

Enter Orchis

News from Faville Grove Sanctuary

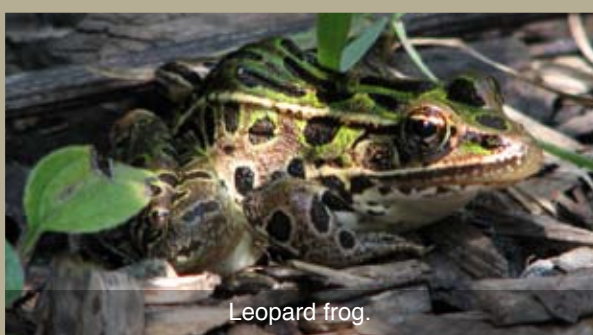
Madison Audubon Society

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May work parties and summer schedule

Our Saturday work party that was scheduled for April 25 had to be cancelled due to thunderstorms, but, weather permitting, we'll meet again this Saturday, May 9, and again on Saturday, May 23. Wednesday morning work parties will continue through May as well. All events meet at 9:00 a.m. at the sanctuary sign on [Prairie Lane \(click for a map\)](#) and continue until about noon. Work activities will depend on conditions, but we're heading into high weed season, so they're likely to involve killing plants!

Our five summer interns begin work the last week in May and will keep us busy every weekday during the summer, so in order to catch our breaths, we will suspend the Saturday work parties until September. But for anyone who would like to pitch in with the interns on occasion and perhaps pick up on a bit of their youthful energy, we will make sure someone meets you at the sanctuary sign on Wednesdays at 9 to show you to the work location. If another weekday time would work better for you, contact Lars by email at favillegrove@live.com or give him a call at 608/220-9563 to make arrangements.



Leopard frog.

New Name/New look/ New web site

We have dropped the old, boring newsletter name, *Faville Grove Sanctuary Volunteer News*, in recognition of the fact that many friends of the sanctuary are not able to get out on the land to volunteer. We appreciate everyone's support in whatever form it manifests, including moral support! We hope you will forward this newsletter to your friends and encourage them to sign up by sending email to Lars at favillegrove@live.com.

The new name, *Enter Orchis*, is intended as an optimistic reprise of a heartbreaking episode in the history of Faville Grove. If you have never read *Exit Orchis*, Aldo Leopold's famous essay written 69 years ago this month as cows were about to be turned out to pasture in the Faville Grove prairie, [click here](#). While orchids are among the most difficult of prairie plants to reestablish, working together, we hope to do just that. We only wish that Leopold and his contemporaries could be here today to see the new direction that things are heading at Faville Grove!

The new look of the newsletter is intended to complement the new Faville Grove Sanctuary web site, which is not quite ready for prime time, but you can have a sneak peak by clicking on www.madisonaudubon.org/favillegrove.

The web site is very much under construction, but one feature that is up and running is the [sanctuary calendar](#). If you just can't seem to remember from one newsletter to the next when that next work party or field trip is, or if you can't make sense of the ramblings on the left side of this page, you might find this feature useful. We'll keep you posted as new features are added to the site.

Many thanks to volunteer Tony Bricko for lending his abundant design and technical skills to the web project, as well as to Brad and Royan Webb and Paul Noeldner for technical support.

Faville Grove Sanctuary loses a friend

Jill Martin, long-time friend and supporter of Madison Audubon and wife of Jerry Martin, died in April following a long illness. While Jill's first loves were quilting and historical preservation, she always supported Jerry's interest in environmental preservation, including his often semi-weekly jaunts from their home in Gurnee, Illinois to Lake Mills to volunteer at Faville Grove Sanctuary. And she shared his spirit of giving.

Jill taught English at the high school and college levels for 30 years. In retirement, she was extremely active with the Warren Township Historical Society, where she served as vice-president. She edited a book titled *Gurnee and Warren Township* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006), gathering more than 200 photographs from the historical society's collection and writing detailed captions. Jill was fascinated by historical and genea-

logical research, and was an expert on the Civil War, volunteering regularly with the Lake County Discovery Museum documenting and preserving Civil War letters. Jill was an avid quilter and established a quilting group. And combining her passions for history and quilting, she collected antique quilts and had expert knowledge of traditional quilting patterns.

Jill and Jerry have donated several properties in Minnesota and northern Wisconsin to the state departments of natural resources. They have also contributed generously to Madison Audubon over the years, assisting with acquisition of land for expansion of both MAS sanctuaries, with acquisition of the house at Faville Grove Sanctuary for its resident ecologist and land steward, and with support for the ecologist position. Jill's generosity, contributions, and dedication were broad reaching and an inspiration to us all.



A Jill Martin original quilt pattern: "Cattywampus", named by Jerry Martin.

Living by the land

“The drama of the sky dance is enacted nightly on hundreds of farms, the owners of which sigh for entertainment, but harbor the illusion that it is to be sought in theaters. They live on the land but not by the land.”

– Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

Even those of us who consider ourselves the most dedicated “outdoor enthusiasts,” “conservationists,” or “nature lovers” find ourselves out of tune with the rhythms and rituals of the land compared with preceding generations. The incessant demands, distractions and comforts of our fast-paced, technological society have drawn us away from our connection to nature. The privileges and conveniences of our time have come at the cost of insulating us from the natural world, shadowing our inherent interconnection with the land. Many of us would be ashamed to admit that we are more familiar with the sequence of television programs on any given night than the sequence of flowering plants in a local prairie. A recent study found that kids today can identify

1000 corporate logos but only 10 native plants and animals. Our daily lives are increasingly out of sync with the natural world around us, to the detriment of the land as well as our quality of life.

And yet, natural events and yearly cycles continue to take place all around. There is at least one annual cycle that never goes unnoticed, even by the least observant. Each April we witness the extraordinary rebirth of our slumbering Wisconsin countryside. The sun rises earlier in the morning sky, buds begin to break, and the singing of birds is unlike anything we’ve heard in months. Spring! The time of year when many living things, including some people, emerge

from hibernation. Even those of us who cherish the solitude, silence, and beauty of the serene winter world begin to grow anxious at the prospect of the shifting seasons. The landscape awakens from the fog of a long dormancy. April fires sweep away the remnants of last year’s growth, rejuvenating the landscape.



Pasque flowers.

Pasque flowers and prairie smoke bloom again, soon to be followed by a parade of brilliant colors and soothing textures, fertilized by the ash of last year’s duff. Chorus frogs, spring peepers, and leopard frogs can be heard serenading each swollen pond and shallow meadow across the land. It’s truly a miraculous season that people and prairie eagerly anticipate.

This season of rebirth marks the real new year in nature’s calendar. Take this

opportunity and make the resolution to become more intimately familiar with your local landscape as we slide into summer. Although we may never part with the many luxuries of our time, it’s critical for us to remain attuned and connected, and to continue to enjoy the rhythms of the natural world. We’ve heard stories of a distant time before the onset of ipods, internet, and satellite television when families would gather in the April twilight and sit on blankets at the edge of a woodlot, eating popcorn as they watch the sky dance of the woodcock before them. Perhaps it’s time to take a lesson from our history and reacquaint ourselves with the natural world around us.

Faville Grove Sanctuary Receives State Wildlife Grant

Good news! We recently received word that Faville Grove Sanctuary will receive \$20,000 in matching funds through the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program, which will go a long way toward helping us to complete our management objectives over the next two years. Our impressive history of achievement certainly helped to strengthen our application and separate our request from the many others submitted. As with earlier grants we have received, we were able to demonstrate healthy volunteer involvement in our projects and leverage funding by pledging in-kind match of future volunteer hours. This means that every hour you volunteer, you are also helping to bring money into the sanctuary. Volunteer hours will continue to be used as in-kind match for the three continuing Landowner Incentives Program (LIP) grants we received for Snapper Prairie, Charles Prairie, and the Lake Mills Ledge Savanna-North, so your volunteer efforts are sure to go a long way, regardless of where in the sanctuary you help out!

The SWG program is designed to provide matching funds for fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need throughout the country. Funding is distributed to states through the federal government and used to implement wildlife management and promote partnership building among conservation groups. (You can find more information on the SWG program by clicking [here](#).)

Applying to the SWG program is a very competitive process, especially in this economic climate, requiring

applicants to match funds and identify how their project will benefit priority conservation opportunity areas and species of greatest conservation need. In fact, Madison Audubon was one of only four non-profit organizations in the state to receive funding, with the remaining 19 grants awarded to DNR projects. This speaks to the distinction of Faville Grove and the value of our sanctuary as a haven for wildlife.

Due in part to our management efforts, Faville Grove is home to many species of greatest conservation need including (but not limited to) the American woodcock, blue-winged teal, eastern meadowlark, bobolink, and 3 species of rare prairie insects.

SWG funding will be used to support summer interns, staff, and contractors who will work on habitat improvements for these species and many others. Specifically, we plan to continue restoring natural gradients between community types within the sanctuary to reestablish habitat corridors, allowing wildlife to move freely across the landscape. With continued management we hope Faville Grove will one day be home to other species in desperate need of habitat such as the red-headed woodpecker, upland sandpiper, Franklin's ground squirrel, and maybe even the greater prairie chicken. We are truly excited with what the future holds for the sanctuary. Join us as we continue restoring the land to create a top-notch refuge for wildlife.



From a drained farm field next to a wall of brush to a wet prairie grading into savanna, putting this landscape back together has required putting together funds from a variety of sources. Before we're done, the Wetland Reserve Program will pay for the hydrologic restoration (bulldozing ditches), the Landowner Incentive Program and Partners for Fish and Wildlife will cover the cost of savanna restoration, and a State Wildlife Grant will assist with restoration of the wet prairie, among other projects. And, of course, your volunteer help is key to it all!

Burn season!

There's nothing like a good burn to quicken the pulse, but when you get a call at work from a neighbor saying that the fire department is fighting a grass fire near your house, it's a bit much. Actually, four fire departments, as it turned out. It is not known how the fire started along [Woodland Road](#), but with a south wind and very low humidity, it eventually burned all the way to Highway 89, from North Shore Road on the west, well into Faville Woods on the east, covering about 60 acres in all. The fire burned within about



Ready—preparing to light the back fire by a full Faville Marsh.

restoration. We hope to do more fall burns in the future on these wet prairies to discourage the willow and other brush that tends to take over wherever springtime wet pockets prevent fire from reaching. It is believed that most fires before European settlement occurred in the fall, often lit by the Native Americans.

Spring burn season began early this year, with hot burns on March 15 and 17 in upland areas of the west



Go—lighting the back fire.

sanctuary. Many days this spring with extremely low humidity made for some very effective burns, even where fuel was sparse in newer seedings or as a result of last summer's flooding. A good burn on Tillotson and Martin prairies top-killed the invading brush except in the wettest areas. With things greening up quickly, we wrapped up the season last Sunday with a burn that we hope killed an infestation of sweet clover in an un-restored area of the sanctuary.



Set—the first test burn.

60 feet of Dave and Roger's place, but we had earlier burned around the house and buildings to reduce the fire hazard there, just in case!

We actually began burning last fall before our November planting when we burned the entire 80-acre Charles Prairie (we planted the south 40). Later in November, we burned 40 acres of the Lower Brandt



From tan to black, just like that—a hot head fire.

Recent sightings at Faville Grove



Burning back the brush under the Tillotson Oak.

Enter Orchis is a collaborative effort by Roger Packard (rpackard@uwalumni.com) and David Musolf (dmusolf@uwalumni.com), volunteer sanctuary managers and Lars Higdon (favillegrove@live.com), restoration ecologist and land steward. It is published sporadically and distributed electronically to friends of Madison Audubon Society's Faville Grove Sanctuary. Please pass it along to anyone you think may be interested. We welcome pictures, articles, and other contributions, as well as comments and address updates. Stop out for a visit soon!