

Natural Heritage Quarterly

*Connecting people with information
and resources to care for their land*

Photo by Thomas Meyer

Plan now for planting later

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Editor's Note

Wisconsin and wildflowers go together. In this edition, we feature the stories of landowners who are bringing beautiful and beneficial blooms back to their land. We pass on tips for introducing more native plants to your own property, for keeping an eye out for new invasive plants and animals, and we provide new informational resources to help you both. Enjoy the read during these waning days of summer.

-Lisa Gaumnitz

For property owners interested in planting more native species on their land to beautify it and benefit wildlife, now is a good time to inventory what you've got and plan for the future.

"People often think about leaving the planning for restoration work to the winter when they have more down time, but you can't see what's growing on the ground in the winter," says Kelly Kearns, a conservation biologist with the Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Conservation program. "Now is a good time to take stock of your property to figure out what you want to keep, what you want to get rid of, and where things are going to work."

That way, you'll be ready to plant in the fall or early spring – the best times to plant because there is ample soil moisture and you can allow nature to prepare the seeds rather than trying to do it yourself artificially.

Kearns, along with fellow native plant experts and conservation biologists Kevin Doyle and Amy Staffen, share key steps and resources to help you plan and prepare for adding more native plants later.



Tim and Linda Eisele's work to restore prairie plants, like wild bergamot, to their Crawford County property attract an eastern tiger swallowtail and bumble bee. Photo by Tim Eisele.

Plan now for planting later (continued from page 1)

1. Take a look at what's on your land now, what you want to keep, and what you want to get rid of. This inventory will provide a good starting point; see "Dig Deeper" for resources to help you.
2. Understand what kind of soils you have. The Natural Resources Conservation Service's [Web Soil Survey](#) can help you get started.
3. Consider wildlife needs when creating the list of plants to include. Providing multiple species in flower throughout the growing season will allow many different animals to use your garden. See "Dig Deeper" for more.
4. Add organic material to your soil to improve water infiltration and allow the roots of your young plants to establish. Generally it is best not to use commercial fertilizer for native plants.
5. Decide whether to use seed or plants. Read what factors to consider and special needs for seeds in "Dig Deeper."
6. For a prairie garden, decide what ratio of grasses to flowering plants, or "forbs," you want. Grasses can establish quickly and become abundant, so plant a greater percentage (by weight of total seed mix) of forbs. In a prairie garden, tall forbs may flop over if not supported within a matrix of grasses. Consider using a cover crop of an annual grain like oats or rye if planting a prairie garden with seed.
7. Consider helping your local waters as well as wildlife by installing a rain garden, basically a miniature wetland in your yard that slows stormwater runoff and filters out chemicals and nutrients that would otherwise run into lakes and rivers. You may find you've already got a natural low spot in your yard for a rain garden when ponding occurs during storms, but even if you don't you can create a shallow basin. Make sure to carefully follow [guidelines for rain garden placement, design and construction](#) or enlist the help of a landscaper to install this most unusual and beautiful type of garden.



Identify the native species on your land with two new web-based informational tools.

For more information, check out these resources:

"The Tallgrass Restoration Handbook for Prairies, Savannas, and Woodlands." Island Press, 2005. Edited by S. Packard and C.F. Mutel.

["Prairie Primer," UW Extension](#)

Our listing of [native plant nurseries](#) and [restoration contractors](#)

Non-profit conservation groups that can teach you more about native plants and natural communities

[Wild Ones](#)

[The Prairie Enthusiasts](#)

[Wisconsin Wetlands Association](#)

Dig deeper

Heeding the call to plan now for planting later is a lot easier with some new informational tools and more information on what factors to consider. Read on to help you get started.

Inventory what's on your land

Two new web-based tools can help you identify the plants on your land.

Flora of Wisconsin

The [Flora of Wisconsin](#) website is a collaborative effort led by the UW-Madison and UW-Stevens Point herbaria. Search by scientific or common name to reach individual species pages with photos, maps, descriptions and other information. Or browse by family or genus to see species pages, or click on interactive lists of wildflowers categorized by color, month, or by largest family.

Rare Plant Monitoring

[Wisconsin's rare plant monitoring website](#) can help you identify rare plants that may be on your property. Click on the "[Rare Plant Finder](#)" and use the "+" in the upper left hand corner to enlarge the map and navigate to your township. Then click on each plant name to learn more about the habitat where it's found, how to identify it (including photos) and the best time of year to search for it. Of course, just because the plant is found in the area doesn't mean it will also be on every property in the area. Landowners also can use the Rare Plant Monitoring Program website to easily submit data on any of the rare plants you observe.

Consider wildlife needs during plant selection

Plants with open, bowl-like flowers are good for bees while those with more specialized flowers, like blazing stars, mints, milkweeds etc., can be good for butterflies, hummingbirds and bees. Colors also are important in attracting a variety of animals. Hummingbirds, for example, are attracted to bright flowers – orange, yellow and especially red tubular flowers. Many plants in the aster family, including coneflowers, sunflowers, asters, and goldenrods, are excellent food sources for songbirds. Native shrubs such as serviceberries, dogwoods and viburnums can supply food and shelter for songbirds as well. Native grasses are used as host plants for butterflies and habitat for songbirds.

Seeds or plants?

Plants will establish faster but cost more. Seed can be cheap but some species will not appear aboveground for at least a few years. Seeding is generally more effective for prairie or wetland plants, whereas woodland plantings generally require starting with plants. For species that are difficult to germinate from seed, such as prairie cord grass, Pennsylvania sedge and hoary puccoon, you may want to use plants instead. Favor seed and plants that are locally-sourced – generally within 50 miles to the north/south, and 100 miles east/west – open pollinated and seed-grown, as they will more reliably support Wisconsin native wildlife. DNR maintains a [list of native plant nurseries](#).



Common serviceberry is a native shrub that can provide food and shelter for song birds. Photo by Kitty Kohout.

Prepare your seeds

Some seeds may need special treatments to ensure proper germination. For example, you may need to mimic nature's progression from winter to spring by placing seeds in the refrigerator for a specific period of time (this is called 'stratification'). Some species also may need to be 'scarified' by rubbing on coarse sandpaper to break the seed coat and allow germination (in nature, this usually occurs when seeds pass through the digestive tract of wildlife that eat them). To optimize germination of legumes, you may also want to inoculate the seeds with a rhizobium bacterium. Seek out more information by communicating with your seed supplier or by consulting references such as "The Tallgrass Restoration Handbook for Prairies, Savannas, and Woodlands" (edited by S. Packard and C.F. Mutel).

Keep an eye out for these newly regulated invasive plants



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org
Lesser celandine is an invasive plant now regulated in Wisconsin.

One of the biggest threats to native plant communities in Wisconsin – and one of the biggest headaches for many landowners – is invasive species. These plants and animals from another region or country often have few if any natural predators here and can quickly crowd out native species, triggering a cascade of effects that can reduce the diversity of plants and wildlife on your property, not to mention its beauty.

Now, updates to the 2009 state invasive species rule aim to help prevent plants and animals that are a problem in other states from gaining a foothold here and becoming a problem on your land.

Effective May 1, the list of species prohibited in Wisconsin –

meaning it's illegal to buy, sell, possess, transport, transfer, or introduce these species into Wisconsin without a permit – has grown to 64 to reflect emerging concerns.

“What’s important to know is there are more species listed as regulated and where to find the list,” says Kelly Kearns, who coordinates invasive species efforts for the Natural Heritage Conservation program. “Do not buy or install any regulated invasive plant and if you find any of these prohibited species on your land, please report them to us. We can work with you to try to get them controlled.”

Forty-eight species – 40 of them plants – have been added to the list of prohibited species. Prohibited species are those that are not yet in the state or only in a few places, are likely to cause environmental and/or economic harm, and can still be eradicated or their spread prevented.

Sightings of any of these new or previously listed prohibited species should be reported to invasive.species@wi.gov so DNR can help the landowner get rid of the invader. Kearns says DNR has a small pot of money that can be used to help private landowners control prohibited species.

“How we work with property owners differs on a case by case basis,” she says. “But what’s universal is that the sooner you control prohibited species, the better. You can prevent them from getting established and causing problems for you and your neighbors.”

Other updates to the invasive species law include adding 30 plants and three aquatic invertebrates to the restricted category. Restricted species are those with a steep economic or environmental impact but are already widespread and are unlikely to be completely eradicated. It is illegal to transport, transfer or introduce restricted species without a permit. Landowners are encouraged to control or remove them, but not required to do so.

Japanese barberry is an example of a newly restricted species; 25 different cultivars, or varieties of this species, have been listed as restricted. Many of these cultivars are still sold commercially, but we have worked with nurseries to phase them out over five years, Kearns says.

“Japanese barberry has recently been spreading into forests in many counties,” Kearns says. “People are not required to remove it if they have it, but are encouraged to control it to reduce its spread.”

[Factsheets and photos of invasive plants now available](#)

Lists of the regulated terrestrial plants, fact sheets and photographs are found online. A new publication with photos of all of the terrestrial and wetland plants newly brought under regulation is now available.



Jumping worm. Photo by Colleen Robinson.

Jumping worms a new problem underfoot

by Colleen Robinson

One way property owners can keep invasive plants at bay is literally right under their feet. A new invasive worm being found in Wisconsin prepares the ground for invasive plants to invade, so keeping an eye out for it and taking simple steps to prevent its introduction can go a long way toward protecting your woodlot.

Wisconsin's first known population of jumping worms was discovered in October 2013 in Dane County. Originating from Southeast Asia, these worms belong to the genus *Amyntas* and are also known as "crazy worms" or "Alabama jumpers." When these worms are disturbed, they thrash violently and slither like snakes.

Believe it or not, none of the worms we see in Wisconsin are native to the state. Our native worms were destroyed in the last ice age. We know of 20 earthworm species in Wisconsin that originate from Europe. And now, this new jumping worm is in the mix. Tell them apart by their appearance:

the band around jumping worms is cloudy-white, smooth, and completely encircles the worm. The band on European worms is raised.

Earthworms' appetite can lead to erosion, introduction of invasive plants

The fallen leaves and other natural debris that collect on your forest floor do many important jobs – retain moisture, protect plant and tree roots, prevent erosion, promote seed germination and deter invasive plants and diseases.

Earthworms eat this beneficial leaf litter and create a disturbance that exposes the soil, causes erosion, compacts the soil and increases rainwater run-off.

The situation favors invasive plants and can harm forest regeneration and ground nesting bird populations.

Jumping worms can consume the litter layer faster than any other earthworm in the state.

They process fallen leaves and topsoil until the soil becomes dry, granular and looks similar to coffee grounds.

Jumping worm populations are established in five Wisconsin counties and appear to be concentrated in urban areas, though they easily hitch rides to new areas.

They are a "Restricted species" under Wisconsin's "Invasive Species Rule," meaning it is illegal to sell, introduce, transport and propagate jumping worms in the state.

The goal with all invasive species is to minimize their spread. To help, know what to look for and follow Best Management Practices (BMPs). For more information go to dnr.wi.gov and search "jumping worm".

Prevention steps

- Clean soil and debris from vehicles, equipment, gardening and personal gear before moving to and from a work or recreational area.
- Watch for jumping worms and signs of their presence. If you find them, report them to the DNR at invasive.species@wi.gov
- Educate yourself and others to recognize jumping worms.
- Only use, sell, plant, purchase or trade landscape and gardening materials and plants that appear to be free of jumping worms.
- Only sell, purchase, or trade compost that was heated to appropriate temperatures and duration following protocols for reduction in pathogens.
- Help the [First Detectors Network](#) find jumping worms across the state.



Penny and Kris Kubly burning brush piles during the winter.

Sharing our story: beloved homestead blooms after prairie restoration

Kris and Penny Kubly had a decision to make: Their long-time rental farmer was no longer farming and they were not farmers themselves, so how would they protect the integrity of their beloved family farm and keep it in the family?

The 172-acre farm next to New Glarus was rich in Swiss history and family memories that Penny and Kris were reluctant to give up. Penny's parents had farmed the land from 1957 to 1999, when Penny and Kris bought the land, and the couple's children had grown up hiking and cross country skiing the trails through the property, as well as sledding and enjoying nature.

To keep the land in the family, Penny and Kris Kubly sought advice from the Green County land and water conservation agents. They decided to enroll in the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which pays a yearly rental payment in exchange for farmers removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and planting species that will improve environmental quality. That program allowed for planting prairie species, an option they chose because prairie plantings are drought resistant and once established require less maintenance.

The journey begins...

So on a snowy November in 2000, the couple planted about 80 acres of prairie. It came up well the next year, but they soon were seeing plants they didn't plant or want – thistle, multi-flora rose and honeysuckle. These

plants had escaped their overgrown pastures and woodland thickets and were finding their way into their new prairie planting.

With an investment in new tools and plenty of their own labor, the couple made progress coaxing along the “good” prairie plants – but new “bad” plants were emerging all the time. They needed a bigger weapon. They couple conducted more research and they had it – fire! They discovered that prairie and oak woodlands evolved with fire and depended on it for a healthy ecosystem. They read Wayne Pauly's book “How to Manage Small Prairie Fires” and proceeded to introduce fire back to the landscape. Managing prescribed fire presented new challenges and danger, but the Kublys pulled it off. The native plants thrived and the couple found more new species. The fire also set back the invading brush.

Sharing our story...(continued from page 6)

They thought they had won the battle but the invading brush re-sprouted and they found yet another invader – sweet clover. This non-native plant likes fire, too, and multiplies quickly after being stimulated by fire. So now they had yet another plant to battle. They pulled sweet clover out by the truck loads.

Getting the big picture

The couple turned to an ecological restoration consultant, David Cordray, who performed an ecological assessment of the property. He set the big picture, tied together the relationships of the different plant communities, and prioritized the needed ecological restoration management practices. With the consultant's help, the Kublys learned that

the green carpet of plants in the woods were garlic mustard, a highly-invasive, non-native species. They learned they had remnant (original) prairie and oak savanna. And they realized, they needed to care for all areas of their property and not just their planted prairie.

Together, the Kublys and their consultant embarked on restoring the oak savannas, oak woodlands, planted prairies, old fields, pastures, remnant prairies and wetlands.

Today, when the couple walks the many trails, they enjoy the colorful prairie, the giant majestic oaks, and the sights and sounds of nature. Recently, the couple came upon twin fawns nursing with their mother. "A walk now is an adventure –

you never know what you may encounter," says Penny Kubly.

"We're very thankful and grateful we were able to restore the land," she says. "It's very satisfying and it's really good for your body and your mind. When you're done working in the prairie, you're exhausted. But you know you accomplished something. You sleep really, really well."



Penny Kubly working on the prairie she has restored with her husband Kris.

Choosing a landowner program that can help you

A bumper crop of government and nonprofit programs offer technical, financial, and other help to people who want to manage their property to achieve certain conservation goals.

How do you know which program(s) is a good fit?

For landowners with a goal of sustaining native plant and animal species and native communities like prairies and oak savanna on their property, there are probably three main programs: DNR's Landowner Incentive Program; the Environmental Quality Incentive Program offered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Partners for Fish & Wildlife offered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Take a look at each one of these individually using this chart.

Programs for natural communities

Program name/acronym	<u>LIP</u> Landowner Incentive Program	<u>EQIP</u> Environmental Quality Incentive Program	<u>PF&W</u> Partners for Fish and Wildlife
Responsible Agency	DNR's Natural Heritage Conservation program	Natural Resource Conservation Service	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Funding	Cost-share assistance provided to restore habitat for at-risk wildlife on private lands in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin.	Annual payments to address resource concerns, undertake more activities and improve and maintain existing conservation systems	Up to 50% cost-share.
Eligibility	Land must be located in Driftless Area, 10-year agreement; state picks up to 75% cost share.	Contracts up to 10 years. Maximum cost share payments set by region, may vary year-to-year. Flat rate payments based on 65% of actual cost. Eligibility for forest practices requires Forest Stewardship Plan or an EQIP plan created by a technical service provider	
Management Practices Covered	Prescribed burns, planting native trees, and other plants, invasive species control, forest stand improvement	Conservation Activity Plan for forest management, brush Management, Critical Area Planting, forest management plan, forest stand improvement, herbaceous weed control, prescribed burning, restoration and management of declining habitat, stream crossing*, others	Restoration of: wetlands; grasslands; threatened and endangered species; savanna



Dogs enjoying a stroll through the Steimann/Weege remnant prairie that is being restored, in part, with LIP funds. Photo by Sue Steimann.

Managing land to achieve other conservation goals

Other programs offered by DNR can help landowners meet other specific conservation goals. Here are links to some of them and to articles that explain them through the experiences of other landowners like yourself.

- [Managed Forest Law](#), provides a property tax incentive to landowners who follow a written management plan and program rules aimed at encouraging sustainable forest management.
- [Wisconsin Deer Management Assistance Program](#), DMAP for short, provides habitat and herd management assistance to landowners interested in managing their property for wildlife. This [Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine article](#) does a nice job of walking you through the benefits and requirements through telling the story of current participants.

Funding available to create or manage rare species habitat in Driftless Area

Private landowners seeking to create and manage habitat for rare plants and animals in the Driftless Area can now apply for funding and technical help through the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP).

DNR Department of Natural Resources is now accepting pre-proposals from landowners who have not previously received Landowner Incentive Program funding. Eligible work under the program may include, but is not limited to conducting prescribed burns, planting native vegetation and removing invasive and woody species.

Applying for Landowner Incentive Program funding is a two-step process: applicants submit a pre-proposal to allow DNR to review their proposed project. A site visit by the LIP biologist also may be needed to assess the project. If DNR approves the pre-proposal, landowners are invited to submit a full proposal which includes a detailed budget, project objectives, work schedule and evaluation benchmarks, Hinebaugh says.

Funding is provided to highly ranked projects on a first-come, first-served basis. Projects may request funding between \$2,500 and \$25,000. As a cost-share program, DNR will reimburse a landowner for up to 75 percent of the cost for the on-the-ground practices that are involved in the management of the project. The landowner is required to contribute the remaining 25 percent share through out-of-pocket costs, or as in-kind labor and equipment match.

The process is competitive and landowners should visit the LIP website to review the project ranking criteria, eligible work and costs for more information.

Choosing a landowner... (continued from page 9)

- [Young Forest Initiative](#), provides technical and financial help for landowners to manage forest habitat in suitable areas to benefit young forest plant and wildlife species. [Read A Tree-mendous Transformation](#) for a nice summary of this program.

Other agency and institution programs

[Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP for short): A federal program that pays a yearly rental payment in exchange for farmers removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and planting species that will improve environmental quality. This program is administered by the Farm Services Administration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and DNR as technical agencies.

[Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#), CREP for short, is an offshoot of CRP. CREP targets high-priority conservation issues identified by local, state, or tribal governments or non-governmental organizations. In exchange for removing environmentally sensitive land from production and introducing conservation practices, farmers, ranchers, and agricultural land owners are paid an annual rental rate.

[Wisconsin Coverts Project](#): This UW-Madison School of Forestry and Wildlife Ecology offers a free, 3-day workshop and materials for participants to agree to share what they have learned with their communities. Application deadline for next year's session is June 15, 2016.



Zach Kastern applies the techniques he learned at workdays on State Natural Areas to restoring his own property.

Volunteer work days offer a chance to test-drive land management tools

Gain insight and hands-on experience controlling invasive species, conducting prairie planting, and other management tools you may want to use on your land by helping out at [State Natural Areas](#). Volunteer workdays usually run three hours and offer an opportunity to get hands-on exposure to land management and restoration techniques and to see and learn more about different native plants, animals and types of prairies, wetlands, forests and more. Find more information about all of these workdays on the [State Natural Areas volunteer webpage](#).

Volunteer applies techniques learned on state lands to his own

Zach Kastern owns three acres south of Whitewater he is restoring to oak savanna and prairie using techniques and tools he learned during volunteer workdays for State Natural Areas in the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest. He now co-leads monthly volunteer workdays in the state forest and continues to apply the lessons learned there on his Walworth County property and a 12-acre conservancy within his subdivision. Kastern answered our questions about what he gets out of volunteering on State Natural Areas,

Volunteer work day... (continued from page 10)

land that holds some of the best remaining examples of the prairies, oak savannas, barrens and other natural communities here before statehood.

Q. What are you trying to restore your land to, or manage it for, and why?

Zach: Right away I knew I didn't want just another golf course yard and started thinking about letting some of it go natural – it was a hay field on rolling terrain. I figured wildflowers like we see along the roadways and in the woods would begin to re-populate if I just let it be and maybe burned it once in a while. I began to realize I wanted it to be prairie to support pollinators and other wildlife so I had to figure out what that all meant. That meant lots of reading and Googling and learning to identify things out there.

After researching things and getting to talk to some DNR biologists and ecologists I began to learn a lot about ecological restoration and my goal became to return my property to pre-European settlement conditions. This would be for the sake of whatever wild things found it suitable and especially pollinator support and conservation which also means steering it more toward oak savanna and prairie. My efforts have also begun to bleed over to the 12 acres of conservancy with the support of my neighbors. The 12 acres is mostly lower kettle land, some of it marshy, some more wooded but all very valuable for conservation purposes. I'm still trying to really classify the exact ecological communities in there but it is pretty diverse. It supports everything from insects to frogs and Blanding's turtles up to ducks, turkeys and deer. Occasionally sandhill cranes will nest there.



From left: Zach Kastern and Ginny Coburn, co-leaders of monthly volunteer workdays for State Natural Areas in the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest, take a water break with SNA Volunteer Program Coordinator Jared Urban and volunteer Diane Sersch.

Q. What role if any has volunteering for SNA workdays helped you on your own land?

Zach: Education, hands-on learning, tool and herbicide usage and techniques. I've learned a ton about how to basically evaluate the land – what are its ills and what are its strengths, what to attend to first and what can wait. I've also learned what tasks are most appropriate for a given season or when to attack certain issues to get the best result. For example, we cut brush like buckthorn and honeysuckle from fall through winter and into early spring when the plants are going dormant or are dormant because they will take up the herbicide treatments way more effectively with little

to no collateral damage to other plants. Plant identification, what natural communities am I looking at, which plants belong and which do not are other valuable lessons learned. I've also realized that the SNAs are also "my land" so I've been approaching my work on them that way. It's not just volunteering for some vague reason, we're taking care of our land.

Interview continued on next page

[State Natural Areas Volunteer Program webpage](#)

Volunteer work day...
(continued from page 11)

Q. What has been most helpful about your SNA volunteering with regard to achieving your own goals on your land?

Zach: Experience and knowledge. Talking with other people who have similar goals and the experiences they've had both good and bad. Learning the tools of the trade and the techniques involved. Also learning about the natural communities that are near my home. I can then attempt to foster similar communities with those same species since I know they exist naturally in the area.

Q. What would be your advice to other landowners regarding volunteering at SNA workdays?

Zach: Come on out and give it a try. You lose nothing in spending quality time on your land and picking up information and experience you can apply anywhere you wish. Our group is pretty easy going in the Southern Kettle Moraine area, we have fun but we work hard and many people return again and again.

Q. Anything else you think would be important for landowners who are interested in restoring or managing native landscapes to know?

Zach: It can be a lot of work at times and kind of trying but the payback is huge in my opinion. When things start to take shape and move the direction you want them to you will be rewarded by interesting plants, bugs and critters moving in. It's visually and kind of spiritually pleasing.

What do you know?

Most monarch butterflies live only a few weeks, but the last generation of monarchs, born in late August in Wisconsin, lives much longer. It is the migratory generation. The shorter days and cooler temperatures of autumn prevent the butterflies from maturing enough to reproduce. This allows them to live for about eight to nine months – long enough to fly to Mexico for the winter and then back to the southern U.S. to reproduce. Help monarchs by creating habitat on your land for them, including planting at least some milkweed native to your area. Learn more at [Monarch Joint Venture](#), a partnership of federal and state agencies, non-governmental agencies, and academic programs working together to protect monarchs and their migration.



Monarch butterfly. Photo by Ann Swengel.



Reader's mailbag

Ted Knorring asked how best to control crown vetch and box elder on the 130-acre forest he manages in Adams County. Bernie Williams, a DNR forest specialist in invasive plants, answers.

Crown vetch is a bit of a nightmare to control, but it can be done if you make the needed time commitment. There are recommendations that include early spring mowing as well as spring and late summer mowing. If you choose to use an herbicide, Triclopyr under the trade name Garlon 3A has shown the most promise to date. A 2 percent solution has been successful in killing 99 percent of the crown vetch in large infestations.

Box elder is much easier to control. The best recommendation is to cut them back mid-summer through late fall and treat the stumps with a 20 percent solution of Garlon 4. Another option would be just cutting them and waiting for them to sprout and using a foliar application of Roundup on the re-sprouts.

More resources:

[Herbicides for forest management website, DNR](#)

[Midwest Invasive Plant Network Control Database website](#)

[Creating a forest: A step-by-step guide to planting and maintaining trees, DNR and UW-Extension](#)



Yellow-rumped warbler spotted during migration along Lake Michigan. Photo by Robert Kuhn.

Nature's Notes

The calendar says it's still summer but fall is in the air. Enjoy the sights and sounds as we say goodbye to one season and welcome another.

What butterflies are you seeing around you? Find a guide to Wisconsin butterflies, reports of recent sightings, and field trips to see butterflies at the [Wisconsin Butterflies website](#).

Blazing-star, wild bergamot, and oxeye sunflowers are in bloom, as are many other wildflowers. Check out the UW-Madison Herbarium's interactive list of what blooms in [September](#).

In wetlands, look for dragonflies and damselflies and listen for crickets singing in the evening air. Search the [Wisconsin Odonata Survey](#) by common or scientific name for pictures and information about the 160 species in Wisconsin.

Keep an eye out for [warblers](#), shorebirds and nighthawks. These birds are beginning to migrate south.

[Report your bird sightings to Wisconsin eBird.](#)

JOIN THE COMMUNITY

Jeanette and other volunteers from the Friends of Festge Park have worked to restore the diversity of the prairies, woodlands, streams and wetlands at Festge Park and Salmo Pond near Cross Plains.

"Prairie restoration has become my passion. It takes much physical effort to restore, plant and maintain prairies yet when you see a rare plant brightly blooming, listen to the birds sing, see the eagle flying overhead, hear the hum of the bees, notice the monarch and other butterflies flitting from plant to plant...it is truly an experience of joy for me."

Order our new eagle license plate now and your \$25 donation will help care for Wisconsin's plants, animals, and natural areas.

Learn more at dnr.wi.gov search "eagle plate."

