



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 6, Issue 2

July 2010

Heroes of McMillan Article by Dennis Dieringer

There are probably few other state owned properties in Wisconsin that are more anonymous than the McMillan Marsh but that is slowly changing. More and more silent users are using the area and appreciate the beauty that it holds.

The staff at the Mead Wildlife Area visits the McMillan after heavy rains to monitor water levels and check on the dike system. Water is crucial to the reservoir and the wetlands of McMillan. The city of Marshfield has several of their water wells located near the McMillan Marsh.

For those too young to remember, the McMillan was a place that only the strong of heart would venture into in the summer months. Mosquitoes and deer flies love it there. Not to mention all of your other loveable creatures, from frogs and turtles to ducks and deer and everything in between. That part has not changed. What has changed is that a bike trail now runs through part of McMillan. With the Marathon County Park Department mowing the trails the McMillan is now more open for public access.

It's the folks who wander on the trails, either by foot or by bike who are the heroes of McMillan. Many of these wanderers pick up garbage if need be or pull off fallen trees from the dike system. Sometimes they even go back home to retrieve a saw to get the job done. Some individuals took time to repaint the main sign and straighten the posts by the entrance. Some individuals monitor blue bird houses or check on nesting sites for endangered Blanding turtles. There is no reward; it's just done because there's a need, a feeling of accomplishment to help do their small part. These same individuals are like a watch dog keeping the staff at the Mead informed of any serious issues. I firmly believe that the McMillan Marsh and its inhabitants have benefited from the trail and its users.

With all of this attention maybe the McMillan Marsh is just one of the state owned properties that few people knew about, but will become better known through word-of-mouth. Little by little the word is spreading that a nice short visit to McMillan is just what the soul needs.

Take a chance—visit the McMillan Marsh and enjoy the serenity.

Friends of the Mead/McMillan

Officers

- *President—Doug Aziz
Mosinee 693-3491*
- *Vice-President—Kent Hall
Stevens Point 344-8081*
- *Secretary—Don Fox
Marshfield 676-3115*
- *Treasurer—John Shippy
Junction City 457-2575*

Directors:

- *Doug Aziz*
- *John Crawley*
- *Don Fox*
- *Don Furo*
- *Malcolm Gold*
- *Michael Gross*
- *Kent Hall*
- *Sue Hall*
- *Jerry Harvey*
- *Ellie Kafka*
- *Mark Lewandoski*
- *Jim Peterson*
- *John Shippy*
- *Bob Trembl*

DNR Staff on board:

- *Tom Meier, Project Manager*
- *Brian Peters*
- *Pam Stange, Educator
Office 457-6771*

Webmaster:

- *Malcolm Gold*

Newsletter Editor:

- *Dave Grabski
dgrabski@charter.net*



Manager's Report

Article and Photos by Tom Meier

This last quarter of our state fiscal year (ending June 30th) has been a challenge due to funding shortfalls in the Mead budget. Although this was the case, we have managed to survive and carry on most of our education and wildlife management efforts. We have accomplished several dike repair projects, begun an interim renovation of the Mead Bike Trail, mowed dikes, planted green (conifer) cover along old field edges for wildlife cover, and conducted surveys.

Wildlife production this spring has been very good for most species. Waterfowl production is average to above, especially for geese. Recent rains have replenished our wetland habitat and conditions are excellent. In some areas, we have almost too much water! Conditions are excellent if you are a fish! Deer production looks very good with many double and even some triplet fawns. Distribution of deer appears to be fairly evenly spread throughout the property. Turkey and grouse production is a bit sketchy due to a very dry spring until the rains started. Chick survival can be severely dampened when the young are exposed to cold rains during the first week after hatching, so only time will tell how these populations are truly doing.

We have a lot on the agenda for the remainder of the summer and will be undertaking grassland as well as wetland habitat projects. The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association is holding a raffle in conjunction with their summer banquet that is scheduled for August 22nd, in Wausau. Proceeds from the raffle will be donated to the Mead Wildlife Area for habitat work. We will also be spraying select brush areas in our wetland and grassland habitat in late July or early August. This program does not eliminate brush in these areas, but keeps it from taking over these important habitat types. Without this method of control, maintenance of habitat diversity would be almost impossible. We use approved and short lived herbicides to do the work which has produced excellent results.

This July, I turned 60 along with our Mechanic Tom Weber. The two of us did not plan on celebrating our birthdays, but were greatly surprised when a lunch in our honor was attended by staff, volunteers and neighbors. I guess we just can't escape growing older!



I hope that all of you have a great July and August and have a chance to enjoy the great weather we have been having.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TOM & TOM!

On May 11, 12, approximately 220 7th grade students visited the Mead Wildlife Area. To see a short (less than 4 minutes) ANIMOTO video clip of the trip enter the following URL into your favorite browser, then sit back and enjoy!

<http://animoto.com/play/N09kED1rF0Gmdyv1b1pbrw>



Mead Wildlife Area Habitat Project Raffle

The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association - Wausau Chapter is hosting the *Mead Wildlife Area Habitat Project Raffle*. All proceeds fund wetland habitat projects at the Mead Wildlife Area. Tickets are \$10.00 each. A maximum of 500 tickets will be sold.

- 1st Prize....**Final Approach Layout Package**. Featuring two FA Eliminator Sport Utility Blinds and two FA Last Pass HD full body Canada Goose decoy 6pc packs!!!
- 2nd Prize....**Final Approach Water Decoy Package**. Includes two FA Floating Canada Goose 6pc decoy pack and two FA Wide Mouth Decoy Bags.
- 3rd Prize....**Final Approach Local Ducks Package**. Includes 36 FA HD Standard Mallard decoys and one FA HD Floating Canada Goose decoy 6pc pack.
- 4th Prize....**Koplin Powersports Package**. Includes 2 Fender bags, 2 ATV Ratchet tie downs, Water Pack JR, Gun Boot, Fuel Pack JR. & Sealtecor soft rear bag
- 5th Prize....**Youth or Starter Package**. 12 FA HD Standard Mallard decoys, 1 FA mesh decoy bag, Buck 110 folding hunter knife, Gamehide Max 4 Wader Shirt (sz XL).

Tickets can be purchased from Friends President, Doug Aziz or at the Mead Visitor Center.

Drawing will be held during the Wausau Chapter Banquet August 26th, 2010 at 7:00PM at the Rose Garden Banquet Hall.

Friends Board Welcomes Mark Lewandoski Article by Sue Hall



Mark grew up in Wisconsin Rapids and was introduced to the Mead Wildlife Area in his early teens hunting roughed grouse with his dad. As an adult he continued to use the refuge for bird hunting and training pointing dogs at the Mead dog training grounds. He joined the Friends board because he sees the area as a precious resource which needs to be preserved for future generations. He likes the fact that it is a multi-use facility that can be used year-round by various outdoor enthusiasts. Mark is impressed with the outdoor education programs conducted by the Mead staff to enable the school children to appreciate and preserve the natural resources.

Mark is a corporate attorney and has worked for American Family Insurance Company for the past 30 years and in the Wausau office for the past 29 years. He manages a staff of 18 attorneys. Mark says he is proud to become the most recent addition to the board of directors and the board is happy for his expertise.



Ephemeral Trail and Boardwalk Update

Article by Patrice Eyers

The project that once seemed like a dream has become reality. Thanks to the fund-raising efforts of Kent Hall, the Friends Board, and the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Grant, seventy-seven boardwalk sections were ordered July 12th. Phase one of this 2 year project is underway. Now it is time to get to work!

Several volunteer workdays have been established in conjunction with the Ojibwa District Boy Scouts -Samoset Council. These scouts are working toward badges in community service projects. These young men do have some restrictions, so we are still in need of adult volunteers.

- Saturday July 31st 10 am-4 pm
- Friday August 6th 10 am – 4 pm
- Saturday August 7th 10am -4pm
- Monday August 9th 10am – 4 pm
- Wednesday August 11th 10 am – 4pm
- Wednesday August 18th 10am – 4pm
- Wednesday August 25th 10 am – 4 pm
- Friday August 27th 10am – 4 pm
- Monday August 30th 10 am – 4pm
- Wednesday September 1st 10am – 4pm
- Saturday September 4th 10am – 4pm



Tom Meier and Don Furo walking on future boardwalk site.

Workdays will be weather dependent. Participants scheduled for the day will be contacted by phone if a cancelation is necessary. Rain dates may or may not be established.

The types of work activities to be completed will include the removal of cut brush, construction of wildlife cover sites, boardwalk placement, boardwalk decking installation, and boardwalk curb attachment. More activities are sure to arise throughout the process.

Volunteers should bring insect repellent and a canteen or water bottle . Work will be performed in a wooded, wet, and buggy area. Please do not wear shorts and flip flops! Pants and proper footwear is a must. If water proof knee-boots are available, they should be worn.

In addition to workdays, there are other ways to participate. A donation of hot dogs, buns, condiments, chips, or desserts would assist in providing our volunteer workers with a nice lunch. We would also have a use for battery operated power tools, water-proof knee boots, and insect repellent.

If you are interested in participating in one or more of these workdays, or you wish to donate other items - please contact Patrice Eyers to sign up. I can be reached by phone at 715-457-6771(Ext 3) or by e-mail patrice.eyers@wisconsin.gov

On a final note, our hats off to the students at Auburndale Elementary School, who raised \$1,096.54 toward the Boardwalk project. The School was able to adopt 2 boardwalk sections and an interpretive panel. Don't forget fundraising is still an important component to completing this project. Maybe Auburndale would like to challenge other schools to get involved!



Junior Naturalist



This page is dedicated to the many students & children "junior naturalists" who visit the Mead Wildlife Area.

First Turkey Hunt

By Mackenzie -Edgar 7th



When the snow melts away, and the birds return from down South
 When you feel a warmer breeze and can almost taste spring in your mouth
 When all you desire is summer and do not want anything more,
 Then to be dressed for hunting and finally walking out your door

It is early in the morning and the sun is still asleep
 You feel the crisp cold morning and the birds have barely made a peep
 You listen to the forest awake from its calm and quite night
 Then when you finally see some movement you squint at that first sight

The beautiful Tom comes strutting through, his tail fanned out in back
 You almost could not see him because the sky is still black
 You ready your gun and prepare to shoot but something stops you in your tracks
 You see its beautiful nature and you then put the gun back

So you decide that you are going to just let the turkey pass by,
 But you know that there will be more so there is no need to cry

Turkey

By Stephanie-Edgar 7th

T-tail feathers

U-unextinct

R-redhead

K-kinda fly

E-eat them

Y-yummy



Tree

By Korinne-3rd

T-tall

R-roots

E-easy to see

E-everywhere



Leaf

By Caitlin-3rd

L-large

E-easy to find

A-air

F-food



Worm

By Caleb 3rd

W-wiggly

O-ohey

R-radical

M-moving



Feather

By Brianna, Abbie, & Devin-3rd

F-fluffy

E-eagle

A-amazing

T-tiny

H-heron

E-egret

R-robin

Duck drawing
by Katelyn-3rd



Please submit your story, poem, game,
riddle or drawing to

Pam Stange at

stange.pamela@wisconsin.gov



UWSP NR302 & Bannach School Field Day

Article by UWSP Student Program Developers

On April 22nd, 2010, the NR 302 class from UW-Stevens Point conducted an environmental field day for the entire fifth grade class of Bannach Elementary School at the Mead Wildlife Area.

The UWSP students were responsible for facilitating, as well as developing, the lessons taught that day. They also visited the Bannach students before the field day to prep them for their visit.

Before planning for this field day began, Pam Stange, the director of the Mead Wildlife Area, visited the class to introduce them to the wildlife area and its resources. They received some initial input from Pam and Ms. Schraufnagel, a Bannach fifth grade teacher, to help guide their development of topics and themes for their lessons. The student's overall theme for the field day was: "Every ecosystem has a unique history and resources that we need to protect and conserve." Four field day lessons were created; Our Furry Past, Burning Questions, Identify that Tree with your Dichotomous Key, and Migration Migraine.



Pictures by Dan Sivek

Undergraduate Student Program Developers:

Adam Brandt, Erika Brock, Jacob Cox, Justine Doty, Amber Hamilton, Jacob Kavalal, Jennifer Lempa, Rosa Narus, Kelsey Olson, Jessica Plante, Kristina Pupak, Emily Spagnoli, Erin Straw, Benjamin Van-Thiel, Lucas Williamson, and Jesse Young



Our Furry Past



Migration Migraine



Burning Questions



Tree ID



Nature Niches



Dragonfly Pond before drawdown

What Happened to Dragonfly Pond?

By: Patrice Eysers

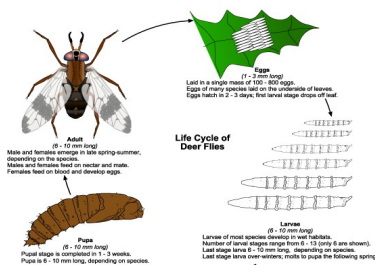
There are numerous ways in which restored and created wetlands can be managed effectively. Natural wetlands regularly go through periods of wet (flooding) and dry (drawdown) cycles. When these cycles are not occurring naturally, the manipulation of water levels in wetlands can be used to mimic the natural cycles and to manage wetland vegetation on created or enhanced wetlands.

Currently, Dragonfly Pond and Rice Lake Refuge are experiencing a **draw-down**. A drawdown is the temporary dewatering of a created or restored wetland. A periodic drawdown is important to the productivity and wellbeing of a wetland for numerous reasons:

1. A drawdown will consolidate the loose organic materials lying on the wetland bottom. Upon re-flooding, the newly consolidated particles will remain firmly on the bottom providing improved water quality and clarity, which in turn benefits new submergent vegetation.
2. A drawdown will expose mudflats to sun and oxygen. The sunlight and oxygen are necessary to:
 - Break down the accumulation of organic material, recycling the bound up nutrients back into the wetland system.
 - Stimulate the germination of annual and perennial wetland plant seeds and the growth of emergent vegetation. Some of these wetland plants include Arrowhead, Bur Reed, Sedges, Bull Rush, Water Plantain, and Pickerel Weed. Annuals produce a large amount of seeds important to migrating waterfowl.
3. A diverse wetland plant community provides habitat for aquatic macro invertebrates, a very important food source (protein and calcium) for waterfowl and shorebirds.



Dragonfly Pond after drawdown



Summarized life cycle of deer flies Illustration
by: Scott Charlesworth, Purdue University
based in part on Pechuman, L.L. and H.J.
Teskey, 1981, IN: Manual of Nearctic

Deer flies belong to the family commonly called horse flies (Tabanidae). They are smaller than wasps, and they have colored eyes and dark bands across their wings. While female deer flies feed on blood, males collect pollen. When feeding, females use knife-like mouthparts to make an incision and then lap up the blood. Their bite can be extremely painful, and allergic reaction from their saliva can result in further discomfort and health concerns. Pain and itch are the most common symptoms, but significant allergic reactions can develop.

Fortunately, Deer Flies are only around for 4 or 5 weeks in June and July. They are found in damp environments, such as wetlands or forests. They lay clusters of small black eggs in the vegetation along the waters edge. The aquatic larvae feed on small insects and pupate in the mud at the edge of the water.



Pancake Breakfast

Article and Photos by Patrice Evers

The Friends Pancake Breakfast was held May 15th, at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center. The breakfast was scheduled to coincide with the opening of the Berkahn bike trail. The beautiful weather, fresh blueberries, and a long list of "professional pancake makers" surely made this event a success, serving approximately 275 people. The day included several opportunities to tour the interior of the property, wildlife viewing, and time to relax and enjoy each other's company.



This occasion is only possible because of the phenomenal donations from the community and the volunteers who believe in the importance of the Friend's mission. A very SPECIAL thanks to Don Furo for the tremendous amount of time and effort that he put into this successful event!!!!



Jill Solinsky won \$100 from her employer's (Pioneer Bank) Volunteer Drawing. Jill volunteers at the Mead Wildlife Area and donated her \$100 prize to the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, Inc. while volunteering at the Pancake Breakfast held May 15th. Kent Hall is accepting the donation on behalf of the Friends.

Photo by Patrice Evers



Mead Wildlife Refuge

(A Poem inspired by the DVD "Journey through the Mead") By Pat Perzynski

From the valley of the Little Eau Pleine
A place man came to tame
Harvesting wild rice, fur, timber, and game

A forgone reservoir
A gift to Wisconsin
By Mead and Consolidated Paper

Friends of Mead
Now shout with blaze orange
And whisper with green camouflage

Oak crowns plume
Limbs abreast
Like geese or crows
Flushed from the meadow

Cattails in a row
Ebony keys
Of a piano

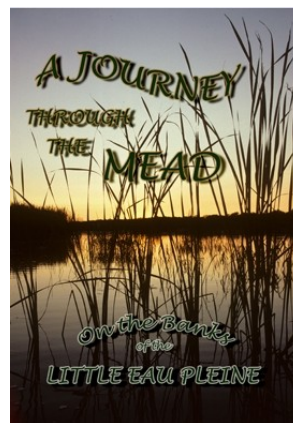
Willows roll
Like fires long ago
Playing tag with the alder

Waterfowl abounds
Osprey and Eagles astound

Whooping cranes once again
Begin to echo and dance
Far away from any fence

Despite the bog waters
Tamarack and Black Spruce
Do not lean
Whitetail and Timber tracks
Do serpentine

For all those who visit
In any weather
They live well that day



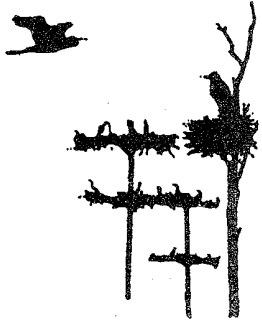
A video showcasing the management of the diverse landscape and wildlife found on the Mead Wildlife Area.

\$12.00 each Or 2 for \$20.00

**Visit The George W. Mead
Wildlife Area Online
<http://meadwildlife.org/>**

Photo by Tom Brown





**Friends of the
Mead/McMillan
Association, Inc.**
S2148 County S
Milladore, WI 54454

Mailing Address Label

Wetlands Gazette

New Waterfowl Regulations Mead Wildlife Area ONLY!

1. All Waterfowl Hunting (Ducks & Geese) is CLOSED until Opening Day of the Northern Waterfowl Zone
 - a. Exception: Ducks Only - May Be Hunted by Youth Hunters During the Youth Waterfowl Hunt.
2. Waterfowl Hunting Hours End at 1:00PM each day
3. Beginning the Monday following Opening Weekend of the Northern Waterfowl Zone and Lasting for 16 Full Days
4. Refuge Enlargements as Posted:
 - a. Townline Reservoir/Berkhahn Flowage Refuge
 - b. Pool 10/Rice Lake Refuge

**For further details and refuge maps, visit the Mead Visitor Center
or call (715) 457-6771**