



# WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 15, Issue 3  
Winter 2019

## From the Field

Article by Brian Peters. Photos by Pam Resech & Joan Voigt

I express an official and sincere THANK YOU to the Friends of the Mead—McMillan for the generous funding provided to rebuild the Mead Amphitheater!! The newly constructed structure will be ADA compliant and is a much more stable design that will last far into the future. Your contributions are truly appreciated!



The wind turbine is again producing electricity thanks to the new blades that were installed. Also, the damaged rain gutter on the old shop/office building has been replaced . . . no more leaking in front of the doors! Thank you to the volunteers who have worked so hard on the Pool 5 boardwalk / handicap hunter blind project! Your work is appreciated and impressive! And thank you to the Friends Group for obtaining a grant to assist with this project!

Patrice and Bill worked on and submitted a small NAWCA grant application to fund a major renovation on the dike adjacent to Little Birch flowage. We should know by February if we were successful in obtaining the grant. I give another thank you to the Friends Group for agreeing to partner with us on this project! Managing and enhancing habitat quality is the purpose of our dike systems and dike maintenance is an ongoing need.

### **Friends of Mead-McMillan**

#### **Officers**

- *President—Matt Ahles*
- *VP- Justin Guthman*
- *Secretary—Robert Sander*
- *Treasurer – Connie Milz*

#### **Directors:**

- *Dennis Dieringer*
- *Brian Lang*
- *Don Fox*
- *Joan Dickrell*
- *Jeremiah Smith*
- *Marlene Furo*
- *Doug Aziz*
- *Doug Urban*

#### **DNR Staff:**

- *Brian Peters, Project Manager*
- *Pam Resech, Educator*

#### **Webmaster**

- *Justin Guthman*

#### **Newsletter Editor**

- *Justin Guthman*



## From the Field-Continued

Wet conditions continued to hamper field work on dike and trail repairs, but we were able to make some headway when the weather cooperated. Waterfowl banding for mallards was very successful, but not for wood ducks. We believe the significant water in the river corridor meant that the wood ducks were spread out and as a result didn't come to our bait sites. They were here but we guess not hungry for our bait corn?? The waterfowl season opening on Sep. 28 was one of our most successful on record. Based on UWSP student assisted bag checks we estimated an average harvest success rate of 3.15 ducks per hunter on opening day, a very high average. We counted 245 waterfowl hunter vehicles with an estimated 420 waterfowl hunters on



the Mead property opening day.

Freeze up came early this year with ice on the flowages the last days of October. Prior to that we had a good number of birds on the property, especially sandhill cranes staging for migration and roosting in the refuges. We estimated over 4,000 cranes roosting here daily before they all headed south to find open water.

A new water control structure was installed in North Honey Island flowage to the river. Although we had plans to prescribe burn the flowage sedge and cattail, the constant wet weather prevented good conditions for burning. At the point when burning was no longer an option we started pumping water into the flowage, running the permanent pump 24/7. Pumping along with precipitation enabled the water to be brought up to the planned winter level as of December 4<sup>th</sup>.

A new Assistant Naturalist LTE has been hired to help Pam and Joan with education activities. Her name is Alexandra Brendel. Alex is a student at UWSP studying for a degree in Environmental Education and Interpretation. We welcome her to the Mead education program. Come out to the Mead or McMillan this winter and enjoy the snow-covered landscape. It's a different perspective than during the green and warm summertime.

## Membership Expiration Update

Historically membership expiration dates were 12 months from the date of renewal. This approach has proven to be difficult to manage and keep organized. Due to this issue, the board has decided to change membership from a rolling 12 months to set January 1st to December 31st (of each year).

In order to ensure our members all get the full benefit from their existing membership, all current members are "grandfathered" until January 1st of the year following their expiration date (for example: Renewed on July 1st 2018 with Expiration of July 1st 2019 = New expiration date will be December 31st 2019 or Renewed on April 1st 2019 with expiration of April 1st 2020 = New expiration date will be December 31st 2020).

We acknowledge that this may slightly decrease our membership income but hope that we will make it easier for everyone in the long run.

Renewals will be sent each year with the announcement for the annual meeting.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support!



# Annual Meeting and Snowshoeing Events

## ANNUAL MEETING

**WHAT:** Annual Membership Meeting

**WHERE:** Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center

**WHEN:** Saturday January 11th 2019 from 9am-10:30am

**WHO:** You, your fiends, your family, anyone is invited

**WHY:**

1. Enjoy soup and bread provided by the board. This is the fourth annual cook off and bragging rights are on the table!
2. Review activities of the past year.
3. Board of Directors nominations and renewals
4. Officers nominations and renewals
5. Review reports given by the Mead/McMillan Project Manager, Natural Resources Educator, and Chairpersons of the Special Projects, Finance, Communications and Membership Committees

## SNOWSHOEING EVENTS

Getting sick of being cooped up this winter? Bring your family and friends and come to the Mead Wildlife Area to get outside and enjoy winter! We will take you on a short, fun hike through the property. This is a great opportunity for beginners to get experience with snowshoes!

Use our snowshoes or bring your own. We have snowshoes for ages 7 to adult. Feel free to bring sleds for younger children. Hot Cocoa will be served in the visitor center.

Weather dependent. Call ahead to confirm

### Snow Shoeing

Where: Mead Wildlife Center (201517 Cty Hwy S, Milladore, WI 54454)

When: Saturday, January 11th 2020

Time: 1:00pm to 3:00pm

### Moonlight Hike

Where: Mead Wildlife Center (201517 Cty Hwy S, Milladore, WI 54454)

When: Saturday, January 11th 2020

Time: 4:30pm to 6:30pm





## McMillan Marsh Matters

By Kyle Christianson

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. By the time this newsletter prints, most deer seasons will be winding down while trapping efforts across our marshes will be heating up. 2019 was a very wet year. The rain made dike work difficult at times, eventually shutting us down early in the fall. We were able to address the highest priority areas before being forced to quit. Moving forward to this winter's work, Pool 2 dike will continue to see attention. After working on holes this past summer, we hope to have rock hauled and placed in January. The project will be completed with the assistance of the Marathon County Parks Department, late spring 2020.

Good luck hunting, trapping or ice fishing. Please enjoy the marsh, enjoy your public lands. Merry Christmas and have a wonderful New Year.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about the Marsh. Please contact me at [kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov) or at 715-781-0928 (C), 715-457-6771 ex3 (O). For any concerns regarding law enforcement, please contact the DNR Tip line at 1-800-TIP-WDNR.

## Board Meeting Summary– November 2019

Article by Robert Sander.

Tom Meier sent a note to the Friends thanking us for organizing the Tom Meier Special Recognition Event. He was particularly appreciative of all the people who came and made it a more special day.

The new outdoor Amphitheater is complete except for some additional grading to help with drainage around the Amphitheater and some minor brick work leading to the Amphitheater. This will be completed in the spring along with any needed repairs from winter damage.

The updated Group Agreement between the DNR and the Friends has been approved and will be signed by Matt Ahles, representing the Friends, and Brian Peters, representing the DNR. This will allow us to continue our fruitful partnership with the DNR and their team at Mead/McMillan.

An application by Brian Peters has been submitted for a \$100,000 Small NAWCA Grant to repair the dike on the Little Birch Flowage. If awarded, the Friends has agreed to match \$5,000 and other groups have committed to match \$5,300.

Pam also reported that there has been a gradual decrease in the number of educational school group field trips and other visitors to the Mead Education Center. She is in communication with local school districts to attempt to understand the reasons. It was also discussed by the Board that the lack of a designated bike trail is probably a contributing factor to the reduced number of visitors. Possible routes for a new bike path were discussed and Doug Urban will be putting together a formal proposal to review with Brian Peters.

The Spooktacular on the evening of October 19 attracted over 245 attendees and over 250 pounds of food donations were collected which went to St. Vincent DePaul-Marshfield. The Spooktacular next year will be on October 10 from 1:30 to 4:00 PM. By having this in the afternoon, we may be able to expand outdoor activities.





## Fall Family Fest– 2019

By Sue Hall Photos by Joan Voigt



Adults and children enjoyed a unique experience to “walk on the wild side” and enjoy nature while attending the Fall Family Festival at the Mead Wildlife Area on Sunday, September 15th. One of the highlights was the live animal presentation by Rex Runke, who entertained the crowd with his live birds and described their habitat. Kids also got to use special nets to catch Monarch butterflies and help “tag” them. This presentation was coordinated by Audubon member, Susan Schuller who wowed the crowd when she showed them a chrysalis which opened up on cue and the Monarch butterfly emerged.

Prior to these presentations, Mead Wildlife Educator, Pam Resch led a wild flower walk and the participants enjoyed various “hands on” nature crafts including building a seed feeder, creating a botany scene, making rocking birds and seeing how a bird digests their food by making gizzard bags.



Several UWSP students from Dr. Perry Cook’s Science Methods classes helped teach the various craft activities. They commented that having kids enjoy nature and being outside was what they hoped to do in their future lives as teachers. They felt the kids learned a lot and so did they.

The festival was co-sponsored by the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society and the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Assn.



## Monday at the Mead Educational Series

By Bob Sander Photo by Marguerite Timmerman

As a follow-up to the success of the Monday at the Mead lecture series in the spring, the Friends of Mead and McMillan offered another 5 topics in the fall of 2019.

These topics were:

- **September 23: CWD in Wisconsin's Deer Herds** This was presented by Amanda Kamps, Wildlife Health Conservation Specialist at the Bureau of Wildlife Management. It covered biological, social, and policy issues.



- **October 7: The Endangered Whooping Cranes** This was presented by Brad Strobel, Wildlife Biologist at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. This again reviewed biological, social and policy issues.

- **October 14: Snapshot Wisconsin** This was presented by Christine Anhalt-Depies, DNR Natural Resources Research Scientist. Snapshot Wisconsin is a year-round project that gets Wisconsin residents and students involved in monitoring wildlife populations through the use of motion-activated trail cameras. The history of the project was discussed and how the accumulating data is being ana-

lyzed to help make wildlife management decisions. It has also been found to increase public engagement with wildlife and the DNR. Resources for getting involved with the project were shared with the audience.

- **October 21: Red-shouldered Hawks and Saw-whet Owls** This was presented by Gene Jacobs from the Linwood Research Station who described his research on the two raptors. He also discussed the biological, social, and policy issues associated with insuring the continued good health of these two species.
- **October 28: Wolves in Wisconsin** This was presented by Scott Walter, DNR Big Game Wildlife Biologist. He addressed the biological, social and policy issues associated with this very controversial topic.

All 5 presentations were very interactive with a multitude of questions from the audience. The topics were obviously of significant interest to the attendees. Attendance ranged from 10 (when the presentation was in conflict with a Packers football game) to a more typical 25-30. These were mostly adults but most sessions also had a few children attending. Attendees new to the Mead ranged from 10-20% of the those in attendance. Comments from the audiences were:

- Great work, we really enjoyed all of the talks.
- Great topics, keep up the good work.
- Very educational.

Pam Resech is planning another series of Monday at the Mead talks in the spring since the fall series was a success. She is requesting suggestions for topics. You can contact her by phone-715-457-6771 ext. 2 or email: [pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov](mailto:pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov) with your suggestions.



## Spooktacular

By Alex Brendel-LTE Naturalist & Photos by Terri Hamus

As the new LTE Naturalist, Pam put me in charge of Smokey the Bear and the Critter Safari. I gathered volunteers from the UWSP, personal friends and past volunteers to fill the Critter roles. During Spook, I helped them get into their costumes and gave them their critter cue cards. These cue cards correlated with the information on the worksheet. The kids enjoyed meeting the Critters and learning some facts about the animals that live on the Mead. The parents also enjoyed learning new facts and knowing that their children were learning too. The volunteers had a great time teaching the children. There were many compliments about Smokey the Bear and the Critter Safari. Everyone enjoyed their time at the event.



A HUGE Thank You goes out to the Volunteers that helped with this special family event. Thank you for your time, effort and donations (before, during and after) to make the Mead's 9th Spooktacular Event a Great Success!

We had a great turnout of 317 people which also included the volunteer helpers & staff.

We collected over 250 pounds of food items, which went to St. Vin-

cent DePaul's Food Pantry in Marshfield. The cash donations will be used to help fund next year's event.

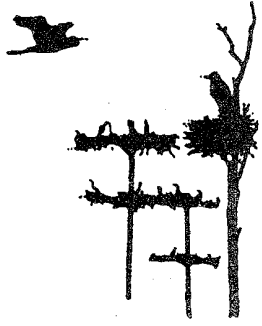
If you have any suggestions or comments for next year, we would greatly appreciate your information.

We are making some changes to next year's "Spooktacular" Event. It will be held a week earlier, and the time frame will be from **1:30-4pm**. So, mark your calendars for **Saturday October 10, 2020!**

If you have Facebook checkout the Spooktacular Album on the Friends of the Mead & McMillan Wildlife Area page.

If interested in volunteering next year, please let us know.





**Friends of  
Mead/McMillan  
Association, Inc.**  
201517 Cty Hwy S  
Milladore, WI 54454

Mailing Address Line 1  
Mailing Address Line 2  
Mailing Address Line 3  
Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5

Wetland's Gazette

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