



## **Wisconsin natural resources. Vol. 33, No. 3 June 2009**

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# WISCONSIN NATURAL RESOURCES

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## Crossing paths with **BEARS**

The buzz about bees

**100** memorable years at  
Peninsula State Park

Your tips for homemade gear



American ginseng has three or four compound leaves each with five leaflets. The Latin species name *quinquefolius* means five leaves.

ROBERT H. READ

## Hunting a woodland curative

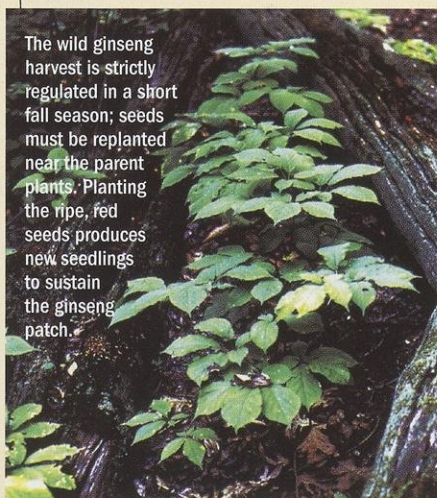
**Ginseng's green leaves and shiny berries light up the shady forest floor.**

Daniel J. Dictus

Perhaps you've seen herbaceous plants with small clusters of bright red berries on your walks or scouting trips through a shady woodland and wondered what they were. It might be bunchberry, Jack-in-the-pulpit, or red baneberry, or you might just have stumbled upon wild ginseng, an uncommon perennial herb that grows in hardwood forests, primarily in the eastern United States.

At maturity, ginseng only reaches a height of 12-24 inches and contains three leaves each with five leaflets. Hence the Latin name, *Panax quinquefolius*. Mature plants bear a cluster of small flowers on a separate stalk in July into August that may develop into small, shiny red berries in fall.

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The wild ginseng harvest is strictly regulated in a short fall season; seeds must be replanted near the parent plants. Planting the ripe, red seeds produces new seedlings to sustain the ginseng patch.

HERBERT LANGE

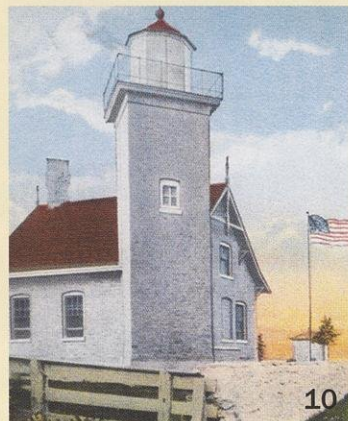
# WISCONSIN

## NATURAL RESOURCES

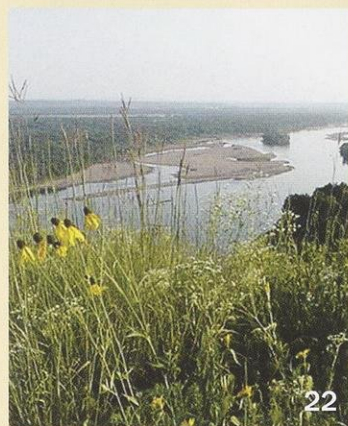
June 2009  
Volume 33, Number 3



ROBERT QUEEN



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LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

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**FRONT COVER:** Bears are seen more often in late May and early June when the young sub-adult males are forced to disperse from their family groups to search for new breeding territories. Our story starts on page 16.

© MIDGE BOLT, Pepin

**BACK COVER:** Red and white pines dominate the canopy of Cathedral Pines State Natural Area in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest of Oconto County. INSET: Fringed polygala (*Polygala paucifolia*). For more information, or to order a guidebook to State Natural Areas, contact the State Natural Areas Program, Bureau of Endangered Resources, DNR, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707 or visit [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna).

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A close-up photograph of a rusty-patched bumblebee on a purple flower. The bee is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right towards the flower. It has a black body with a prominent yellow and orange band across its thorax and abdomen. Its wings are dark and translucent. The flower is a vibrant purple with many small, tubular blossoms. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting foliage.

A third of the world's plants are pollinated by bees. Native bumble bees, like the rusty-patched bumble bee shown here, are excellent pollinators of wildflowers, trees, shrubs and crops like squashes, berries and alfalfa.

# What's the buzz



## Simple steps can bolster native bees and hedge our bets against honey bee declines.

David L. Sperling

**A**sustained drop in honey bee populations nationwide has farmers and orchardists making backup plans to ensure their crops are adequately pollinated. Buried among the stories about colony collapse disorder and potential causes of bee die-offs — like stress, pesticides, pathogens and parasites — is some familiar advice. Just as a key to staving off invasive species is maintaining biological diversity, so too a key to keeping crops fruitful and flowers blooming is building up native bee populations.

The European honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) is a flying workhorse. Managed hives of honey bees are carted around the country to pollinate berries, vegetables, fruit trees, flowers and agricultural row crops worth roughly \$20 billion annually in North America, according to The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. This prodigious import was named the state insect in Wisconsin in 1977, even though it's a non-native species.

However, nearly 4,000 other wild bee species are native to the continent and fully 500 species are found in Wisconsin, many of which equal or surpass the honey bee's efficiency in pollinating crops and native plants. In

fact, The Xerces Society notes that research documented 51 native bee species visiting watermelon, sunflower and tomato

fields in western states;

more than 45 bee species pollinating berry crops in Maine and Massachusetts and 67 species of native bees pollinating blueberry crops.

Bumble bees, for instance, are con-

sidered the premier pollinators of many native plants and cranberries.

According to researchers at the University of Maine, on a bee-for-bee basis, bumble bee species are eight times more efficient than honey bees at pollinating some highly-valued crops like blueberries. The bumble bees are more effective because they will fly in cooler temperatures, damper conditions and lower light levels extending pollination by several hours each day.

They also perform a behavior called "buzz pollination," where the female bumble grabs the flower's pollen-producing stamens in her jaws and vibrates her wings to give the stamens a good shaking — dislodging pollen grains. This behavior is extremely effective in cross-pollinating berries, tomatoes and peppers. Larger fruits and more abundant tomato crops are attributed to plants pollinated by bumble bees. They are also critical pollinators of native plants whose seeds feed songbirds and game birds.

Unfortunately, some of the bumble bee species also are declining due to combined effects of diseases, altered habitat, pesticide use, invasive species, climate change and the international transport of commercially-raised bumble bees. Two such species once com-

about bees?

mon to the northeastern and midwestern states, the yellow-banded bumble bee (*Bombus terricola*) and the rusty-patched bumble bee (*B. affinis*), are largely absent from their traditional range. They are excellent pollinators of wildflowers, alfalfa, berries and other crops like cucumbers and pumpkins. Other bumble bee species may also be decreasing, though it is difficult to generalize if declining populations are localized or more widespread since native bee populations are typically only monitored in a handful of locations rather than throughout their natural range.

When R.P. Macfarlane, a New Zealand bumble bee researcher hired by Wisconsin's cranberry industry, surveyed bumble bee populations in northern Wisconsin in 1993, researchers reported that the yellow-banded bumble bee constituted about 93 percent of the bumble bees tallied; today they make up less than one percent of bumble bees in the region. Isolated populations of this bumble bee found in the towns of Mountain, Manitowish Waters and Two Rivers in 2007 and 2008 were the only recorded sightings of this species in the Midwest. Reasons for this decline are unclear. Bumble bee authorities believe European bee diseases were introduced to North America as European companies started to domesticate American bee species to manage crop pollination. Certainly habitat loss, habitat fragmentation and pesticide use contribute to the losses as well, says Eric Mader, National Pollinator Outreach Coordinator for The Xerces Society in Madison.

To bolster our knowledge about changes in native bee populations, both the yellow-banded and rusty-patched bumble bees are the first species of ants, bees and wasps that will be tracked by field biologists conducting field work in Wisconsin. By adding these bees as Species of Special Concern, researchers will start keeping records when these species are found. Over time, this database will provide a picture of the bees' abundance and distribution on the Wisconsin landscape.

While some plants are also pollinated by the wind and by mammals



Populations of the workhorse of crop pollinators, the honey bee, have been declining for several years, losing 30-35 percent of their population. The collapse of honey bee colonies may be due to a combination of mites, diseases, nutrition issues, stress, pesticide use and exposure to other chemical residues.

JOHNNY N. DELL, BUGWOOD.ORG

like bats, bee pollination from managed hives and wild native bees remains an important part of the mix, sustaining both native and cultivated plant species. In areas where agricultural fields have lost many of their natural pollinators, surrounding pastures take on added significance and provide two valuable benefits, according to agricultural and ecology researchers. First, they act as a backup source for insects that pollinate crops. Second, they act as a refuge where pollinating insects can build strength before slowly recolonizing degraded croplands.

Wildlife depends on these natural pollinators both as a source of food and for enabling the fertilization of plants they rely on for fruit, seed, cover and sustenance.

"By aiding in wild land food production, helping with nutrient cycling, and as direct prey, pollinators are important in wildlife food chains," say biologists who study hooded warblers in fragmented forest areas. "Many migratory songbirds require a diet of berries, fruits and seeds from insect-pollinated plants" and the larvae of these insects are an important component of the diet of these young birds,

noted the research team with the Nebraska Ornithologists Union.

One increasingly common strategy for farmers who are hedging their bets by bolstering native bees is to increase the natural growth of grasses, shrubs and trees surrounding their fields. For instance, instead of renting honey bees, canola growers in Alberta found they got better seed set and increased profits if at least 30 percent of their land was left in natural habitat and

### Wasps are not bees

**Yellowjackets and many other wasps and hornets get bad press for a reason. The aggressive, uninvited guests at picnics that suck up soda, crawl over fruit and help themselves to brats and burgers are not bees, nor are they significant pollinators. They nest in papery hives above ground or underground. The wasps are relatively hairless, and have pointed abdomens. These ill-tempered hotheads readily sting people. True bees are usually hairy, are much more docile and usually don't sting unless they are stepped on or forced to defend a nest site.**

cover rather than fencerow-to-fencerow row cropping. These buffer zones of natural vegetation provided food and shelter for more native bees and increased bee visits when their crops set flowers. Pressure from native bees also can make honey bees more efficient and effective when pollinating hybrid seed crops by causing the honey bees to move more frequently between rows of male and female plants.

### Encourage a variety of nesting sites

Though we think of bees as social insects that live in hives with highly-organized social structures, most bee species are more solitary and almost 70 percent of native bee species nest in the ground or near the ground rather than in exposed hives. The female bees either excavate nest tunnels with a series of brood chambers or use existing holes or burrows bored by insects, worms or rodents into soil or under tree bark. The females place a mix of pollen and nectar in each brood cell, lay an egg and plaster over the cell with mud or little bits of leaves. The adult female bees live only a few weeks and die after the nest area is complete. The eggs hatch, become larvae, pupate and emerge as adults either the same year or the following season depending on the species.

Conserving the habitats and plants these native bee species use is an important strategy for sustaining adequate numbers of plant pollinators where honey bee populations are naturally lower, have dropped off significantly or are in short supply.

For the first time, the 2008 Farm Bill (Food Conservation and Energy Act) specifically mentioned native bee protection and provided money for both bee research and bee habitat preservation. Provisions added by the House of Representatives make pollinator conservation a national priority in conservation programs administered by the federal Department of Agriculture. The Farm Bill also provided \$10 million a year for the next five years for grants to research honey bee and native bee



ERIC MADER, THE XERCES SOCIETY

To attract a variety of bees, plant flowers of differing sizes, shapes and colors that bloom at different times of the year. Here a bumble bee visits wild indigo.

biology, potential solutions for colony collapse disorder, bee health and bee ecology. An additional \$7.5 million will add bee research programs to the USDA Ag Research Service, \$2.75 million to inspect and monitor honey bee populations for five years, and provide insurance and disaster relief for beekeepers.

### Planting to attract bees

Informing consumers and farmers about the value of native bees, and simple steps they can take to conserve and increase the numbers and diversity of natural pollinators are equally important. Bees collect pollen, and butterflies, birds and bees collect nectar from a range of plants from spring through the end of the fall growing season. You can create habitats where these insects can forage in backyards, rain gardens, parks, school grounds, golf courses, farms and woodlands. Here's advice from The Xerces Society on how to get going:

Small patches are fine as long as you provide a **diversity of plants that flower all season**. Different species of pollinators are active at different times of the thawed out seasons from May through October.

**Use local native plants.** Research shows native plants are four times more attractive to native bees and butterflies than exotics. In gardens, heir-

loom varieties of herbs and perennials also provide good foraging.

**Choose several colors of flowers of differing heights.** Native bees are particularly attracted to blue, purple, violet, white and yellow blooms.

**Plant flowers in clumps.** Clusters of flowers attract more pollinators than individual blossoms. Clumps four feet or more in diameter are particularly attractive to bees.

**Include flowers of different shapes.** Bees have different sizes, different body shapes, different tongue lengths and consequently choose different shaped flowers. Variety will attract a greater mix of species.

**Talk with experienced gardeners.** Groups like UW-Extension's Master Gardeners, local chapters of The Wild Ones, the Native Plant Society and native plant nurseries can provide advice on choosing native varieties that will work well given the location, moisture, soil types and light that you have available.

**Consider larger-scale projects.** The new pollinator provisions contained in the 2008 Farm Bill provide direct financial assistance to rural landowners for conservation efforts that support bees. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program provide guidelines for cost-sharing to

establish wildflowers, flowering trees and shrubs. Contact local Natural Resource Conservation Service offices and U.S. Department of Agriculture service centers.

### A beeline to these blossoms

Here are some native plant genera that are good sources of pollen and nectar, but the list is by no means exhaustive. Consult wildflower guides, nurseries and local experienced gardeners for advice on particular species.

Aster (*Aster*)  
 Beardtongue (*Penstemon*)  
 Beebalm (*Monarda*)  
 Blazing star (*Liatris*)  
 Cup plant (*Silphium*)  
 Wild indigo (*Baptisia*)  
 Fireweed (*Chamerion*)  
 Goldenrod (*Solidago*)  
 Giant hyssop (*Agastache*)  
 Ironweed (*Vernonia*)  
 Joe pye weed (*Eupatorium*)  
 Leadplant (*Amorpha*)  
 Lobelia (*Lobelia*)  
 Lupine (*Lupinus*)  
 Milkweed (*Asclepias*)

New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus*)  
 Obedient plant (*Physostegia*)  
 Prairie clover (*Dalea*)  
 Purple coneflower (*Echinacea*)  
 Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium*)  
 Spiderwort (*Tradescantia*)  
 Steeplebush (*Spiraea*)  
 Sunflower (*Helianthus*)  
 Willow (*Salix*)

Here are some garden plants that are also bee-friendly. Supplement these with native species:

Basil (*Ocimum*)  
 Borage (*Borago*)  
 Catnip (*Nepeta*)  
 Cosmos (*Cosmos*)  
 Lavender (*Lavandula*)  
 Oregano (*Origanum*)  
 Rosemary (*Rosmarinus*)  
 Russian sage (*Perovskia*)  
 Spearmint (*Mentha*)  
 Squill (*Scilla*)

### Building to attract a buzz

About 70 percent of our native bees live in the ground in old tunnels, snags or similar locations, but they will adapt to manmade structures or enhanced nest-

ing spots if the site is a comfortable fit. Here are some simple projects you can do. Consider working on these as family projects since the designs are all simple and your children can have the satisfaction of building bee habitat.

**Nesting blocks** – A sheltered piece of an untreated 4 x 4 or 4 x 8 can make a fine bee condo. Drill holes between 3/32" and 3/8" in diameter approximately three-quarters of an inch apart. The holes should be smooth inside and closed at one end. The height of the nest block is not critical, eight inches or more is fine, but the depth of the holes is important. Holes less than a quarter-inch in diameter should be three to four inches deep. Holes a quarter-inch and larger in diameter should be five to six inches deep. You can also drill holes in tree stumps to attract bees. Follow the same advice on hole size and spacing. Also make sure the stumps are dry if drilling with electric drills to avoid the risk of shock. Mount the nest blocks as you would a bird house on a post or side of a garage, barn or shed. Keep the tunnels hori-

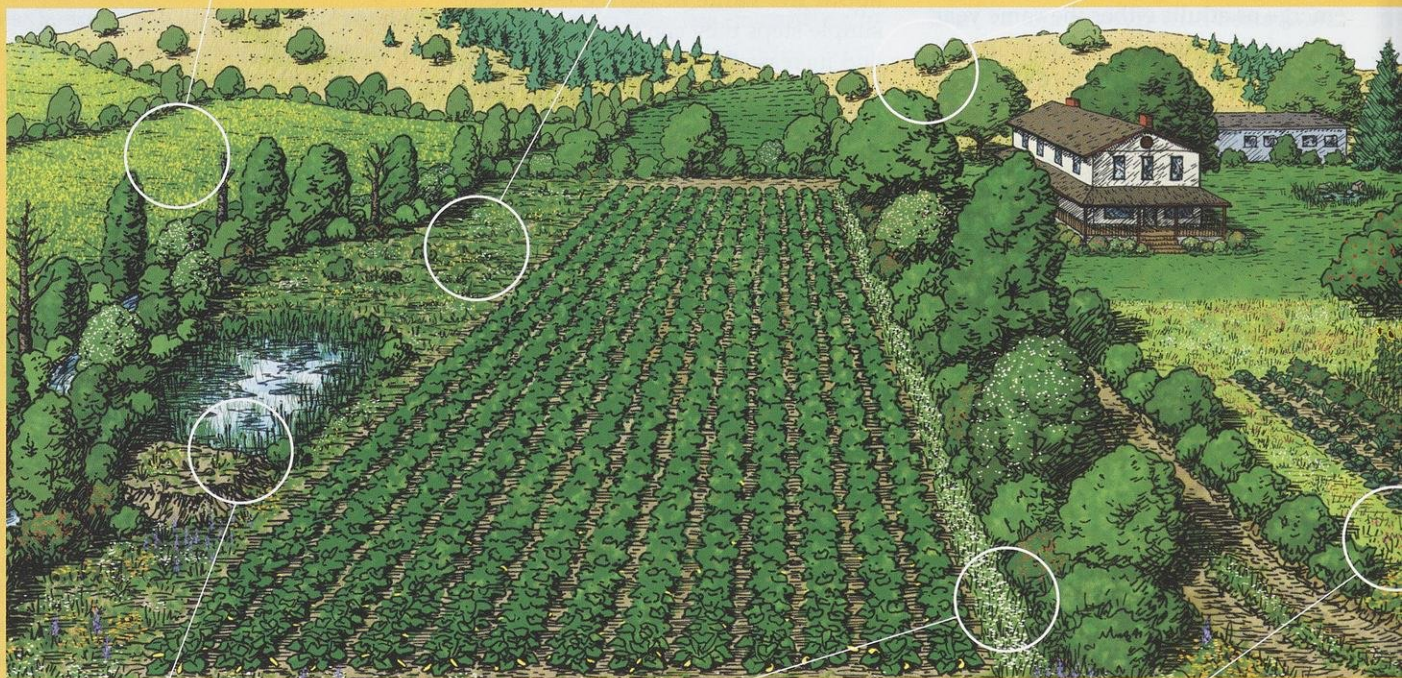
## FARMING FOR POLLINATORS

Protect a variety of plants and nest sites that benefit native bees.

### Temporary Bee Pasture

### Fallow Fields & Set-Asides

### Natural or Undeveloped Areas



### Ponds & Ditches

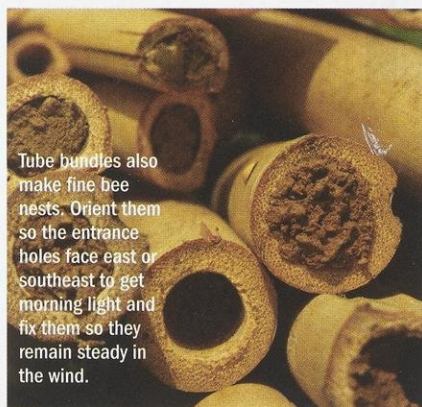
### Field & Road Borders

### Cover Crops/Food



Homemade nesting blocks provide shelter for bees. Place them where they are sheltered from weather.

MACE VAUGHAN



Tube bundles also make fine bee nests. Orient them so the entrance holes face east or southeast to get morning light and fix them so they remain steady in the wind.

MACE VAUGHAN

zontal with the entrance holes facing out. The idea is to mimic the holes bored into a tree by beetles. Nests of this type attract a variety of very docile spring and summer nesting solitary bees.

**Stem or tube bundles** – Reeds and other plants that have naturally hollow stems can also make good nesting tubes for tunnel-nesting bees. Cut the stems into six- to eight-inch lengths and be careful to leave one end sealed at a natural node. Tie 15-20 of these tubes together with the sealed ends toward the back. Slide the tubes into a low wooden frame, piece of PVC pipe or other container that will keep the tubes dry and protected from weather.

Whether building nest boxes or tube nests, location will determine if they are used by bees. Shelter the nests from the worst of the rain and wind with the entrance holes facing east or southeast. This placement will provide some morning sun to warm up the nests more quickly and protect them a bit from midday heat. Keep the stem bundles horizontal. Nest heights can vary, but three to six feet off the ground is recommended. They can be placed against buildings, fences, and staked or anchored in trees. Fix the nests firmly so they don't shake in the wind.

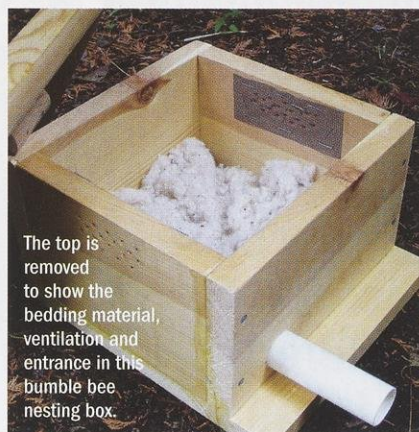
**Ground nests** – Clear the vegetation from small south-facing areas that are level or slope gently downward to drain well. Gently compact the soil surface. Creating small patches of different heights, pitches and locations will attract different bee species. You can also create an artificial pit. In a sunny, well-drained spot, dig a pit about two feet deep and fill it with a mix of light-colored, fine drained sand or loam. Planter boxes and raised beds can also serve as bee nesting sites.

**Bumble bee nests** – These bees look for warm dry cavities of varying sizes. In nature, they would seek out mouse holes and openings under grass tussocks. Artificial nest boxes made from untreated lumber about seven inches on a side will also attract bumble bees. Drill a few small ventilation holes near the top and cover these



Nearly 70 percent of native bee species nest in the ground and will excavate tunnels in looser soil.

MACE VAUGHAN



The top is removed to show the bedding material, ventilation and entrance in this bumble bee nesting box.

MACE VAUGHAN

openings with screening fine enough to keep out ants. Make a few small drainage holes in the bottom. Fill the box loosely with upholsterer's cotton or short lengths of unraveled string. Make sure the box is weather tight to keep the larvae relatively warm and dry and to deter mold and fungi growth. An entrance tunnel of three-quarter-inch plastic in a contrasting color will attract bees. Place the box in an undisturbed area on, or buried in, the ground in full or partial shade where there is no risk of flooding. Put out the box in spring when you first notice bumble bees or when willows and flowers start blooming. Don't get discouraged as bumble bees occupy only about one in four such artificial boxes. If you don't have "tenants" by late July, store the box until next spring and try a different location.

David L. Sperling edits Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine.

Many fact sheets, brochures and downloadable books about native bees and pollinator conservation are available free-of-charge through The Xerces Society website at [www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org).



Artificial Nests/ Shelter

Gardens/Food

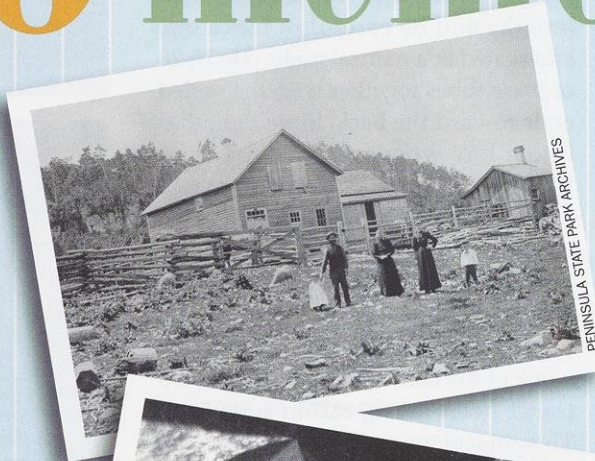
THE XERCES SOCIETY

# 100 years of memories

**As Peninsula State Park celebrates its centennial, history shows that the first hundred years of fun and relaxation are only the beginning.**

*Kathleen Harris*

**T**he first time we camped in a Wisconsin state park was back in 2001 and the park was Peninsula. I ventured there with my six- and eight-year-old sons. As soon as we rolled into Tennison Bay campsite 456, my boys jumped on their one-speed bikes to careen the campground's winding, black-topped lanes, leaving me to wrestle with bungee-style tent poles, musty sleeping bags and a tangle of metal marshmallow sticks. As soon as they heard the sound of wheezing tailpipes



PENINSULA STATE PARK ARCHIVES



PENINSULA STATE PARK ARCHIVES



ANNA GRISWOLD NICHOLS



PENINSULA STATE PARK ARCHIVES

Peninsula has a rich history. Native Americans camped here 2,000 years ago. European settlers farmed the region before parkland purchases started a century ago.

**TOP TO BOTTOM:**  
The Larsen farm, 1880s. One of 35 family farms purchased and consolidated to form the park.

A tennis game at Camp Meenahga for girls. The summer camp ran here from 1916-48.

Swimming at the camp dock, 1942, now part of the Skyline Road parking lot.

A 1921 basketball game.



near our site, my boys pedaled back faster than a bass on a mayfly. Their buddies had arrived, dropped off by grateful parents. More bikes, more folding chairs, and more hoopla amplified the commotion.

I had no way of knowing this would be the first of many adventures over the years, always with extra friends, and always at Peninsula. Together, we'd started a family tradition. Five stitches, two charred pie-irons, four bigger bikes and one pop-up tent later, site 456 is still our sentimental favorite and Peninsula is still our favorite destination.

In spring and fall, Peninsula is as laid-back as any state park. At sunset, couples sigh, hold hands, and lean in to each other at romantic Sven's Bluff. At sunrise, active AARP-types walk briskly along the spectacular Eagle Trail, a two-mile trek below craggy, 430-million-year-old bluffs. In summer, the park belongs to "families" — those with two parents, no parents or grandparents; groups of couples; scads of

scouts, and trios of twenty-somethings launching kayaks to paddle along Peninsula's eight-mile shore. Peninsula is a beautiful backdrop for generations of memories, a treasured setting for treasured family stories. This year, the invitation to experience this irreplaceable landscape is more compelling than ever as 2009 is Peninsula State Park's centennial (visit [peninsulafriends.org/100](http://peninsulafriends.org/100)).

### More than 2,000 years of memorable camping

Surviving a century is quite a tour de force. Peninsula has weathered two World Wars, the Great Depression and other severe economic catastrophes, and unforeseen changes like invasive plants and changing camping habits that threatened to harm this precious landscape. Through it all, Peninsula has stayed on point: protecting resources, open space, recreation and a place to relax despite the odds.

Enjoying the terrain between Fish Creek and Ephraim is nothing new. A 1994 archaeological dig at Peninsula State Park reveals "campsites" dating back as far as 400 BC. Pottery shards and other artifacts indicate the area — in particular, Nicolet Bay — was used as a summer fishing camp by native people. Later, in the mid-nineteenth century, a mosaic of log cabins and small farms replaced the bark and skin-covered wigwams.

Land purchases to create Peninsula State Park began in 1909 from a community of 35 scattered family farms and a small school. Most of the Scandinavian families living within the

present park's 3,776-acre boundary accepted a pittance of payment (an average of \$20 per acre) and signed quit-claim deeds to their land. A few negotiated lifelong leases and the property was later turned over when the occupants passed away. The community cemetery is still maintained onsite. The property is also the site of the original State Game Farm that operated here from 1928-32.

In Peninsula's first half-century, several of the abandoned, aging cabins were leased to families for \$60-75 a season. The Weborg Point area was especially popular and several skilled artisans from the Chicago area set up an artist's colony here, including a portrait artist, a weaver and pianist Agnes Kuechler.

She lived year-round, with neither electricity nor running water, in Swen Amundson's log cabin at Sven's Bluff.

In 1913, the State appointed Albert E. Doolittle, a forester from Trout Lake, as Peninsula's first superintendent. "Early days were primitive," wrote Doolittle's son, Jay, in undated correspondence in the Peninsula archives. "There was no electricity and 'roads' consisted of two ruts made by horse-drawn vehicles. My father took care of the park while riding horseback. The State did not buy an automobile for his use until 1916."

Within two decades, Peninsula designated camping areas at Weborg Point, Nicolet (Shanty) Bay and Welckers Point and established 63 campsites, according to the 92-page *Peninsula State Park Centennial Reader* written and issued for the centennial celebration. The booklet and an accompanying list of park historic sites are available at park concession stands and the park office.

In 1921, it cost 50 cents to camp for a week or five dollars for the season. Many families would bring up camping gear around Memorial Day, rent one of the wooden tent platforms and stay in a large canvas tent all summer until Labor Day. Camping "conve-



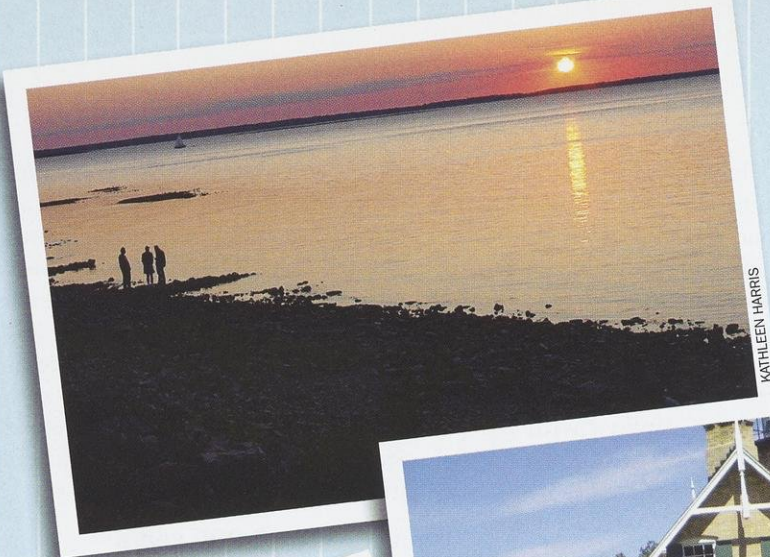
The site has always offered stunning vistas and picturesque places to relax. This hand-colored postcard is titled Eagle Terrace Party.

niences" circa 1933, might seem like roughing it by today's standards. Lorraine Ost Busscher recalls in the centennial reader, "My father would dig a hole in the ground and line it with canvas to make a crude ice chest to keep perishable food cool." Lorraine's family used old screen doors to keep bugs out of the tent. An old piece of linoleum lined the tent floor. A small kitchen and eating area in the tent was divided from the sleeping quarters.

The campgrounds also contained cooking shacks where visitors could share use of a communal wood-fired stove. As you read through the diaries and stories compiled in the reader, you get a sense of both the relaxed atmosphere and the variety of services that local businesses were only too happy to offer to the seasonal resident campers. Peddlers made the rounds of the campgrounds selling fresh produce, fresh cherries and berries in season, and raw milk that campers kept cold in boxes set in spring waters. Laundry service, boat rentals, ice delivery and fresh bakery were also available. Coopers, farmers and carpenters also sold their services in the early years. Cooper Peter Weborg made barrels for large catches of herring that were caught in pond nets off Nicolet Bay. Farmers rode the muddy, rutted park roads.

"My father, Orrin Thomas Malmer, drove a lightweight wooden wagon through the park twice a week, peddling Fred Larson's home-butchered meat," recalled Thelma Erickson. Superintendent Doolittle was also known to deliver sundries to campers. Many local men earned wages for maintenance work. Several helped rebuild both towers in 1932 (Sven's was dismantled in 1947).

By 1935, a different kind of camp was "pitched" at Peninsula – the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). "It was located on park property across from where the YMCA is now, near the Gibraltar School football field," recalled Itsie Krause, born and raised in Fish Creek. At the time, Krause was 10



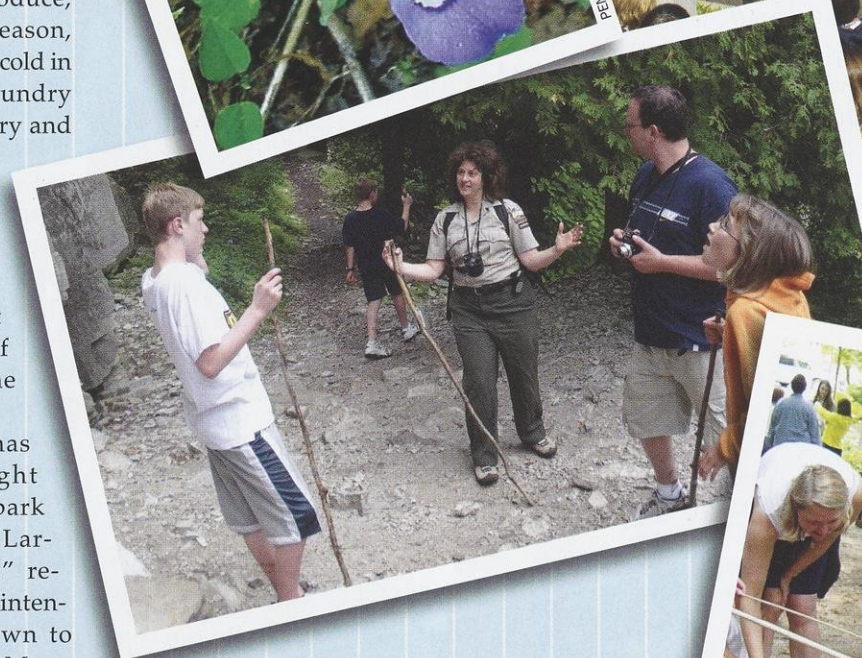
KATHLEEN HARRIS



SEANERES



NICK MEIERS



The park still offers a neat mix of natural and cultural experiences.

TOP TO BOTTOM:  
Sunset at Welcker's Point.

The endangered and tiny dwarf lake iris (*Iris lacustris*) thrives along the shoreline.

Students enjoy an interpretive talk by Barbara Southwell, dressed as lighthouse keeper Julia Duclon. Eagle Bluff Lighthouse built in 1868 still warns Great Lakes mariners of the rocky shoals.

Visitors hike with the park naturalist to see cedars more than 500 years old clinging to the tiny fissures in the limestone cliffs.

Campers gather ringside to eat their corndog creations at a cooking workshop.



years old. "Big army tents were erected. These men were brought here to work. Times were tough during the Depression, with little work and very little money to be made." The CCC

constructed Eagle Panorama, built stone walls along roadsides, planted trees and cleared 100 acres of poison ivy at Nicolet Beach. [My cousin Harry Pelke] and I "would go into the CCC kitchen and they would give us food, sometimes better than we had at home. One time when we came, they gave us each a shirt. They were very big, but we were proud to wear them."

Another Fish Creek octogenarian, Buck Eckert, recalled that CCC enrollees scrimmaged the high school football team. "I remember the CCC boys played in their bare feet. I guess the work boots they'd been issued were just too heavy."

Besides being a work site for the CCC (1935-

37), the state park provided jobs for local residents and has continued to do so throughout the decades. State relief paid the Depression-era wages. Masonry skills were in demand, especially outside the park along Fish Creek's Cottage Row. Here, wealthy summer residents built elaborate homes. "When they needed sand for masonry on various job sites," wrote Thelma Erickson, "Emil Krause would haul it from the depression that now shows across from the Nicolet campgrounds, where the cars now park for the American Folklore Theatre shows. That was solid sand, and it was all removed. It was a long haul, my husband remembered, as he rode on the wagon behind draft horses driven by Krause,

a very able, hard-working, reliable employee – one trip in the a.m. and one in the p.m., starting at 7 a.m. and ending at 6 p.m. on summer days!"

Today, more than 100 people are employed by Peninsula State Park, its concessionaires and on-site partners. Peninsula's economic impact in local communities exceeds \$30 million annually in providing lodging, food, entertainment, shopping and services (according to the *State Parks and Their Gateway Communities Report*, 2002).

Back in the park's first years it also hosted a summer camp. Local girls earned money for books and clothes by working in the kitchen at Camp Meenahga (1916-1948), which once stood near Skyline Road parking lot. Evelyn Franke worked in the kitchen in 1927. She earned ten dollars a week to start. "I [bought] clothes, mainly, because we were a big family and not that well off. All summer I stayed in the tent house with five other kitchen girls. It had flaps on the side and when it was nice you could roll them up." Mrs. Franke described visits by parents of Meenahga girls. "The chauffeur would be standing there. They were very rich ... There was a Kimberly [Clark] girl. Many of the girls were from St. Louis." (Peninsula Archives interview in 2003).

Eric Beckstrom also remembered Camp Meenahga. Beckstrom's father was Peninsula superintendent during the camp's final years. After the season was over and the tents taken down, Eric would crawl under the wooden platforms to look for any pennies or nickels that had fallen through the cracks. He was about five when Camp Meenahga closed.

Beckstrom remembered a park ranger who worked for his dad, too. "Kenny Nash drove a Nash Rambler and worked as the park constable. In those days, the [ranger] didn't wear a uniform, just a hat and a badge. He had a crank siren [hidden] under the Rambler's hood. One time, local kids got hold of another crank siren and pulled Kenny over. They didn't recognize his car and thought he was a

tourist. They were going to give him a ticket. Boy, were they surprised to find out it was the park constable!"

Superintendent Doolittle welcomed Camp Meenahga, knowing it would mean local jobs and bring attention to the wonders of the park. Superintendents who followed him continued to demonstrate public relation know-how. They answered diverse questions. Peninsula Superintendent Ralf Halverson (1968-74) shared some of the memorable funny letters at a 1973 community program:

*Dear Mr. Halverson:*

*After traveling in Wisconsin and seeing some of the beautiful forests, we inquired of other people living nearby. We were told that Wisconsin was rapidly losing its virgin forests. Isn't there something the Wisconsin Conservation Department can do to help the forests keep their virginity?*

*Dear Mr. Halverson:*

*After reading the literature furnished by the Department of Natural Resources, we find that we can camp in your park for twenty-one days if my husband and I come up there on July 22 and have our four children.*

*Dear Mr. Halverson:*

*We have never camped before, but our friends told us how much fun it is. Is it safe for me to sleep with my husband in your campgrounds?*

Today's questions seem more straightforward. *Can we bring firewood into a state park?* The short answer is "only if it has been harvested within 50 miles of the park," explained present Peninsula Superintendent Tom Blackwood. The emerald ash borer beetle and other forest pests warrant restrictions on moving firewood in state parks. Other questions relate to changing RV rigs that are getting higher, wider and heavier. "We've had a few campers ask us to cut branches and trees in order to accommodate RV pull-outs," Blackwood says. "We generally don't oblige that kind of request."



NICK MEIERS



KATHLEEN HARRIS

## A balancing act to meet visitors' wants and needs

Peninsula does oblige gentle use of resources and especially encourages sustainable recreation, such as biking and kayaking. About 11,000 people attend nature programs each year and volunteers help control invasive species by hand-pulling weeds and grubbing out roots on work days. Thousands more tour the park on their own since Peninsula is considered the gateway to other Door County natural areas. How many people first fell in love with Door County after a trip to Peninsula State Park? It may have been a drive along scenic Skyline Road, a visit to the historic gravesite of Potawatomi Chief Simon Onanghissee Kahquados, or a tour of 1868 Eagle Bluff Lighthouse.

Perhaps a round at the only Wisconsin state park golf course was the driving force. The course opened in 1921 with six "sand and oil" greens. (Turf came later, with an irrigation system.) It later grew to two nine-hole courses and, eventually an 18-hole course. An annual tournament on the challenging course began in 1925.

Such unique features peak interest, boost numbers and place high demand on precious park resources. Peninsula's master plan, up for revision in 2010, directs use to specific places at specific times. Peninsula State Park is considered fully developed.

Key park features are remarkable at Peninsula and natural attributes keep drawing visitors for a closer look. One-hundred-fifty-foot bluffs cut across the park. They represent Wisconsin's largest, contiguous, protected tract of the Niagara Escarpment. A suite of species associated with the limestone rock face include red-backed salamanders, goshawks (which have nested in Peninsula), and populations of endangered land snails

established after the last glaciers scoured the landscape.



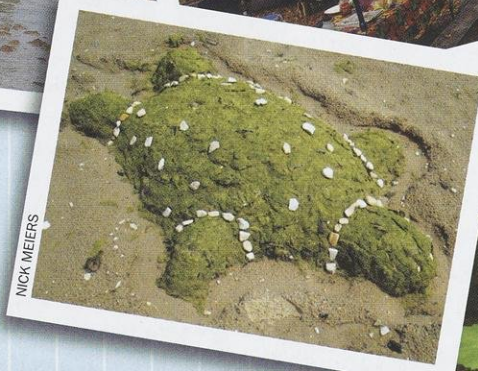
ROBERT QUEEN



RACHEL PINGEL



PENINSULA STATE PARK ARCHIVES



NICK MEIERS

Popularity and a prime Door County location bring challenges that Peninsula continues to meet.

### TOP TO BOTTOM:

Swimmers and boaters share the beachfront on a hot day.

Park workers head out to spray invasive phragmites, a nonnative variety of reed that is spreading along Great Lakes coastlines, including along the park's shoreline.

Habits change. Some visitors want campgrounds to make space for big rigs that were not envisioned when campsites were developed for backpackers and small pop-up tents.

A stinky algae, *Cladophora*, occasionally floats in to shore on the Great Lakes. It's no joke, even though a visitor sculpted and decorated it into the shape of a playful sea turtle.

Helpers of all ages are enlisted to pull garlic mustard trying to keep invasive terrestrial plants from crowding out the park's native flowers, shrubs and trees.



KATHLEEN HARRIS

Wildflowers, too, are surprisingly diverse. Robust Canada anemone and more fragile Kalm's lobelia both thrive here. More remarkable are colonies of federally endangered dwarf lake iris, sustained along the sunny openings of Sunset Bike Route. Peninsula's Wildflower Checklist (\$2) lists best wildflower sites and seasons.

Birds can be easy to spot as well, with just a small investment of time. Pileated woodpeckers are more abundant as Peninsula's second growth forest has reached maturity. Mergansers are often spotted along the park's eight-mile coast.

### Won't you join us during this centennial year?

That first summer, my family camped four times. Now that my sons are teenagers we are lucky to squeeze in a two-day trip. Our family is entering a different era of camping. Gone are days of amusing ourselves with sidewalk chalk and wearing cartoon pajamas. Instead, it's cell phones and boxers. Any year now I expect the boys will ask to camp on their own; of course, I will agree (wistfully). Then, at least for a while, camping will be set aside. Time will pass. I'll mull over memories of sitting by a blazing "chimney log" campfire after ordering six noisy boys into the camper and craning my neck to listen as the 14-year-olds whispered conspiratorially to the younger ones, first, "Do you like any girls?" and then "Have you had your first kiss?"

But I know my kids will come back. Maybe after a grueling stint at a city job. Maybe just to catch a sunset from the top of Eagle Tower for old time's sake. Maybe to introduce their own children to sparking campfires, or to jog along side as they wobble on bikes without training wheels for the first time.

People return to Peninsula State Park and we invite you to join us for special events during our centennial year.

*Kathleen Harris has been chief naturalist at Peninsula State Park in Fish Creek in Door County since 1998.*

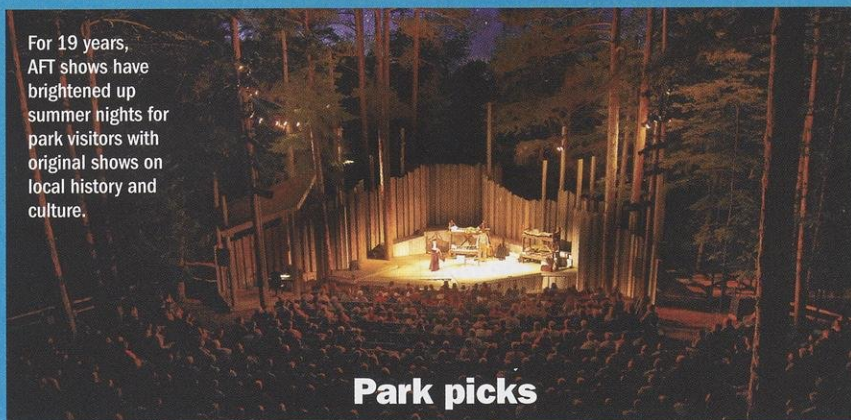
## Planning a centennial visit

Parks staff, the Friends of Peninsula State Park and the surrounding communities are whipping up special shows, hikes and events during this centennial season. Check out the website [peninsulafriends.org/100](http://peninsulafriends.org/100) to plan your visit. You'll find a listing of current activities and dates for centennial events like the Centennial Campfires to see videos and hear stories from past campers, a park-wide Centennial Scavenger Hunt, the So Many Memories geocache with write-ups of park history and adventure stashed on the grounds, and the Peninsula 100 Club for those who can earn a shield for hiking, biking, skiing and snowshoeing 100 miles on the grounds during this special year.

Just outside the park within walking distance, the Peninsula School of Art is planning three special art "Eco-tivity" installations from Aug. 7-Sept. 26, including a series of 20-25 anchored sculptures extending from land into Tension Bay that you can tour via kayak.

For those who collect more than memories from their visits, the park and friends group offers mementos and goodies to remember this centennial season. Your purchases fund the special events held at the park this year. Head to the website above and click on "merchandise" to find collectibles like centennial patches, pins, medallions and window clings as well as practical camping equipment like canteens, water bottles and blankets emblazoned with the centennial logo. If you want to show your support, an array of caps, shirts and sweatshirts is available for sale. To delve into park history and visit with past tenants, we highly recommend the *Centennial Reader* (\$5), *Historical Site Guide* and map (\$2), and the park's Wildflower Checklist (\$2). To order, write to Friends of Peninsula State Park, P.O. Box 212, Fish Creek, WI 54212, call the park headquarters at (920) 868-3258 or e-mail [kathleen.harris@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kathleen.harris@wisconsin.gov).

For 19 years, AFT shows have brightened up summer nights for park visitors with original shows on local history and culture.



AMERICAN FOLKLORE THEATRE

### Park picks

Enjoy these special events at Peninsula this summer:

See **Sunsets and S'Mores**, a new American Folklore Theatre (AFT) show created especially for Peninsula's 100th birthday. AFT performs original shows based on local history and culture year-round, and their summer home has been in an 800-seat outdoor amphitheater at Peninsula State Park from June through August for the past 19 years. All shows are family appropriate and family affordable. ([folkloretheatre.com](http://folkloretheatre.com)). Other shows this season include **Cheeseheads: The Musical** and **Muskies in Love**.

Log onto [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) to find starting coordinates for **So Many Memories**, a new multi-stage cache available all year.

Discover park history by purchasing the **Centennial Reader** and the **Historic Sites** guide. See if you can figure out the source of the stone foundations along Eagle Trail.

Bike **Sunset Bike Route**, and look closely along the portion named Hidden Bluff Trail. There, you'll see jack-in-the-pulpits, bulblet ferns cascading down low bluffs and a black ash swamp. Can you spot the site of the old ski jump and toboggan run on the east side of the trail?

Remember to tally your miles for any of these adventures to earn a discount on the 2009 **Like to Hike** pin (featuring the wood violet) or a free centennial hiking medallion (while supplies last, funded by the Raibrook Foundation).

Support the centennial by purchasing a custom **Peninsula Art Poster** created by local Door County artist Dave Hackett. Limited print edition.

Visit [peninsulafriends.org/100](http://peninsulafriends.org/100) to see a roster of 2009 signature events.

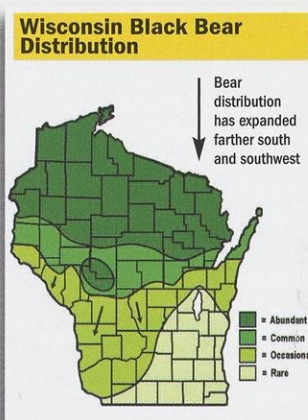
# Bear in mind

Young bears roam in Wisconsin seasonally in spring when forced out of their mother's territory. Habitat to the south offers less competition for territory, which can be fierce. Some adapt to new food, cover and shelter. Some wander away, presumably back toward their home range after the breeding season ends.

**As black bear populations spread, play it smart. Learn why they do what they do, and why bears should not be feared or dismissed, but respected.**

Linda Olver

**A**ttitudes toward one Wisconsin native, the American black bear (*Ursus americanus*), have changed for the better and the worse over the past 200 years. Native Americans revered it and made full use of bears for food, clothing and spiritual purposes. Early European settlers valued the black bear's fur, meat and fat. In fact, melted bear fat is considered a premium oil for frying doughnuts and a delectable ingredient in baked goods. Yet, as Wisconsin's human population increased, tolerance for black bears decreased.



Prior to the 1950s, bears were unprotected and considered "vermin" by many people. Black bears were shot or trapped at any time of year in unlimited numbers. With the advent of legislative protection, bear populations rebounded, however hunting pressure continued to increase. In the early 1980s, fewer than 5,000 black bears roamed northern Wisconsin. Very few, if any, were found south of Highway 64, which runs east-west 20 miles north of Wausau. In 1985, the bear hunting season was closed to prevent over-harvest, and in 1986, the Department of Natural Resources sought and received authority to limit the number of bear harvest permits and the number of hunters through a quota system. Since then, Wisconsin's black bear population has been slowly increasing. Currently, black bears are commonly found in the northern third of the state and are moving into the central forested portion of the state and points south.

Today, the black bear is again viewed as both a symbol of Wisconsin's wildness and as choice prey. Seeing a black bear in the wild is an exciting experience for many and an equal thrill for those who prize the black bear as a big game species. The number of hunters applying for bear hunting licenses far exceeds the number of harvest permits available and each year the number of applicants grows. For the 2009 bear season, nearly 96,000 hunters



RYAN BRADY

Transmitters on collared black bears and GPS recorders track their movements. Researchers hope to better understand if bears just seek the next available territory or keep roaming looking for habitat with prime food, cover, shelter and den sites.

applied for 7,310 allotted permits.

### More routes to southern range bring more bears to more places

A two-year study, in which black bears were marked and then recaptured, was conducted in 2006 and 2007 by University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate student Dave MacFarland under the direction of Tim Van Deelen, assistant professor of forestry and wildlife ecology. Results estimate Wisconsin's black bear population is between 23,000-40,000 bears statewide, substantially more than our previous estimates! While a large proportion of the population still resides in Wisconsin's northern counties, distribution is moving southward. Sows with cubs have been seen in southern Wisconsin, indicating bears are overwintering and these areas are developing resident bear populations.

Land-use changes may be enhancing black bear movement, Van Deelen believes. Some farmland is moving back into corn production and other biofuels, and farmland is also purchased for hunting and recreational uses. Those managing their land for wildlife increase the amount of woodland edges and hedgerows that act as wildlife corridors, and that decision is changing Wisconsin's rural landscape.

"Lands that were active dairy farms 20 years ago are now hunting properties or hobby farms," Van Deelen says. "The fencerows get thicker, and the woodlots get bigger over time. Farm fields are becoming more favorable bear habitat and provide more corridors for dispersal."

As development in bear habitat continues and bears disperse south and west, more human-bear interactions are inevitable. To keep interactions more positive, it is important that we understand black bear behavior and motivations.

### The journey from home is a scary path for young bears

Black bears possess a number of physical traits and behavioral adaptations that help them survive long, cold winters when food is scarce. Bears are omnivores that eat animal, insect and plant foods. Bears are also opportunis-

tic feeders that will ingest most seasonal sources of food. In spring, bears feed on greening vegetation and will prey on deer fawns. By mid-summer they gorge on ripe berries and roots. They will fatten up on nuts and other seeds in late summer to early fall. Bears will eat carrion,

fish and insects when they can find them. Bears have excellent senses of smell that help them locate food, but relatively poor eyesight and only moderate hearing.

Black bears are very territorial and are loners most of the year, except for briefly interacting during mating and when sows raise cubs. They want their own space. The boar's home range is about 27 square miles, while a sow's territory is much smaller, usually about five square miles. A bear will mark its territory by rubbing, biting and scratching trees.

Good bear habitat has extensive forested areas interspersed with nu-



Bears leave telltale scratches on trees that you may notice if you hike through bear country.

MICHELE WOODFORD

merous swamps and stream bottoms. Bears prefer thick ground vegetation where berries and nuts are abundant and they can build up a large fat reserve during seasons of plenty. Dens are usually dug out under a fallen tree. Caves, hollow trees or stumps, dense thickets or

conifer stands also make decent den sites.

Bears enter their dens in mid-October through early November as food supplies dwindle. They are not true hibernators. The bears fall into a deep sleep and their body temperature, heart rate and respiration decrease, but not to the low levels associated with hibernation. The bear's dormant winter sleep is called "torpor."

Cubs are born in mid-January, while their mother sleeps. The average litter contains three to four cubs, but litters of as many as six have been reported. The cubs stay with their mother for just over a year, learning how to



Most bear complaints can be resolved if people remove or secure food sources. When that does not work, APHIS Wildlife Services staff trap bears. Some 728 bears were relocated last year.

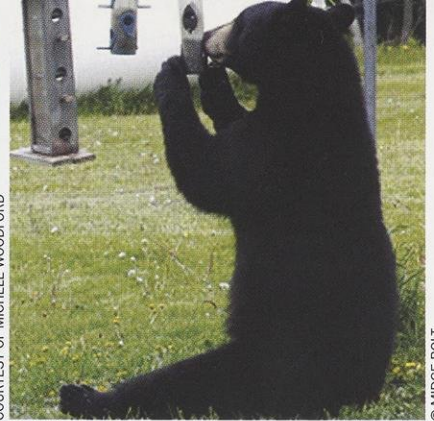
MICHELE WOODFORD



Where there's a will, bears will find a way to reach food.



It was no Yogi Bear moment when an aggressive bear disrupted a campsite picnic near Eau Claire.



Bears love bird seed. Clean up spilled seed and put feeders away for at least 30 days to encourage bears to move on.

gather food and survive. They den with their mother during their second winter when they are just under a year old. The following spring, the yearling females are encouraged to establish their own territories, but are tolerated within their mother's territory. The young males are a different story. They are strongly encouraged to leave their mother's territory and they are not tolerated by other adult males in nearby areas. So these yearling males strike out, looking to establish their own turf. The sows breed and give birth every other year, providing ample time to teach their offspring how to take care of themselves.

### It's no picnic to meet a hungry bear

Bears are big mammals, second only in size to elk in Wisconsin. An adult black bear may weigh 250 to more than 500 pounds, but when they awaken in spring, bears have lost approximately 25-40 percent of their body weight and emerge from winter dens really hungry, looking to replenish reserves depleted over the winter.

In the spring, food may be limited and difficult to find, especially for young bears who are wary and alert as they wander into new territory, cross roads, or encounter cars and people just as vegetation is beginning to grow. They are up to the task. Bears can swim, easily climb trees and can run up to 30 miles per hour.

In their drive to find food, bears will take advantage of any readily available food sources, whether natural or from human activity. Even though bears are naturally shy creatures that avoid people, a hungry bear exploiting a food source can quickly learn to associate humans with food and can become a nuisance. The bears

are merely responding to their need to consume large amounts of food.

The southerly dispersal of bears coupled with the growth of recreational and residential land development in open areas increase the potential for human-bear encounters. Further, the bears can be attracted to a number of artificial food sources such as bird feeders, greasy grills, dog food, garbage, gardens and compost piles. While it is exciting to see a bear in your backyard and you might sacrifice bird seed for the chance to watch a bear up close, the encounter comes with a high cost: Once a bear associates people with food, it will be bolder, escalate efforts to obtain food and may pose a safety risk. Though bear attacks on people are relatively rare, they can be serious. Most often, these attacks are defensive when a bear has been startled. Learn to minimize the foodstuffs that attract bears and you can avoid problem encounters.

State law prohibits recreational feeding of bears. Even inadvertent feeding is illegal. A 2007 law requires that you cease baiting and feeding activities for other animals, such as deer or birds, for at least 30 days if bears are known to visit the feeding sites. Baiting bears in Wisconsin is only legal by permit when associated with hunting activities, which are viewed as an important means of controlling growing bear populations.

A bear can become a financial liability to farmers by damaging agricultural crops, wrecking apiaries and harming livestock. The Wildlife Services (WS) program of the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), manages bear damage and nuisance abatement work in

Wisconsin in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources. Damage or nuisance complaints about bears, wolves and birds are answered by WS toll-free in Wisconsin at 1-800-433-0663 (for problems south of Waupun) and 1-800-228-1368 (Rhinelander office for problems in northern Wisconsin). Most nuisance complaints are resolved by providing information on removing food sources and suggesting other strategies to reduce bear visits. WS field staff investigate chronic nuisance complaints that do not involve a food attractant. If appropriate, field staff may trap and translocate a bear that damages property and agricultural fields. Bears that exhibit bold or aggressive behavior towards people, are highly habituated to people, depredate livestock, or routinely cross electric fences and destroy apiaries, may be euthanized.

In 2008, WS staff handled a total of 1,383 bear complaints — 1,101 nuisance complaints, 92 for property damage and 190 for agricultural damage. A total of 728 bears were trapped and relocated last year.

### When bears are too close for comfort

If you encounter a bear, remain calm. Bears are shy and if not conditioned to humans, will usually flee quickly. If you see a bear in the woods, make noise so the bear knows you are there. Slowly back away and allow the bear a clear exit that doesn't intersect your path.

### Reducing contact at home

Never feed a bear! The bear will not forget the feeding experience and will tend to get more demanding with time.

**Bird feeders** – Bears love bird seed.



DNR FILE PHOTO

Young bears forced out on their own will seek natural food sources but may also scavenge garbage, backyard grills and compost piles if they are available.

If you live in prime bear habitat, take down your feeders in early spring and don't replace them until late fall. If you must feed birds during the months when bears are active, make the bird feeders inaccessible to bears. Hang feeders at least 10 feet off the ground and five feet away from tree trunks on a limb that will not support a bear. You can refill the feeders easily by using a pulley system. If a bear visits your feeders, discontinue all feeding for at least 30 days. When you bring your bird feeders in, remember to clean up all spilled seed or suet below the feeding area.

**Garbage** – Don't let garbage pile up and place garbage, especially food wastes, in cans with tight-fitting lids. Empty garbage cans regularly and occasionally don some rubber gloves, wear eye protection and wash down the cans with sudsy ammonia and water. Let the solution sit in contact a few minutes, then scrub the inside walls and bottom to minimize odors. Rinse and air dry the containers to make the trash cans less attractive to bears. Store garbage cans in a sturdy building until pick-up or disposal day.

If bears are raiding your garbage, consider using a commercially available bear-resistant container or 55-gallon drum with a locking-ring lid.

Don't discard cooking grease in your yard. Collect cooking fats in a glass or metal container with a sealable lid. Transfer to a plastic bag and seal tightly when ready to dispose.

**Grills** – Don't leave food cooking unattended. Burn off greasy residues and any remaining food. Scrub grease off grill racks, smokers and other outdoor cookers after each use.

**Compost piles** – Compost piles may attract bears. If you do compost, place the pile a safe distance from the house. Do not compost meat, fish or other pungent scraps in compost piles. Electric fences are an effective way to keep bears out of compost piles. Follow appropriate safety precautions.

**Pets** – If feeding your pet outside, only feed enough so all pet food will be completely consumed at one feeding and not left in the dish. Bring in any unconsumed pet food at night and store pet food in sealed containers inside a sturdy building. Do not leave bones or scented chew toys laying in your yard.

### When you go out in the woods tonight

**Keep your distance** – Do not approach a bear in the wild. If you encounter a bear, let it know you are there. Slowly back away. Do not run or climb a tree to get away from a bear.

**Camping** – Do not cook, eat or store food in your tent. Also keep your sleep-

ing bag and tent free of food stains and odors. Do not sleep in the clothes you wore while cooking meals. Residual food odors may attract bears.


Where practical, do your cooking, eating and dishwashing well away from your tent (100 yards recommended). Store food and cooking utensils away from your campsite, preferably in a hard-topped vehicle or hung in a tree at least 10 feet off the ground and five feet out on a limb that will not support a bear. Odorous items such as toothpaste, soap, lotion and deodorants could also attract bears. Treat these items as you would food.

Keep your campsite clean. Do not be careless with food, beverages or garbage when camping. Dispose of scraps in a closed container away from the campsite, not in the campfire. Do not bury garbage.

Do not leave pets unattended at your campsite.

**Viewing and photographing wildlife** – Use binoculars, spotting scopes and telephoto lenses to get a closer look at bears. If a bear approaches, back away slowly to maintain a safe distance. Never approach a bear to get a closer look or a better picture. Never sneak up on or surprise a bear. Never try to get a bear to move to a different location. Avoid direct eye contact with a bear; it may be interpreted as a threat. Stay away from cubs and dens.

**Hiking** – Walk in groups, if possible. Always let someone at another location know where you will be hiking and when you expect to return. Avoid hiking at dusk and at night when it is easier to startle a bear. Keep children and pets close at all times. Keep your dog on a leash or leave it at home if you know you will be traveling through bear country. Make plenty of noise — talk, sing, clap, rustle leaves while hiking.

Make a little time to better understand bears' habits. Take these preventative steps and you can enjoy seeing bears while lessening the likelihood of problems should you encounter bears near your home or on your travels. 

*Linda Olver is the assistant bear and deer ecologist in DNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management.*



These dumpsters were eventually sealed and surrounded with electric fencing to make them bear proof.

USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES

# IT WORKS FOR ME!

**We asked you to share your stories of homemade gear for the outdoors and you delivered!**

**Last August we invited readers to send in descriptions and pictures of the homemade contraptions they devised or extra gear they packed to make their outdoor experiences a little better and days afield a little more enjoyable. Here are some of the handy tips you shared. Thanks.**

## ■ Staff of life

My husband, Jim, created this staff out of a 5½-foot wooden flag pole painted forest green. It was a Boy Scout project when he was a Scoutmaster. We have since added and subtracted some items. Now, it has a hook for retrieving things overhead, such as fruit and for snagging things under foot, such as handles on geocaches or something that has

fallen in a hole. The staff has a scarf attached for shooing flies, wiping the brow or for use as a tourniquet if necessary. Five attached hiking medallions remind us of places we have been. We attached a pop-up clear tape dispenser for catching live ticks. Wooden beads that make a sound let bears know we are in the area and

we've attached a whistle too. A knife sheath on one side holds a knife, a small first aid kit and a sewing kit. A rope wrapped around the staff can be used in case of an emergency; It hides a fish hook with line attached. A second sheath holds a pen and pencil for signing geocache log books. The bottom third has a



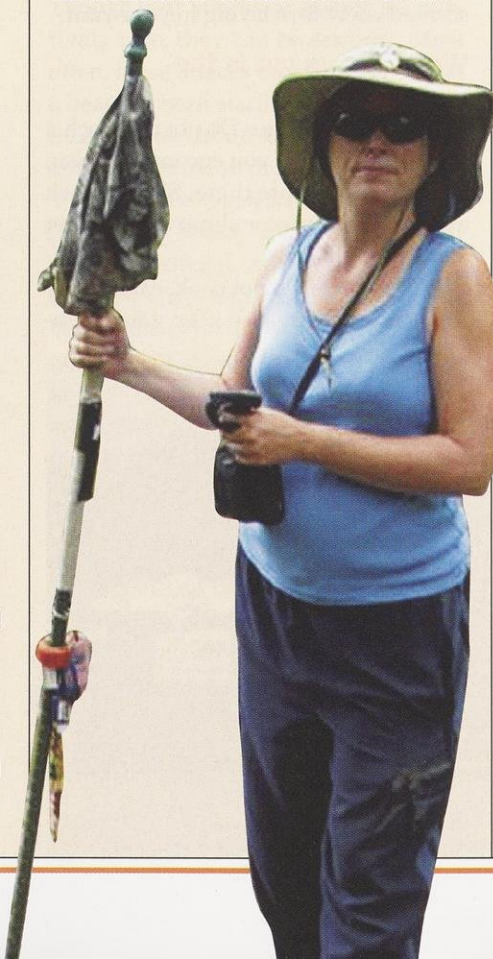
hole with some wire through it so we would have a spot to hook on a few carabiners where we have attached bottles of sunscreen, hand sanitizer, a mini-flashlight, a thermometer, tick remover, a compass, bug repellent, tracking tape and more beads. The bottom 24 inches are notched every inch so we can measure a fish, check snow depth, stream depth or anything else that needs to be measured. A rubber tip on the bottom finishes it off.

I use this staff in all seasons whether snowshoeing, geocaching or hiking. We've made good use of almost everything on it but have not had to use the rope or marker tape.

• Cathy Calvetti  
Eagle River

## ■ First aid extras

I came across your story as I was packing my first aid kit for the northern woods of Canada.



I pack the regular Band-Aids, Neosporin and creams to fight the itch from insect bites and poisonous plants. This year though I'm putting something extra in the kit — leftovers. I'm putting in the extra Tylenol 3s I have from a past dental procedure in case I sprain an ankle or blow out a knee. I'm also taking some oral antibiotics should I get a nasty infection or run into a deer tick while I'm isolated from the rest of society. I'm taking amoxil because it is good for about anything. Readers can ask their doctor to write them a prescription for a few capsules of doxycycline to have on hand if they are in the woods quite a bit. Taking 200 mg within 72 hours of being bitten by a deer tick has been shown to decrease the incidence of Lyme disease. I should add that I am a doctor, so it is a little easier for me to get a hold of these products, but it is still good advice for every outdoorsman or woman. The pills take up very little room and on a long trip could make an emergency a "survivable inconvenience."

• Brandon Sheetz, MD  
Milton

## ■ Foot care in a pinch

Blisters on your feet can make a short hike a pain, but on longer trips, blistered feet are sheer misery. Always pack extra dry socks, some mole skin pads and some pre-cut strips of good old duct tape that you can wrap around a film canister, a camera strap, fuel canister or plastic storage bottle. In a pinch, duct tape can reduce foot chafing and it is waterproof. I've used it to bind together two toes if one is stubbed, cushion a bad seam in a pair of shoes that rubs my feet wrong, cover a cut or shield a blister from further swelling. By the way, always break in a new pair of shoes before packing them for a trip. Vacation is no time to learn that your new "comfortable" shoes are irritating your feet.

• WNR magazine staff

## ■ Stop the shake, rattle and roll

To keep hooks and sinkers from bouncing about in your tackle box, just glue some magnetic strips to the bottom of each compartment that holds hooks. Those cheap refrigerator magnets that so many businesses distribute work great. Just cut them to size and glue them with the magnetic side up. They keep hooks in their place. Just make sure you don't keep your compass in the same container!

• WNR magazine staff



## Deer stand comfort

I rescued six of these wooden chairs from a weekly trash collection, cut off the legs, repaired and glued the seat and backs back together with waterproof Gorilla Glue. Then I painted them with polyurethane and attached each chair to a piece of pressure-treated 2x8 using stainless steel lag screws and washers. I put a swivel on a floor flange and piece of pipe so the chairs rotate. Finally, I built a wooden storage compartment under each hinged seat and now we use them in our deer stands to hunt more comfortably for a longer period of time.

• Robert J. Albers  
Green Bay



## Have rods, will travel

Here is my homemade fishing rod case that was easy and inexpensive to make for packing up my two-piece rods for a family vacation.

- 3" diameter PVC pipe cut just a little longer than your longest rod
- 2 plastic pipe end covers
- 4 small sheet metal screws or similar screws
- One metal handle from a building supply or hardware store
- Two pop rivets to attach the handle
- A few strips of Velcro
- A short piece of nylon strapping or webbing

Drill pilot holes at one end of the PVC pipe and permanently attach one end cover with the screws.

Position the handle about midway on the pipe, drill two holes and attach pop rivets using a simple hand riveting tool.

Place one piece of stick-on Velcro as a hinge on the other cap end. Attach small squares of Velcro to the piece of nylon webbing. Then attach the two mating pieces of Velcro to the lid and side of the PVC case to form a locking strap.

This kit neatly and safely stores four two-piece rods. I took three medium heavy spinning rods and an ultralight spinning rod on my trip and you can pile any amount of luggage or gear on top without bending or breaking any rod tips. I just slip the fishing reels into a fanny pack and I'm all set.

• Steve Zandler  
Beloit

## Kit and caboodle

I keep this small duffle bag kit in my pickup all year. It holds an extra set of clothing for those times when we get back to the vehicle soaking wet or just need an extra layer because the temperature has dropped significantly.

My duffle contains a pair of military cargo pants, a flannel shirt, a pair of socks, a couple of knit caps, a lightweight parka, a few pairs of gloves and an old pair of sneakers. All the items are old, but not worn out. The kit can be stuffed or squeezed into a storage space or tucked under a seat.

Last fall my daughter and I went out fishing on a sunny, but cool day. We got cold and quickly returned to the car to dig into the kit before we headed out again. I have even tapped into these clothes while watching our high school's softball games in early spring.

• Steve Zandler  
Beloit




## Deer retractor

I developed this tool to help cleanly gut a deer years before such devices were commercially available at sporting goods stores. It consists of a large treble hook with all the barbs flattened, dulled and anchored into a straight handle made of deer antler. I use it to help field dress deer efficiently and cleanly.

1. With the deer on its side, insert the retractor in the anal opening and pull outward, extending the anus without tearing any tissue.
2. Cut around the rectum about six inches deep.
3. Use a plastic tie to tie off the anus and prevent waste from spilling into the cavity or releasing any waste. Loosen or cut the device free from the anus.
4. The rectum can now be easily extracted through the body cavity without contaminating the meat when the rest of the intestines and gut are removed during field dressing.

• Mark Montaba  
Plymouth





# PEACEFUL PASSAGE

**Twenty years after  
its creation, the  
Lower Wisconsin  
State Riverway  
buffers 92 miles of  
flowing tranquility  
from the turbulence  
of overuse and  
development.**

Stunning view of the Lower Wisconsin River and bluffs near Ferry Bluff, west of Sauk City where Honey Creek joins the river. Bald eagles roost in this area.

The state continues to invest in this scenic waterway. Since dedicating the Lower Wisconsin for recreation 20 years ago, state stewardship funds have purchased and preserved another 27,500 acres of land along the riverway.

“It is very wide; it has a sandy bottom, which forms various shoots that render its navigation very difficult. It is full of islands covered with vines. On the banks one sees fertile land, diversified with woods, prairies and hills.

There are oak, walnut and basswood trees...We saw there neither feathered game nor fish, but many deer...”

•  
*The journal of  
Pere Jacques Marquette  
1673*

“For over four hundred miles, the Wisconsin, though a river superficially tamed by the dams along its central portion and the reservoirs on its tributaries, is still a wilderness stream, but quiet now, aging, seldom rising to flood stages of early years, pastoral and beautiful where it flows slowly down between the hills that enclose its valley to give itself through the Mississippi to the sea.”

•  
*The Wisconsin,  
River of a Thousand Isles  
August Derleth  
1942*

“This bill creates the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. The boundaries of the riverway are designated by the Natural Resources Board. Within the boundaries, certain activities are regulated in order to preserve the scenic value of the lower Wisconsin River.”

•  
*From the  
Analysis by the Legislative  
Reference Bureau  
Senate Bill 22  
1989*



The Lower Wisconsin's vast shallow backwaters teem with wildlife and are important spawning areas for many species of fish.

Gregory K. Matthews

**T**his year marks the 20th anniversary of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway and 2009 has been officially declared "The Year of the Wisconsin Riverway" by Governor Doyle.

Almost a decade of cooperative effort during the late 1970s through the 1980s among citizens, environmental groups, politicians and the Department of Natural Resources resulted in a law establishing the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (LWSR) and the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board on August 9, 1989.

The Riverway Board, appointed by the governor and composed of one member from each of six counties with land abutting the river and three at-large members who represent recreational user groups, is an independent state agency and unique to government. It's responsible for administering a system of regulations to minimize the visual impact of activities when viewed from the Wisconsin River during leaf-on conditions. The aim is to preserve a more wild view and more relaxing experience on the river.

Landowners, including the Department of Natural Resources, must obtain a permit from the Board before building a house, modifying an existing structure or harvesting timber in the Riverway. Other activities are banned by Riverway law, such as

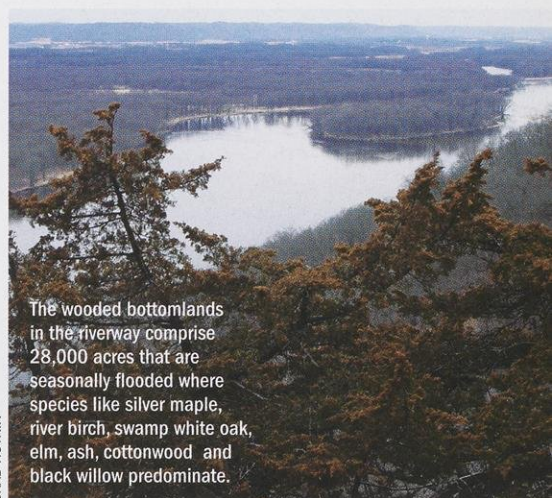
using glass containers on the river, to minimize the footprint of river visitors on other users and the daily lives of Riverway residents.

### Flowing through time

The Wisconsin was born, along with most of the state's major rivers, over two million centuries ago when ancient seas permanently drained the upper Midwest. During the millennia preceding glaciers, rivers and their branches slowly, relentlessly wore down through layers of sandstone and limestone, leaving Wisconsin covered with prehistoric hills and wide, deep, steep-sided valleys.

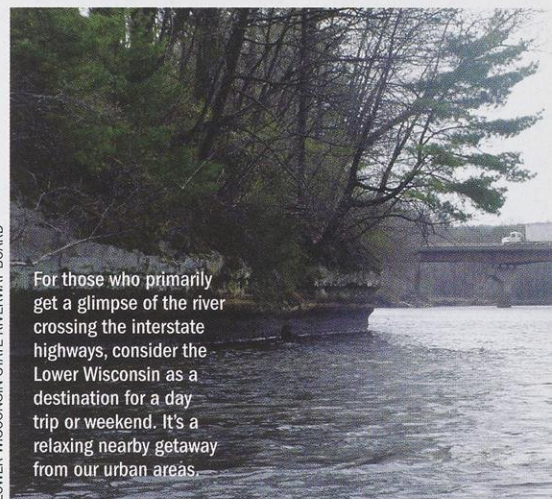
Beginning about a million years ago, the glaciers ground, gouged and crunched over the state at least four times, leveling most hills and plugging river beds. Sand and gravel outwash half-filled the ancient valley of what's now the Lower Wisconsin River from bluff to bluff along a 92.3-mile stretch running from the Prairie du Sac Dam to its confluence with the Mississippi River.

Today, the Lower Wisconsin still restlessly flows toward the sea through the center of that valley, cutting through and removing sand left by the melting glaciers. If you stood in the river's midstream and looked bluffward, you could see the one-time rim of the ancient valley and, if you had a



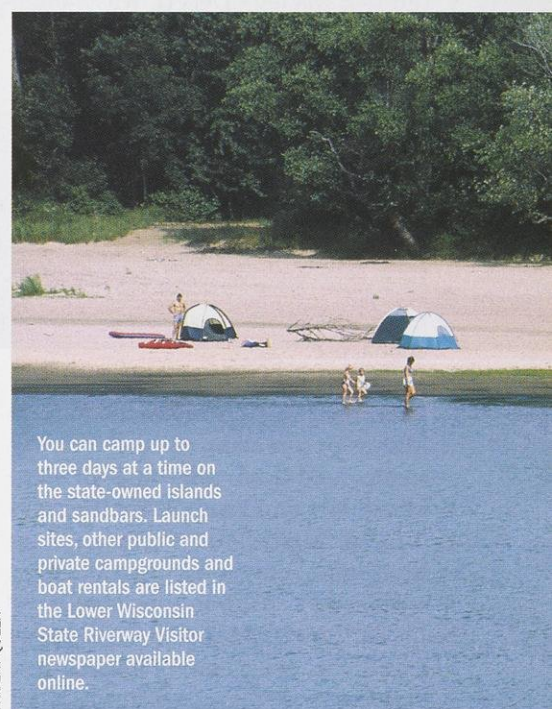
The wooded bottomlands in the riverway comprise 28,000 acres that are seasonally flooded where species like silver maple, river birch, swamp white oak, elm, ash, cottonwood and black willow predominate.

BRAD HUTNIK



For those who primarily get a glimpse of the river crossing the interstate highways, consider the Lower Wisconsin as a destination for a day trip or weekend. It's a relaxing nearby getaway from our urban areas.

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD



You can camp up to three days at a time on the state-owned islands and sandbars. Launch sites, other public and private campgrounds and boat rentals are listed in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Visitor newspaper available online.

ROBERT QUEEN



The riverway encompasses 79,275 acres of which about 44,000 acres are in state ownership. These lands are divided into 26 management units to sustain wildlife, fisheries, forests and public recreation. Partnerships with the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board, private landowners and river users also aim to preserve gorgeous vistas like this in perpetuity.

pole long enough, you might push it down through 150 feet of sand and gravel to touch the old valley floor.

Before the 20th century, the entire Wisconsin River, born in Vilas County where a little spring-fed creek sneaks out of Lac Vieux Desert, was a main artery of discovery and water transportation for Indians, explorers, fur traders, missionaries and later lumbermen. Now, the northern and central portions of the Wisconsin River have been harnessed for hydroelectric power, replete with dams to generate the power to run paper mills and utilities and minimize flooding. Impoundments also cater to intensive recreational use.

Yet below Prairie du Sac, the Lower Wisconsin flows freely to the mighty Mississippi, in many places seemingly unchanged from the days of Pere Marquette and Louis Joliet. It offers unique, high quality recreation in hunting, fishing, boating, canoeing, swimming and nature appreciation.

The Lower Wisconsin Riverway is located almost entirely within the state's Driftless Area — untouched, yet influ-

enced, by the last glacial epoch 12,000 years ago — and its valley dominates local topography. It is wide and dotted with sandbars during the summer.

Bordering the river are floodplains — side running sloughs dug out by high water; landlocked ponds and oxbows, mucky with silt and rich in plant life; wide marshland expanses and wildlife havens.

Farther inland lie bottomland forests with water-loving trees such as soft maple, river birch, swamp white oak, white and green ash, hackberry and cottonwood. Still farther back, past a wide expanse of dry, sandy prairie and dominating the skyscape loom the bluffs. Their foothills mark the river's prehistoric levels.

Bands of yellowish sandstone, greenish-white limestone and orange lichens on the exposed rocky outcrops reflect sunlight and remind one of medieval towers guarding the river's flanks. The bluffs gradually become higher as you approach the Mississippi, often rising 300 to 500 feet above the river valley.

All this beauty and yes, solitude, is

situated within a few hours of Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago.

"It's hard to imagine that this beautiful resource lies within a half-day drive of more than 15 million people," said Dave Gjestson, now retired, the first (and only) full-time Riverway Coordinator for the Department of Natural Resources.

The Lower Wisconsin is a fragile resource, a delicate blend of water and geology, plants, animals and distinct seasons with only limited ability to accommodate man's intrusions. "...to cherish we must see and fondle," warned Aldo Leopold, "and when enough have seen and fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish."

The Riverway is viewed by many of the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors (more than 415,000 in the last recreational user study back in 1982) as an escape from the monotony of daily routine, a chance to immerse themselves in a scenic riverway seemingly untouched by man's hand.

"The Riverway law insures that the natural aesthetics of the (Lower) Wisconsin

sin River will be protected in perpetuity despite its location," added Gjestson.

### Formation of the Riverway

Area residents and DNR's predecessor, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission (WCC), long recognized the Lower Wisconsin Riverway's value as a natural and scenic resource. Public and state efforts to preserve it originate back to January 1939, when the WCC and the old State Planning Board proposed designating the river basin as a parkway.

Federal studies from 1975-9 culminated in a recommendation from the U.S. Department of Interior to include the Lower Wisconsin as a National Wild and Scenic River.

Many residents, visitors, public servants and politicians had goals to protect the river corridor, starting with Wisconsin congressman Robert Kastemeier, who conducted a public meeting in October 1979, at Spring Green on his bill to designate the Lower Wisconsin as a Federal Wild River.

DNR Secretary Tony Earl formed an advisory group of citizens interested in the Lower Wisconsin during March 1980, to aid in developing a master plan. The agency subsequently held more than 40 meetings at municipalities along the river corridor to discuss the proposed plan. But it was not enough.

River basin landowners and area residents objected to many parts of the master plan and on August 31, 1982, DNR's Bureau of Environmental Impact decided that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was needed for any management plan covering the Lower Wisconsin. A new DNR Planning Task Force was appointed in October 1982, lead by planner David Aslakson to formulate an EIS.

Shortly thereafter, a 34-member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) formed to provide local perspective, and ensure that local concerns and problems would be heard by DNR planners and addressed in the plan.

That group, in conjunction with the DNR Planning Task Force, convened for more than five years, meeting up and down the breadth of the river corridor, gathering comments, suggestions and observations from every

county, town, village and regional planning commission. The Department of Natural Resources began drafting an EIS, aerial surveys of recreational use on the river were conducted by the University of Wisconsin and all manner of observations and comments from the public and elected representatives were pursued.

"The CAC was essential," according to State Sen. (then State Rep.) Dale

Schultz. "We enabled the region's leaders to have essential input that ended years of stalemate and led to the successful proposal to create the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway and Riverway Board."

Sen. Schultz described the Riverway Board as an "important aspect" of the legislative package. It was "crafted in a manner to assure local control was retained to the greatest extent possible



FRIENDS OF THE LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER

Volunteer groups promote river recreation and help out in emergencies. The Friends of the Lower Wisconsin River were among those who lent a hand during extensive flooding in 2008.



GREGORY K. MATTHEWS

DNR staff survey a backwater slough to identify and estimate the populations of rare and threatened fish species that inhabit the riverway.



Riverway regulations ensure that over time a wild feel and look will be maintained along the Lower Wisconsin during leaf-on seasons.

LOWER WISCONSIN STATE RIVERWAY BOARD

to administer scenic protection regulations" and also continues to give citizens an opportunity to discuss Riverway issues in a public forum on a monthly basis.

### Controversies worked out along the Riverway

Controversies "were built-in during the early Riverway program," pointed out Gjestson: A group called Private Landowners of Wisconsin (PLOW) challenged the constitutionality of the new Riverway law; naturists at Mazomanie Beach drew enforcement attention; horse riding organizations were angry about a lack of Riverway trails; illegal ATV use was tearing-up sensitive areas; some town boards were upset about roads and boat access sites; and a few politicians still were skeptical about the new project.

"I relied on past management experience and DNR's citizen participation guidelines backed by excellent support from supervisors and our legal team," said Gjestson. "We tackled each problem through a solid public meeting process that eventually resolved most issues within a few years," said Gjestson.

Now a part of modern Lower Wisconsin River lore was a gathering in 1994 at the Riverway's Muscoda headquarters to mark the project's fifth anniversary. About 75 PLOW mem-

bers attended carrying a flag-draped coffin within which a copy of the U.S. Constitution symbolized the alleged stripping of their property rights by the Riverway law.

When Riverway Board Executive Director Mark Cupp and Gjestson recognized State Sen. Richard (Dick) Kreul for his efforts in creating the Riverway and requested he offer a few remarks, all the PLOW members stood up, turned around, and faced the back of the room. Whereupon the senator thanked the group "for showing us your best side!"

### Lots to do with few resources

"The state lands management end of my responsibilities was very enjoyable and satisfying," noted Gjestson. "Litter pick-up, boundary posting and fencing, boat access maintenance, erosion control, trail mowing and user survey's were some of the chores," all done with a skeleton crew, even under the best of circumstances.

Since Gjestson left his Riverway post in January, 1996, there has not been a full-time equivalent position as Riverway coordinator, though forester Brad Hutnik and a property manager also had responsibilities for public lands outside of the river corridor.

"I had persistent problems with vehicles, especially ATVs, operating in unauthorized areas (sensitive, protect-

ed habitats), along with attendant issues of dumping trash on public land," pointed out Steve Colden, who retired last year as Riverway property manager, a position now filled on a temporary assignment.

DNR staff and volunteers like the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin periodically fill 20-yard dumpsters with trash left on Riverway properties, including couches, tires, appliances, televisions and drywall.

The Riverway, with its wide range of natural resources and expansive area, has its share of user conflicts, especially among those who want to hunt, fish and hike without encountering unauthorized vehicle traffic, according to Colden.

"If the trend continues that people recreate closer to home, those conflicts may intensify and stress our limited resources and manpower in the Riverway," Colden said.

### Challenges and the future

Mark Cupp, executive director of the LWSR since the project's inception, described the past 20 years as a "rare opportunity to build a state agency from pencils and desks to policies and procedures and to watch the fledgling agency mature" into a viable regulatory entity in the river valley.

"The unique and innovative aesthetic protections have become an accepted part of living and doing business in the valley. While there is not universal support for land use regulations, generally speaking, landowners and local residents understand the purpose of the standards and have adapted to the new regulatory landscape." Cupp said the regulations maintain a wild feel and a sense of getting away by limiting what can be seen from the river.

He noted the success of the LWSR has been based on the cooperation of neighboring landowners and commitment of the Riverway Board's citizen members. "Without their dedication, through both turbulent and smooth waters, the project would not have achieved the stature it now enjoys," Cupp said.

*Continued on page 28 →*

## COMMENT ON A STORY?

Send your letters to: Readers Write, WNR magazine, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707 or e-mail letters to david.sperling@wisconsin.gov. All letters must contain the writer's name and address. Only your name and community will be printed. Letters must address issues raised in the magazine and may be edited for length.

wind, the goat-prairie steepness, the realization that when I thought I'd reached the top, I still had half the bluff to climb! Every time I head up or down US Highway 61 in the beautiful Hiawatha Valley, or drive up Highway 35 to Trempealeau, I remember that glorious day in Perrot State Park.

Carol Gainer  
Holmen

## AVIAN ABUNDANCE

I read with interest your article on backyard birds ("Creature Comforts," December 2008). I lived in Wisconsin my whole life until moving to north central Texas in 2004, after retirement. I live in the country and checked my backyard after reading the article. That day I saw a Cooper's hawk, red-tailed hawk, mourning

dove, Eurasian collared dove, blue jay, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, Carolina wren, bluebird, cardinal, meadowlark, grackle, robin, cedar waxwing, goldfinch, the ever-present vulture and even a road runner. Ground nesting birds are fairly rare because of fire ants.

Dennis Harlander  
Purdon, Texas

## EATING RUSTY CRAYFISH

In February, you printed a letter about trapping rusty crayfish. I have a related question. While I lived in Howard in the 1950s, a

favorite snack in the area was "fresh bay crabs" (native crayfish). Many taverns and restaurants served them boiled or refrigerated after cooking. My brother-in-law used to get a license to go "crabbing" in Green Bay, and there was always a good market for his catch. Fishermen tell me almost all the native crayfish are gone from the lower Green Bay area.

Has anyone determined if rusty crayfish are as edible and tasty as the old Green Bay "crabs"? They were just boiled in salt water and dill weed until red and then served that way. If the flavor is the same, maybe making people aware would encourage more people to find instructions for trapping them and making a dent in the population of this unwanted species.

Robert Daun  
Madison

**DNR conservation warden staff replies:** Rusty crayfish can be caught (fishing or small game license required), and they are good to eat, though their tails are much smaller than the native crayfish and there is not a lot of meat in each one.

Read up before you start to harvest and make sure you have reviewed the regulations. See page 16 of the Guide to Wisconsin Sparing, Netting and Bait Harvest Regulations 2009-10, available online at [dnr.wi.gov/fish/regulations/2009/documents/SpearNet0910.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/regulations/2009/documents/SpearNet0910.pdf)

Also review rules found in NR 19.27 that prohibit possession of live crayfish on any inland waters unless the person is removing the crayfish from that water and is not releasing them or introducing them elsewhere. Crayfish also may not be used as bait. (There are some specific exemptions for the Mississippi River.) It is also illegal to place, deposit, throw or otherwise introduce live crayfish into any waters of the state unless a permit authorizing introduction has been issued by the department.

## REMEMBERING BRADY'S BLUFF

What a pleasure it was to view the back cover of your February issue and see the exact same spot on Brady's Bluff where I stood in spring 1952! I was nine years old and on a hike with my father (since deceased) and mother, now 93 years old. I remember every detail of that day as though it were yesterday — the spring

## UPDATE

## The bull that crawls on its belly

Our thanks to readers and other citizen scientists who have sent in detailed reports and photos of their sightings of bullsnakes in Wisconsin.

Since we first asked for your help ("More bluff than bite," April 2007) 43 reports of bullsnakes were submitted in 2007 (14 confirmed as bullsnakes) and another 40 sightings were reported in 2008 (24 confirmed as bullsnakes). These reports from the public are critical to increasing our knowledge of the range and distribution of this rare snake in Wisconsin. In fact, citizen reports comprised almost half (46 percent) of the 83 sightings we received in the last two years.

During the last two years, the greatest number of bullsnakes was seen in Dane, Monroe and Sauk counties and we had our first report from Trempealeau County. Please continue reporting your sightings online at [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/herps/snakes/bullsnake2.htm](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/herps/snakes/bullsnake2.htm). Make sure to include the date and county, township, range and section of each sighting. GPS coordinates and the names of nearest roads are especially helpful. Also record the weather, time of day and temperature for each sighting. It's also very important to include close-up photos of bullsnakes as the western foxsnake (*Pantherophis vulpinus*) and eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platirhines*) are most often mistaken for bullsnakes. Please include your

name, phone number and e-mail address with each report so a herpetologist can follow up and contact you for further information since each sighting is so rare.

Bullsnares (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*) are big and brawny, often exceeding 74 inches in length. But they are harmless constrictors that prey on rodents. They have

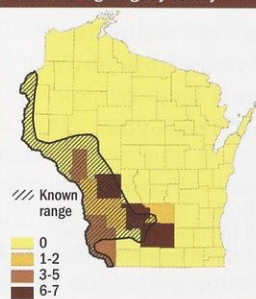
thus far been seen in prairie, grasslands, savannas and open bluffs along the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers. The bullsnake is considered a protected Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Wisconsin and is also rarely found in Iowa and Minnesota.

To refresh your memory about bullsnakes' appearance, habits and behavior, visit [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/herps/snakes/bullsnake1.htm](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/herps/snakes/bullsnake1.htm) to see photos of this species, photos of similar species that are often confused with bullsnakes, life history information and a map showing the known range of this rare snake.

The sightings you submit are important additions that will help herpetologists form plans to conserve the species. Unfortunately, many harmless snake species have been persecuted by people and the more information we can gather about the bullsnake's life history and range, the better job we can do making decisions about conserving the small populations of these often-maligned animals.

— Joshua M. Kapfer, wildlife biologist with Natural Resources Consulting, Inc. in Cottage Grove, Wis., [jnkapfer@hotmail.com](mailto:jnkapfer@hotmail.com). Or contact DNR Conservation Biologist Rori Paloski, Bureau of Endangered Resources, (608) 264-6040, [rori.paloski@wisconsin.gov](mailto:rori.paloski@wisconsin.gov).

Intensity of confirmed 2007-08 Bullsnares sightings by county



JOSHUA M. KAPFER

## Peaceful passage Continued from page 26



River recreation is home to fun events like a giant pumpkin paddle that encourage people to explore and enjoy the Lower Wisconsin River.

FRIENDS OF THE LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER


He listed other challenges to resolve during the next 20 years and beyond:

- **Forest fragmentation** – As large blocks of land are parceled into smaller units, cohesive management becomes more difficult, especially if neighboring landowners don't share the same objectives.
- **Invasive species** – A number of non-native species are already in the Riverway or are likely to be present soon and discussion on where to best spend limited financial resources and manpower is needed.
- **Climate change** – A transition in species composition for some habitats is likely and special management efforts may be necessary to assure retention of existing species.
- **River hydrology** – After a century of harnessing the river upstream, there appear to be changes in species found in the bottomlands. Studying methods to replicate flood events and other natural occurrences that preceded dam construction should continue and strategies pursued to maintain the mix of native species found in the river bottoms.
- **Biofuels** – Increasing conversion of set-aside lands to production agriculture to grow more crops and use of timber residue for fuel or electricity could have adverse consequences on the Driftless Area's fragile soils unless proper conservation measures are in place.
- **Recreation** – User numbers and con-

flicts should be closely monitored and efforts should be made to ensure all recreationists are instilled with "riverway ethics." A new study of user numbers should be undertaken and an assessment of user impacts on resources conducted to determine if limits on user numbers ought to be considered.

- **Landowner education** – Outreach by state and local government should ensure landowners obtain the skills necessary to make proper management decisions.

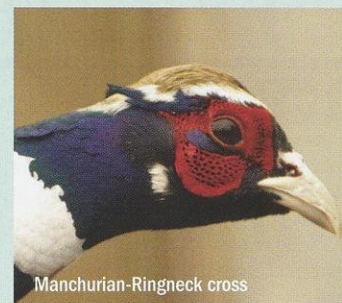
Despite these challenges, Cupp emphasized that "the value of the Riverway project grows with each passing year. The true value protecting this valley will be evident years from now when future generations have the chance to paddle this water, hike the bluffs and appreciate the majesty and beauty of the river, the islands, the towering bluffs, the wooded hills and the mysterious bottomlands in the same manner that we enjoy this spectacular resource today.

"The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway remains a magical place and through the combined efforts of the many stakeholders, we can assure that some day 50 or 100 years from now, someone will stand on a sandbar, look around in awe and say, 'Thank you.'" 

*Gregory K. Matthews is public affairs manager for DNR's South Central Region including all of the counties through which the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway flows and was a member of the Riverway Planning Task Force.*

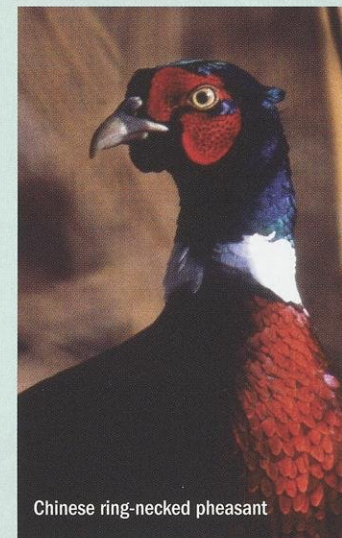
## Readers Write

*Continued from page 27*



Manchurian-Ringneck cross

MACFARLANE PHEASANTS, INC.



Chinese ring-necked pheasant

STEPHEN J. LANG

### MANCHURIAN PHEASANTS

I live in Winnebago County in the town of Nekimi in a pretty good pheasant location. I really enjoyed your article ("Raising ring-necks and outdoor opportunities," February 2009) and it brought back a question. Last spring a young man and his father from the Waupun area came to purchase my truck. After I told the father how many pheasants we had calling from "their areas" he explained something to me. He said he had long been on a team with a program to bring back pheasants in the area. In fact, he said, we probably don't have any "native" birds left in the area. He explained that all the birds they had planted were a "Manchurian" breed, which has the little white stripes on their heads. In fact, we have watched now and indeed most all have these little white stripes on the head. However, we have seen at least one without the stripes. Could we have native birds here still surviving? Is there a way to tell differences on the hens?

Dennis King  
Nekimi

## Hunting a woodland curative

**Game Farm Director Bob Nack replies:** The DNR participated in releasing Manchurian pheasants from the Jilin Province in China in the early 1990s. Both the Manchurian strain and the Chinese Ringneck strain we currently release can have white stripes on the head above the eye. The Manchurian pheasants will have a small tear-shaped white spot below the eye. A Manchurian-Ringneck cross can also be purchased from some game farms in Wisconsin. Often, but not always, these birds will have the white spot under the eye. The white stripes on the head alone are not useful in determining the difference between a Manchurian-Ringneck cross and our native ringnecks. If you have good pheasant habitat, odds are that you have native pheasants on the property.

### WISCONSIN RIVER STURGEON

I was fishing in late March and caught and released a small sturgeon on the Wisconsin River, south of Mosinee. We launched off of Beans Eddy. I had caught four large catfish and numerous small walleye and expected to find another catfish on the end of my line when I pulled up the small sturgeon, about two feet long. I had no idea that there were sturgeon in the Wisconsin River. Another boater near us said some anglers caught a number of sturgeon the previous day. It really made my day!

Cathy Rohloff  
Mosinee

DNR has an active program to restore lake sturgeon to their traditional range including a stocking/recovery program midstate on the Wisconsin River. It's one of six major sturgeon rehabilitation projects underway as we reported in our February 2009 story, "A strong base for broad recovery." It sounds like you had a great day of fishing!

### ADDITION

Cowbird trapping, mentioned in our April issue as an important means of reducing parasitism of Kirtland's warbler nests, was conducted by the Wildlife Services program of the USDA Animal Plant Inspection Service at the Adams County nest sites.

Also, the image on pg. 24 of a field trip to warbler nests was taken by Joel A. Trick.

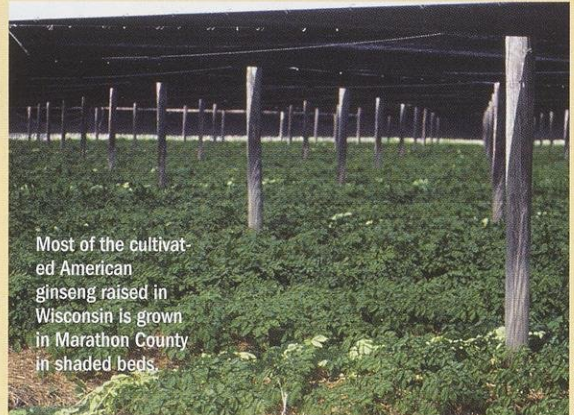
The curious-looking gnarled root is the object of every wild ginseng hunter's search: the root purportedly packs a wallop when it comes to curbing illnesses and increasing strength and vigor. It's medicinal uses include formulations that are marketed for improving eyesight, prolonging life, improving brain function, promoting fertility, curing impotency, lowering blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and reducing stress. Among the many ways to ingest the herb are eating raw roots, in teas, in tinctures where finely grated roots are covered with alcohol and water, in powders, pills, extracts, capsules, tablets, toothpaste, soft drinks, candy, chewing gum and even in cigarettes!

To grow successfully, ginseng plants require 70-90 percent shade with 35-50 inches of annual precipitation in a loamy, well-drained soil. Though wild ginseng grows from Canada south to Florida and from Maine west to Oklahoma, it is a rare find and the ginseng trade is strictly regulated under an international treaty, federal import/export laws, state harvest restrictions, and certification and licensing requirements. Ginseng is also commercially grown and, given our ideal growing conditions in Wisconsin, more than 90 percent of the American-grown ginseng is raised in Wisconsin by fewer than 180 registered growers. This cultivated ginseng is grown in raised beds in fields with special shading, primarily in Marathon County. If it is planted in beds in the woods where trees provide a natural canopy of shade, it is referred to as "woods-grown" ginseng. The bulk of the exports are sold to Asian markets, particularly in China, Taiwan and Korea.

Wisconsin permits the harvest of wild ginseng under strict rules designed to preserve this slow-growing, long-lived plant. Wild ginseng doesn't mature quickly and only produces a few seeds a year once it reaches four to five years old. The unharvested plants frequently live 30 years or more, and the roots grow exceedingly slowly. Other woodland threats also take a toll on ginseng. It is eaten by deer, wild turkeys and rodents that feed on the plants, fruits and seeds. The plant is susceptible to both dry and wet growing conditions. Invasive species like garlic mustard, buckthorn and honeysuckle can also shade out young ginseng. Fragmentation

of forests by houses, roads and other developments leaves less quality forest habitat for ginseng.

"To sustain wild ginseng's long-term survival, it's critical that plants be harvested only after they have matured and had the opportunity to set seed for several years," says Kelly Kearns, who directs DNR's Plant Conservation Program for the Bureau of Endangered Resources. "They may only be harvested by licensed har-



Most of the cultivated American ginseng raised in Wisconsin is grown in Marathon County in shaded beds.

ROBERT QUEEN

vesters, during the fall harvest season, and only if the plants have at least three leaves and a flowering stalk. Harvesters need to plant any seeds found on the plants to ensure more ginseng can grow in the future."

In Wisconsin, wild ginseng harvest is prohibited on all federal lands, state lands and most public lands. You must have permission to dig ginseng from private lands. Unless you are collecting on land that you own, all harvesters need a license and roots can only be sold to licensed wild Wisconsin Ginseng Dealers. Wild ginseng can only be harvested from September 1-November 1. Regulations, harvesting rules and tips to sustain ginseng are available from DNR stations and two fine brochures can be downloaded online. *Wild Ginseng: Regulations and Guidelines for Sustainable Harvest* is available at [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/laws/pdfs/ginseng\\_regs2001.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/laws/pdfs/ginseng_regs2001.pdf). *Good Stewardship Harvesting of Wild American Ginseng* in Wisconsin is available at [ahpa.org/portals/0/pdfs/Wisconsin.pdf](http://ahpa.org/portals/0/pdfs/Wisconsin.pdf).

For those who would just enjoy seeing this plant, keep your eyes peeled for the compound leaved plant with a small cluster of white flowers that later glows with bright, shiny berries.

Daniel J. Dictus writes from Combined Locks.

# Comforts

Natasha Kassulke



Red Admiral

## Where fliers tune in for a landing



ROBERT QUIJEN

Butterflies are closely tied to the plants they use for food, shelter and as a nursery. You can garden to attract species you'd like to see fluttering nearby.

If you plant parsley, fennel, carrots or dill, you may start seeing black swallowtails swooping in. Plant snapdragons, and you'll increase your chances of attracting the common buckeye. Once butterflies move into your yard, you can observe their behavior, take photos and even post your sightings online.

Creating a butterfly garden is simple. You will need:

- A sunny location – pick a spot that gets at least six hours of sun per day
- Plants that are good sources of nectar
- Food plants for caterpillars
- Shelter and resting spots – large flat rocks that provide a warm basking spot
- Moisture – a small moist area with a depression that collects water or you can keep watered
- Puddles where they can take in dissolved minerals from shallow, still waters

Butterflies also are very nearsighted and are more attracted to large stands of a particular flower than to single blossoms. Avoid using insecticides and herbicides in or near your butterfly garden. Here are some suggested plants that butterflies prefer for larval foods and nectaring foods for adults:

### Common buckeye

*Larval food plant:* snapdragon  
*Nectar:* aster, milkweed, chicory, coreopsis

### Comma

*Larval food plant:* nettle, elm  
*Nectar:* rotting fruit and sap, butterfly bush, dandelion

### Great swallowtail

*Larval food plant:* citrus trees, prickly ash  
*Nectar:* lantana, milkweed, lilac, goldenrod, azalea

### Great spangled fritillary

*Larval food plant:* violet  
*Nectar:* ironweed, milkweed, black-eyed susan, verbena

### Monarch

*Larval food plant:* milkweed  
*Nectar:* milkweed, butterfly bush, goldenrod, thistle, ironweed, mints

### Mourning cloak

*Larval food plant:* willow, elm, poplar, aspen, birch, hackberry

*Nectar:* rotting fruit and sap, butterfly bush, milkweed, shasta daisy

### Red admiral

*Larval food plant:* nettle  
*Nectar:* rotting fruit and sap, daisy, aster, goldenrod, butterfly bush, milkweed

### Tiger swallowtail

*Larval food plant:* cherry, ash, birch, tulip tree, lilac

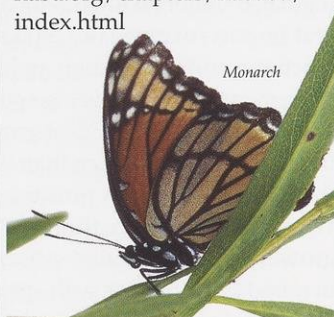
*Nectar:* butterfly bush, milkweed, phlox, lilac, ironweed

### Viceroy

*Larval food plant:* willow, poplar, apple

*Nectar:* rotting fruit and sap, aster, goldenrod, milkweed

You can share your butterfly sightings at [wisconsinbutterflies.org](http://wisconsinbutterflies.org). For more information about butterflies in Wisconsin visit the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association at [naba.org/chapters/nababa/index.html](http://naba.org/chapters/nababa/index.html)



AL CORNELL

## POOCHES SUFFER FROM SPRING ALLERGIES

Do you think you are the only one with an itchy nose and watery eyes? For pets with allergies, spring is no picnic either. Atopy or canine atopic dermatitis is the second most common form of skin allergy in dogs after flea allergy dermatitis. It occurs when hypersensitive dogs come into contact with common allergens in the environment, resulting in skin inflammation and itching that usually recurs seasonally. Dogs with allergies may show the following symptoms:

- chewing feet
- rubbing their face on the carpet
- scratching their body
- recurrent ear infections
- hair loss
- sores from constant scratching and licking

Managing pet allergies can be difficult and may require lifelong therapy. Treatment depends on the animal's sensitivity and length of the allergy season. Avoiding the offending allergen is the most effective control but may be impractical or impossible. Other treatments include anti-inflammatory drugs, antibiotics or antifungals for skin infections, shampoos and immunotherapy (injecting small doses of an allergen extract so your pet's immune system becomes less reactive to the problem allergens).

## SCAREDY DOG

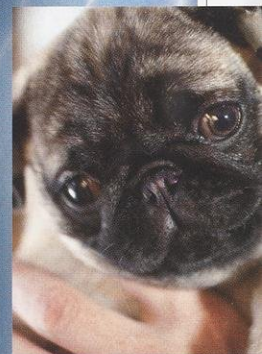
Your dog Thor might think he is a god, until the thunder roars. Then he cowers under the bed, trembling, drooling and hiding from an unseen danger. Thunderstorm phobia is a common behavioral problem for dogs.

The *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association* cites several breeds that may be predisposed to a fear of storms. These include herding dogs such as collies and German shepherds, and hounds such as beagles and basset hounds. The study also suggests a fear of storms is common in sporting and working breeds.

To help a dog that may be afraid of thunder, try the following:

- Turn the radio or TV up loudly to help drown out the sound.
- Provide a safe place and encourage your dog to go there in a storm. Do not use a closed crate, though, because a scared dog could hurt itself trying to escape.
- Distract your dog by playing with it.
- Desensitize your dog by playing a recorded sound of thunder. Start out soft and increase the volume slowly over time.
- Reward your dog when it exhibits calm behavior.

You may need to talk to a veterinarian. A prescription sedative could be necessary in severe phobia cases.



STEVE APPS



Great Spangled Fritillary

RICH PHALIN

Natasha Kassulke

## On track and on a roll

Traveler is hot on the trail to a good time as **National Trails Day**, sponsored by the American Hiking Society on June 6, offers a taste of the trails — wooded or watery — awaiting us year-round. This year's theme is "Take in the Outdoors."

And there are trails so everyone can enjoy the outdoors. Wisconsin state parks, forests and trails also offer more than 650 miles of trails that are accessible to wheelchair users and others with mobility impairments. Visit: [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/parks/access/actrails.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/parks/access/actrails.html).

Looking for a faster pace? Celebrate National Trails Day by showing off your fleet-of-foot form on June 6. Join the **Blue Mound Trail Run**, a challenging 15-K or 6-K run on Blue Mound State Park ski and bike trails. Call (608) 437-5711 or visit [wisconsintrailruns.com](http://wisconsintrailruns.com). If you are feeling extra strong, return to Blue Mound State Park for the **Horribly Hilly Hundreds Bicycle Challenge Ride** on June 20. Weave in and out of valleys untouched by glacial activity. Two challenging options of 100 and 200 kilometers await bicyclers. Call (608) 437-HURT (4878).

If you like a bit of well-lit surf with your turf, perhaps maritime trails are more to your liking. Take a self-guided **Door County Mainland Lighthouse Walk** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 13-14. Sites include: U.S. Coast Guard Canal Station and North Pierhead, Sturgeon Bay; Sherwood Point, Sturgeon Bay; Cana Island, Baileys Harbor;

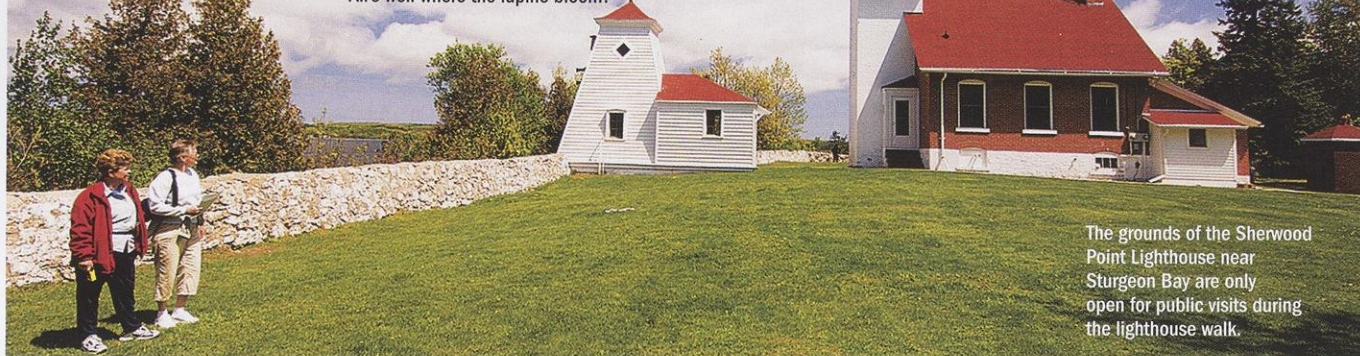
Range Lights, Baileys Harbor; and Eagle Bluff, Peninsula State Park, Fish Creek. Tickets (good for both days) are \$15 or \$5 for children ages 5 to 17. Visit the Door County Maritime Museum website at [dcm.museum.org](http://dcm.museum.org) for details.

Bike or hike and fall in love with lupines on June 13 as they bloom along trails in Mercer. **Lupine Junefest** runs 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and features music, kids' games, chalk art contest, nature displays, photography contest, a kids' scavenger hike, art/craft show and antique car/motorcycle/truck show. Visit [mercerc.com](http://mercerc.com) or call (715) 476-2389.



USDA APHIS PPQ ARCHIVE

All's well where the lupine bloom!



The grounds of the Sherwood Point Lighthouse near Sturgeon Bay are only open for public visits during the lighthouse walk.

## The 12 Hours at John Muir Challenge takes

place in La Grange near Whitewater on June 13. The event is part of the Wisconsin Endurance Mountain Bike Series sponsored by the Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycling Association and features bike relay and solo events. Funds raised are used to develop new trails and maintain trails already in use. Visit [wemseries.com](http://wemseries.com) or call (414) 339-4781.

Walk a trail of trash and treasure during **Wisconsin's Longest Garage Sale** in Price County June 18-20 along Highway 13 from Ogema in southern Price County to Park Falls in the north and beyond. Visit [pricecountywi.net](http://pricecountywi.net) or call (715) 767-5445.

Or indulge your infatuation with inflatables with more than 5,000 other tubing travelers bobbing down the Chippewa River during the **Frenchtown Annual Float and Regatta** on June 21 in Chippewa Falls. Tubes are available for rent. For more information e-mail [loopy@723loop.com](mailto:loopy@723loop.com) or call (715) 723-5667.



Celebrate the summer solstice and Father's Day with a float down the Chippewa River.

Then it's time to trade in your Wi-Fi

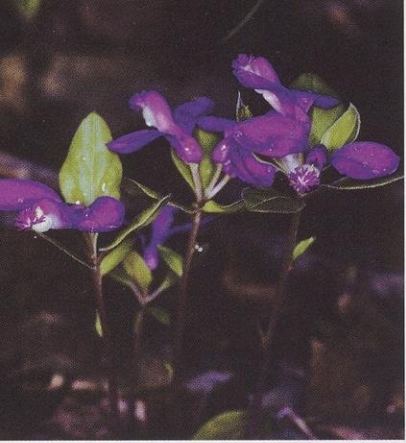
and computer for a wood handle Pulaski and a chainsaw. Attend **Ice Age Trail University** June 24-28 at the UW-Baraboo campus to take a lesson from the School of Hard Knots! Learn about the Ice Age Trail mobile skills crew and opportunities to spend quality time outdoors while honing trail building skills. Camping is offered onsite. Visit [iceagetrail.org](http://iceagetrail.org) or register at [tr.im/iYs0](http://tr.im/iYs0)

Pick your mode of trail travel during **Florence County Trail Days** on June 27. Guided tours are offered on ATVs, auto waterfall tours, hikes, paddles, horseback riding and bike trails. Visit [florencewisconsin.com](http://florencewisconsin.com) or call (888) 889-0049.

Wrap up your summer trails tour with a candlelight hike at **Kohler-Andrae State Park** in Sheboygan on July 18 from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. Hike along the beach and wander the sand dunes along a tiki torch-lit trail. Call (920) 451-4080.

COURTESY OF CHIPPEWA FALLS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

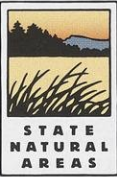
LEN VILLANO PHOTOGRAPHY



## Wisconsin, naturally

### CATHEDRAL PINES STATE NATURAL AREA

**Notable:** One of the finest old-growth conifer stands in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, dominated by hemlock and super-canopy red and white pines. The old-growth patches are imbedded in a larger matrix of small kettle lakes, ephemeral ponds, bogs, and upland mesic forest composed of sugar maple, yellow birch, white ash, basswood, paper birch and American beech. Common groundlayer species include intermediate wood fern, blue-bead lily, club-mosses, partridge berry and fringed polygala. The pines support an active great blue heron rookery.



#### How to get there:

To reach the Cathedral Pines hiking trail, which loops through a block of old-growth conifer forest: from the junction of State Highway 32 and County Highway F in Lakewood, Oconto County, go north on 32 one mile to Archibald Lake Road (FR 2121); then south 1.5 miles to Cathedral Lane; then north 0.3 mile to the Cathedral Pines parking area. Hwy. 32 and town roads offer access to other portions of the site. See [dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna/sna496.htm](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna/sna496.htm) for more information.

