingshooting for Migratory Birds (\$500) programs. Mill Creek Education and Gun Club donated \$300 to the Learn to Hunt Waterfowl program. Whitetails Unlimited, Marshfield Chapter donated to the Learn to Hunt Waterfowl (\$1,000), Hunter Safety (\$1,000) and Wingshooting for Migratory Birds (\$1,000) programs, and also provided four trail cameras. Our appreciation goes out to all of our supporters!



Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Article & Photo by Patrice Eysers

This September, the Mead hosted its 5th Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program. While attendance was lower than expected, the youth hunt weekend provided great insight to the overall success of this program. Past and present participants, along with other new waterfowl hunters gathered at the Mead for our LTH wild game feed.

Thanks to donations and grants from numerous entities including the Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin, Whitetails Unlimited – Marshfield, and the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association, the hunting equipment loaner program allowed several past participants to continue to hunt and even allowed for a past participant to introduce a friend to waterfowl hunting!

If you or someone you know is interested in learning about waterfowl hunting, or interested in mentoring a new waterfowl hunter, this program is a great opportunity. In addition, the Mead will be offering a one day advanced Wingshooting Clinic and an introductory program "Basic Shot-gunning for Women" in the spring of 2015. For more information, contact Patrice Eysers at 715-457-6771 ext. 5. Finally, a huge thanks to all of those involved in the hunting/shooting programs at the Mead – it wouldn't happen without you.



Jens was an adult participant this year. He hunted McMillan Marsh with his mentor-Mark.



A Prescribed Burn on the Berkhahn Flowage

Article by Kyle Christianson & Photos by Pam Resech

Anyone who has been by the education facility since the 22nd of October has noticed that we conducted a prescribe burn of the Berkhahn sedge meadow. Our weather windows were hard to come by but we were able to find a day that worked. Nineteen firefighters from two programs, Forestry and Wildlife Management, came together to accomplish the burn. The goal was to burn 630 acres of sedge meadow, upland, and marsh habitat. Berkhahn flowage has not been burned in 10+ years. Because of this, the habitat was slowly converting to a woodier component.



John Hunt (Wausau Forestry) watering the Sedge Meadow Observation Deck during the prescribed burn



Burning allows us to set back the woody encroachment at a larger scale than any other tool we have. We accomplished most of the 630 acres considering the narrow window we were operating in. Monitoring the effectiveness of the fire will continue through the 2015 growing season. If you were unable to see that burn, do not fear. It is the staff's intention to conduct several burns during the 2015 season. So keep your eyes to the sky for smoke.



McMillan Marsh

Article by Kyle Christianson



Hunting and trapping seasons are now in full swing. Staff is engaged in car counts as well as flight counts, measuring hunting pressure and waterfowl usage. Water levels have finally stabilized after a very wet summer and fall. All flowages are at management levels or slightly above. Projects completed in 2014 include the walking trail graveling project, in cooperation with Marathon County Highway Department and an Eagle Scout bike trial brushing project. However, several infrastructure projects like spillway construction, tube emplacement, and parking area construction still remain. With winter quickly approaching, it is our hope we can finish them in 2014.

Upcoming winter work on the marsh includes boundary assessments and posting, winter waterfowl meeting on Feb 11th 2015 at 6pm at the Mead Visitor Center, and prep work for 2015 field work.

Lastly, a bat monitoring project will be started on the marsh. Box construction will take place this winter with placement and monitoring to begin spring of 2015.

Anyone interested in joining the project can contact me at: email- Kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov or phone-715-457-6771 ext. 3.



Dick Shepherd & Don Fox constructed a new brochure rack, Photo by Don Fox



Community Education Events

Article by Kaylee Lietz & Photos by Pam Resech

Wisconsin Farm Technology Days-August 12-14:

The Mead Education Staff along with various Friends of the Mead/McMillan members had an educational booth in the Family Living tent at Farm Technology Days, which were held in Portage county this year. They introduced the many visitors to all the different opportunities the Mead has to offer.

For the younger visitors there was an interactive wetland display, where they could sift through the water and find the critters that call a wetland their home. There were also many different furs to touch and feel, and the butterfly identification buzzer board. Visitors really enjoyed all the interactive components and learning from us about the Mead.



Terri Hamus teaching the kids about the many critters found in a wetland habitat



Pam teaching the kids butterfly identification using the buzzer ID board

Heritage Youth Day-Saturday August 23:

The Education staff and Friends members also participated in the 9th Annual Sporting Heritage Youth Day held at the Wausau School Forest. This year's focus was on the importance of

Waterfowl Management and Research through the use of a waterfowl banding activity.



Kaylee and Zachary setting up the "Duck Banding" lesson

Each participant got a "duck band" and a worksheet, which they used to determine what type of duck they were, what flyway the duck uses during migration, and why we band waterfowl. After they

completed the worksheet, participants got their own straw "duck call" that they could practice calling ducks with. All visitors enjoyed this new and unique learning activity.



Ellie Kafka giving a duck calling demonstration to participants



Wildlife Conservation Education-Fall

Articles & Photos by Pam Resech & Kaylee Lietz

This fall was picture perfect for education. The colors had popped and the temperatures were just awesome for being in the out of doors and learning about the environment.

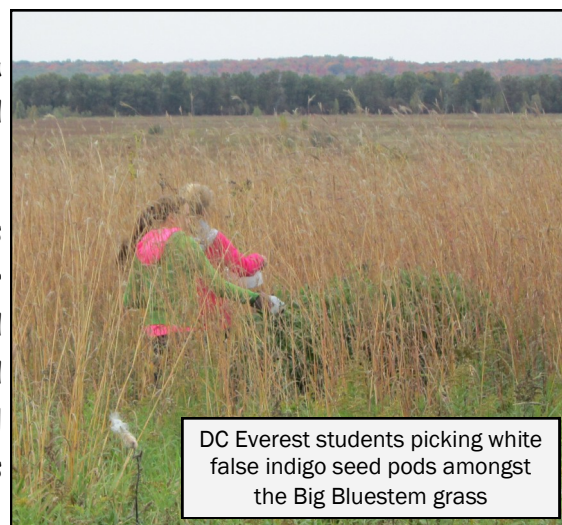
A new lesson "A Rottin' Place to Live" takes a close-up look at a dead tree to learn about decomposition. Dee Brewster's 8th grade students from Athens were the first group to experience this new lesson. The students were very surprised at the many different organisms they found in the dead log and their dependence on dead trees for food, shelter and/or nesting sites.



Athens' students collecting and counting organisms from a dead log

Students from DC Everest Junior High enjoyed their "Adventure Day" at the Mead. During their visit Kyle led a lesson about Native prairies and the importance of seed collection to enhance our property's grasslands.

Along with these lessons, the Forest was in full swing with its colors, which provided students a beautiful setting to try their hand at Tree Identification and find out which trees the Mead has and their importance to wildlife. Students also learned about how the animals are preparing for winter, due to the fall season and the change in temperature. All groups enjoyed this wonderful fall season and all the colors it provided.



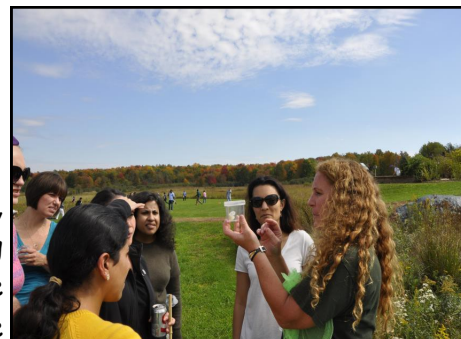
DC Everest students picking white false indigo seed pods amongst the Big Bluestem grass

Portage County UW-Extension Master Gardeners Community Grant

The Friends received a grant award for \$450.00. This grant money will be used to enhance our lesson plans about "Native Pollinators in Our Prairie Gardens".



Pollinators impact the lives of humans, animals, plants and other insects, making them a group which is critical to life as we know it. A growing interest in native pollinators, specifically bees, is partially a result of massive public awareness about the decline of European honeybees worldwide.



Pam explaining the importance of butterflies to medical students during the Marshfield Clinic Retreat Day

Photo by Mike Schulein



News Briefs

Articles Pam Resech & Photos by Pam, Kaylee, & Don Fox



New Membership Event Drawing:

This year the Membership committee is sponsoring a drawing for a free \$50.00 gift card. This drawing is only open to new members that attend and become members during an event held at the Mead Education & Visitor Center. This year the drawing was held during the "Spooktacular" event.

Pam Hageness-Mosinee was the lucky winner of a \$50.00 gas card from Lietz's Convenience Store in Mosinee.



Cellcom Grant:

On October 29th, Friends of Mead/McMillan Association received a \$2500 Green Gift from Cellcom at a presentation at their facility.

This grant money will be used to fund the creation of signs for the geology specimens located in the "A Story in Stone Garden".



Eagle Scout Project:

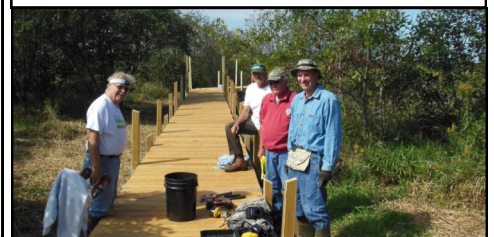
Alex Gunn, Marshfield-Troop #392, completed his Eagle Scout service project for the Mead Education & Visitor Center.

His project was the construction of two picnic tables. These tables will aid the visitors and school groups with a comfortable means to enjoy their picnic lunch. Thank you Alex for this great



New Wildlife Viewing Blind :

Ten volunteers and four DNR staff have put in 214 hours completing phase 1 of the new wildlife viewing blind located on Dragonfly Pond. Dick Shepherd, Don Ebbers, Tim Kaiser, Paul Adler and Don Furo by the deck structure. Mike Brehm, John Shippy Dick Shepherd and Don Fox by the start of the start of the boardwalk ramp. Volunteers not pictured are Wayne Johnson & Tom Hollar.



Education Donation:

Thank you to Western Fraternal Life Association for their gift of money to the Mead Education program. This group's members continue to help us with our education program by means of money, supply donations and volunteer help.

Pictured with Pam & Brain are members and Mead volunteers Gladys & Arne Ruha. Not pictured are Brenda Ostermann, Marcell and Janice Weiloch.



Attention Deer Hunters:

As in past years, dumpsters for the disposal of deer carcasses are available at the Mead service building parking lot adjacent to Hwy. S, and at the Advanced Disposal facility in Marshfield. Dumpsters are donated by Advanced Disposal. Deer hides can be donated at the sites by placing them in designated collection boxes.



BRAW Annual Convention

Article by Sue Hall & Photos by Patrick Ready

The Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center is a great place to hold a state convention featuring an environmental building with unique displays, classroom, outdoor habitat with a boardwalk and kiosk to have lunches.

The Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, BRAW, held its state convention at the Center this past September. The 100 participants enjoyed speakers from the area including Kim Marshall, a 4th grade teacher from WI Rapids, who showed her nest box program with cameras so students throughout the school can view the behavior of cavity nesting song birds. Janet Eschenbauch presented the history of the Central Wisconsin kestrel project at Buena Vista Marsh and Dr. Stanley Temple from Madison presented his research on the Passenger Pigeon extinction.



Kim Marshal-Washington Elementary Teacher

In addition to the speakers, the participants commented on the beautiful alternate energy building and the surrounding area which makes this facility a wonderful place to hold a meeting or convention. For more information on booking the Center for your meeting, contact Pam Resech, Educator at 715-457-6771 ext.2.

Great Gift Idea too!

If you need to renew your membership or have friends who are interested in joining the Friends of the Mead/McMillan please use the following membership form:

*****Current** members please use form to update any changes to your mailing and email address, or phone number.

The annual membership fee is \$30. Make Check payable to Friends of the Mead/McMillan.
Mail to: Mead Wildlife Area, S2148 Cty Hwy S, Milladore, WI, 54454.

Renewal _____ New Member _____ Gift for New Member _____

Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip	
Phone	
Email	

Thank you for your support with our environmental endeavors!



4th Annual Spooktacular & Food Drive

Article by Lorraine Michalski & Kaylee Lietz

Photos by Maryel Schoenfuss

The weather on Saturday October 18 was ideal for the fourth annual Spooktacular. Tiki torches lined the long driveway leading to the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center which was decorated outdoors and indoors with festive fall and Halloween decorations.



Once visitors entered in the building they were greeted with many indoor activities. There were a variety of games that kids could play to win prizes and candy as well as many fun Halloween crafts available for the creative minds. Pumpkin painting was outside on the kiosk and when finished they could take pumpkins home.

The fun was not just on the inside, but Outdoors as well. Mother Nature

welcomed everyone to the Critter Trail. Participants could walk around and interact with the many different larger than life animals and learn about their different adaptations. After meeting all the fun critters, the participants finished their walk by meeting and wishing Smokey Bear a Happy Birthday!

Over 375 visitors enjoyed the event and donated monetary or non-perishable food items which were delivered to local food pantries; Center of Hope in Mosinee and St. Vincent De Paul in Marshfield.

The non-scary, family fun night Halloween event is organized by the Spooktacular Planning committee; Pam Resch, Kaylee Lietz, Bill Seybold, Marlene Furo, Joan Dickrell, Rhonda Reigel, and Arne Ruha. The event is made possible by the numerous dedicated volunteers who help before, during and after the event in many different ways.



Eileen Riehle-
aka-Mother Nature



Volunteers from UWSP & Wausau West EE Club: Amber Locnikar, Kaitlyn Rodman, Curtis, Sandy, & Cassandra Knudsen, Natalie Vilter, Erica Flynn, and Kyle Zuk.



Spooktacular Event-continued

The Spooktacular committee would like to extend a huge Thank You to all the participants and volunteers who donated their time to make this year's Spooktacular another success.



Crafts & Games in Classroom



Pumpkin Painting



Smokey the Bear and Flying Squirrel by the fire



Cookie Decorating



First time visitors to the Mead Education and Visitor Center 52148

County Hwy 5 Milladore were amazed by the artifacts, memorabilia, and the wildlife mounts on display. The Center was dedicated to the state in October 2005 and opened its doors to the public, Spring of 2006. Majority of the funding for the educational programs and events like this one come from Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association.

For more information, visit the Friend's website at www.meadwildlife.org and find out how you can become a member and get more involved at the Mead.



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Please check the label of this newsletter as your membership might have expired. If there is no date on it, you are receiving this newsletter free for now. If your membership is up for renewal or you would like to become a member visit our website; www.meadwildlife.org or stop by the Center.

Wetland's Gazette



UWSP student Molly helping visitors create a "Critter Creature" at the 4th Annual Family Fall Festival event held on Grandparents Day.

Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, Incorporated Board of Directors invites you to attend the:

Annual Membership Meeting
9am Saturday January 17, 2015

Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center

Bring a friend and enjoy a morning at the Mead.

Refreshments will be provided.

