



madison  
**AUDUBON**  
society

NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY 2017

## Love is in the air

*Spring awakens to the chorus of migration*

Let's get serious for just a moment.

These are unusually challenging times. There are multiple threats to conservation and facing them requires serious thought. To that end, Madison Audubon is thinking very strategically about the present and the future. We've recently updated our strategic plan, have begun discussing the next plan, and are grateful for the fruitful discussion generated by members at the recent Listening Session. Yes, these are serious times calling for serious thought and we will be engaging in just that. But, sometimes I need to remind myself that we are in the joy business too.

So on that note, now for something completely different, something a bit lighter.

An internet article about the joys of the spring season entitled "Love is in the Air" recently came across my news feed. As an admitted and proud bird nerd, I have a tendency to view life through rose-breasted grosbeak-tinted glasses, so the title struck me differently than the authors likely intended. I just can't help thinking that this little phrase has so many meanings for a bird enthusiast.

First, it is a wonderful time of year for bird lovers like you and me! Spring has sprung, the migrants have returned and the birds are belting out their tunes like Tom Jones on a Vegas stage. As Robin Williams quipped, "Spring is Nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party!'" (And who shows up in their party attire better than an American coot chick, like the one pictured above?). Second, it's a pretty dang exciting time for birds too. Birds of all feathers are working to secure territories, find and court mates, and prepare to

raise a family during a new breeding season. A season of love so to speak. Finally, as you are well aware, those amazing birds that we all love so much do something quite extraordinary—they fly... in the air. So, last but not least, "Love is in the Air" has a certain poetry that blends both the figurative and literal senses (and, yes, the corny sense too).

Wisconsin's incredible birds are getting ready for a very important time of year—chock full of nests, baby birds, and awkward fledglings. To ensure the future of birds in Wisconsin, we will be meeting new and old challenges together with serious and urgent intent. But with profound appreciation and joy too. You may have heard us say that your love of birds is the heart of our work. I hope as you read this newsletter, you feel that ring true. After all, love is in the air.

Matt Reetz, executive director  
mreetz@madisonaudubon.org

Madison Audubon  
is your local  
Audubon chapter

*Together with our members, we work to protect and improve habitat for birds and other wildlife through land acquisition and management, education and advocacy.*

TOP: The wild and cheerful plumage of an American coot chick signals a new season. Photo by Tore Bustad, Flickr Creative Commons.  
RIGHT: The candle-like florets of a culver's root to celebrate Faville's 20th birthday. Photo by Brenna Marsicek

## Happy Birthday Faville!

Faville Grove Sanctuary turns 20 this year! Watch your inbox this summer for an invitation to a party on the prairie. We want to celebrate with you the beautiful results of many years of hard work on this restoration effort.





## Meet the 2017 Crew

### Faville Grove Interns

Olivia Clark, UW-La Crosse,  
Major Undecided

John Dougherty, UW-Madison,  
Civil Engineering

Hannah Sigg, UW-Madison,  
Environmental Studies

Keaton Bormann, UW-Madison,  
Biology and Environmental  
Studies

### Prairie Partner Interns

Krista Farrell, UW-Madison,  
Landscape Architecture

Emily Jorgensen, UW-Madison,  
Environmental Studies and  
Chinese

Alex Gall, UW-Stevens Point,  
Wildlife Ecology

Caleb Burst, UW-Madison,  
Zoology

Kaitlyn Kozak, UW-Stevens Point,  
Wildlife Ecology - Research and  
Management

Graham Steinhauer, UW-Stevens  
Point, Forest Ecosystem  
Restoration

# PLANTING THE SEEDS

## *MAS Ecological Internship Program begins another year*

For almost four decades, Madison Audubon has run a highly successful paid internship program that we feel is a win-win-win. Win 1 is for Madison Audubon. We receive high-quality restoration work from diligent, enthusiastic young people during a time when things are especially lively at our sanctuaries and extra help is certainly needed. Further, with the Prairie Partners program, we enjoy a wonderful collaboration between MAS at Goose Pond, Friends of Lakeshore Nature Preserve, Friends of Pheasant Branch, Natural Heritage Land Trust, and Pope Farm Conservancy to sponsor an intern team that works on many conservation properties people know and enjoy.

Win 2 is for the interns. We take the responsibility of mentorship very seriously. These young adults get practical hands-on experience (and some cash too!) that will enrich their career paths, wherever they may lead. Many past interns have gone on to careers in ecology and environmental science and are establishing themselves as future conservation leaders.

Win 3 is for all of us. By both teaching and learning from young voices in our community, we hope to broaden and strengthen Wisconsin's conservation community by further solidifying a land ethic that will endure through the generations.

This intern program and all the fruit it bears would not be possible without your support. Thank you!

## A blast from the past

### *Summer interns from the last 10 years: where are they now?*

We tracked down a number of interns from the past 10 years to see where they are now and how their internships may have shaped their careers and relationships with the natural world. Featured here are just a few of their responses. Learn more about their and others' stories and perspectives at [madisonaudubon.org/interns](http://madisonaudubon.org/interns). Numbered photos are identified in the tan box, opposite.



**STEPHANIE JUDGE**, *Prairie Partner Intern '07*

NOW: Land Protection Specialist for The Nature Conservancy

"The Audubon restoration ecology internship was one of the most formative and valuable experiences of my life. It laid the foundation that supported all of my later academic work in landscape architecture, and the knowledge I gained that summer continues to inform my career today."



**JENNA MOTZ**, *Faville Groove Intern '11*

NOW: UW-Madison Veterinary Medical Student

"I no longer work in restoration ecology, but my summer at Faville Grove played a large role in shaping my perspective on how ecosystem health can impact individual health. While I now focus more on wildlife and companion animal medicine, I know that no one exists in a vacuum—we are all a reflection of our environment."





## A note from Faville Grove Sanctuary:

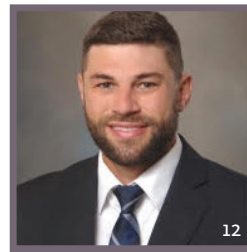
"As Faville Grove Sanctuary turns 20, we salute the many interns who have been with us nearly from the beginning. Nothing gives us more hope for the future than to work with a group of idealistic young people and watch their love and understanding of, and commitment to, the environment develop over the course of a summer."

- Roger Packard and David Musolf, Faville Grove Sanctuary resident co-managers

### DARREN LADWIG, *Prairie Partner Intern '10*

NOW: Wisconsin DNR- Wildlife Biologist

"I look at my summer as an intern as the foundation of my ecological background for dealing with Wisconsin plant and animal communities. I constantly deal with invasive species as part of my job when managing state-owned lands. Having the background and knowledge to identify and treat them appropriately is a necessity for doing this work. Being able to recognize native plants also helps to categorize certain habitat types and what these areas may have looked like pre-settlement."



### KATY HAIMA, *Faville Grove Intern '07*

NOW: Policy Analyst, Seattle Planning Commission

"That was the summer that my relationship with nature went from enjoying it to realizing my place in it, and my dependence on it. I learned that the prairie was an infinitely fascinating place, where the majesty of spreading bur oaks instilled as much awe as the precise detail of a fringed orchid."



### More interns!

Read more about these former interns at [madisonaudubon.org/interns](http://madisonaudubon.org/interns)

1. Drew Harry, FGS '12
2. Sandra Kinzer, FGS '14
3. Andy Kellner, PP '07
4. Josh Seibel, FGS '11
5. Tony Abate, PP '13
6. Tyler Hasheider, PP '10
7. Maddie Dumas, PP '14
8. Greg Skupien, PP '08
9. Matt Weber, FGS '09
10. Jacob Zeldin, PP '13
11. Brenna Marsicek, FGS '07
12. John Pinzl, FGS '09
13. Nick Sievert, FGS '08

## A note from Goose Pond Sanctuary:

"The internship program is great for both the interns and Madison Audubon Society. The interns gain experience working in the field, and the sanctuaries benefit from their hard work. At Goose Pond, we have worked with interns since the 1980s, and enjoy working alongside them, getting to know them, providing references, and keeping in touch."

- Mark Martin and Sue Foote-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary resident co-managers



An even further look back shows that some interns have made lifelong careers in ecology. The first restoration ecology intern at Goose Pond Sanctuary in 1978, Russ Hefty, recently retired from serving as supervisor for Madison Conservation Parks. We are thrilled to see how the students coming out of this program continue to shape the land and communities in which they work.

LEFT: Russ Hefty, first summer intern for Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary, leads a tour for MAS in 2014. Photo by Arlene Koziol



# WINGSPAN

*Donate to the Wingspan project today!*

Online:  
[madisonaudubon.org/wingspan](http://madisonaudubon.org/wingspan)

Phone: 608-255-2473

Mail: 1400 E. Washington  
Ave. Ste. 170, Madison WI  
53703

## The *Wingspan* project spreads its wings

*Progress continues on the observation pavilion at Goose Pond*

*Wingspan* is happening! The project to construct a beautiful observation pavilion overlooking Goose Pond is in the works and making progress. Materials have been ordered, contractors arranged, and timelines set. This summer, efforts will begin to prepare the Bicentennial Prairie site for the construction and installation of the *Wingspan* platform in the fall of 2017.

The pavilion will feature three large, wing-shaped metal shades above timber benches. An ADA path leading to the structure will ensure anyone who seeks rest and rejuvenation here can access it.

Thanks to over 30 donors so far, *Wingspan* is on its way to fruition, but we need you to be part of this effort as well! Those of us who

use Goose Pond Sanctuary as premier nature destination know that it is a special place. Many of us want to give back to this property which has given so much joy to so many people.

The fundraising goal for the project is \$50,000 and a generous matching grant from the John Kaiser family means that donations to *Wingspan* up to \$25,000 will be doubled. Consider donating in honor or in memory of a loved one and make them part of the *Wingspan* legacy.

It's easy to donate online, by mail, or over the phone. Every gift helps us reach our goal, and donations of \$250 and above will be named on a permanent plaque on the site.



### WINGSPAN DONORS through May 3 - Thank you!

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## Open Wide!

Did you know that you can use a chick's gape pattern (the coloration on the inside of the mouth) to help identify the species? The bright colors, especially red, are thought to trigger a stronger feeding response in parents.

*Which species are we gaping at? Take a guess! Answers are listed on page 7.*



Madison Audubon is a proud member of the following organizations:



## Birding Spotlight: Eastern Bluebirds

*Monitoring bluebird boxes has its rewards*



We never know what to expect from spring in Wisconsin, but regardless of when and how, many of us enjoy seeing the return of eastern bluebirds. Folks around the state, many of whom are members of Madison Audubon, the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, or both, set out nest boxes in county and state parks or on private property in hopes of increasing the number of bluebirds in our area.

A late start to warm spring temperatures can delay the start of the nesting season. We prepare the boxes in March, and starting in mid-April, monitors do weekly inspections to see if nesting has begun. Each visit we record any nest, eggs, or chicks, and of

which species. We do our best to place the boxes in habitat that bluebirds prefer: short grass, where they can find food, and near a few trees or a fence where they can perch to hunt for insects.

The song and flash of electric azure were abundant in Wisconsin until the early 1900s when competition with introduced species like house sparrows for nesting sites decreased their numbers. Thanks to the 9,000+ nest boxes BRAW volunteers and other individuals support in our state, the species is rebounding. Now that is something to sing about!

Pat Ready, MAS member, BRAW president, and Climate Watch volunteer

## Bluebirds and Climate Change: Join the effort!

This June, join Madison Audubon and a nation-wide team of citizen scientists to look for eastern bluebirds and explore how climate change is impacting their habitat. The project is called Climate Watch, coordinated by National Audubon. Volunteers survey for certain bird species—in our case eastern bluebirds—and help scientists determine if climate change is affecting habitat for these birds in our area.

Joining is easy! Simply email Brenna (see below) to sign up for one of the survey squares, and spend a morning between June 1 and June 15 in your square doing 12 point counts. Record how many bluebirds you observe, and submit your data online.

Sign up today at [madisonaudubon.org/climate-watch-2017](http://madisonaudubon.org/climate-watch-2017). Contact Brenna Marsicek ([bmarsicek@madisonaudubon.org](mailto:bmarsicek@madisonaudubon.org) or 608-255-2473) to join or ask questions.



## Teaching the science

*Shifting focus from scientific research to education*

Scientific research is a wonderful thing. From medicine to industry to recreation and everything in between, countless discoveries have made our lives easier, safer, and enriched. My career path was once headed toward academic research. I spent years doing field research on birds, and while this work was fulfilling, I knew I could be having a more direct impact in the conservation world.

A common complaint of scientists is that they are so focused on research that they neglect the most important step: communicating their findings with the general public. If research only lives in academia, what good is it? In an age of alternative facts, scientists must find a way to bridge the gap between researchers and the public, especially in the field of environmental science. A more knowledgeable public will lead to earth-conscious consumers and educated voters, both of which will be important in the coming years.

Environmental education is just one way of bringing science to people. Each time we bring kids outside to look at water critters under microscopes, we're helping them see the world in a new way. When we play games about food webs, we're showing kids how everything in this world is connected and that they're an important part of it. And when

they use binoculars to watch an American robin on her nest, we're building their love of all wild things—especially birds.

I know that my job as an educator is—to me—far more important and undeniably more rewarding than work I could have been doing as an ecologist. I take scientific information and pass it on to our members and the curious kids I work with. It's empowering to share that knowledge because the collective group of people working to protect our environment achieves more than I ever could on my own. By supporting Madison Audubon's education department, YOU are helping to strengthen the next generation of land stewards and environmentally aware voters. Thank you!

*Carolyn*

Carolyn Byers, education director  
carolyn.byers@madisonaudubon.org



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### Volunteer with us!

Help teach kids about the wonders of nature. Email [info@madisonaudubon.org](mailto:info@madisonaudubon.org) to learn how you can get involved.

.....

## Shout-out to our Education Interns!

Our education team is hoppin'. To keep up with demand, this spring we were fortunate to work with two education interns, Abe Lench and Olivia Sanderfoot. Abe and Olivia worked with grade school kids to deliver exciting and meaningful lessons on anything from turtles to bird beaks.

Abe will wrap up his internship this May, while Olivia will stay on through the summer. If you haven't met them yet, stop in and say hello!



*Abe Lench*



*Olivia Sanderfoot*

# DONOR ROLL

Thank you to those who donated January-April

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nization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Answer key to chick  
gape quiz (page 4):

LEFT: Grasshopper  
sparrow  
RIGHT: Horned lark



#### EVENINGS WITH AUDUBON

Birds of Cuba: An inside perspective of bird conservation in Cuba, with Ernesto Reyes

MAY 30 | 7:00 p.m. | Goodman Center



#### MADISON AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS

Join us on a summer hike! Free and offered on a variety of dates, locations, and focus species. Learn more at [madisonaudubon.org/field-trips](http://madisonaudubon.org/field-trips).

LEFT: A dazzling display of a Cuban oriole. Photo by Ernesto Reyes. ABOVE RIGHT: A beautiful setting for a field trip at Pleasant Valley. MAS Photo. RIGHT: Barb, Deb, and Pat Constans share a love for Madison Audubon's sanctuaries. Photo provided by Barb Constans

### Leaving behind a legacy *Barbara Constans reflects on her environmental philanthropy*

My partner Deb Rohde and I have been members of Madison Audubon for many years. Among the many great non-profits we support, we feel that Madison Audubon stands out the most. The preservation of our wildlife and the environments they inhabit is critical to the future of our world. We love how the organization works hard to provide education while creating a safe environment for our native wildlife. Their efforts at Goose Pond and Faville Grove have provided important habitat for birds, plants and animals.



A highlight of our membership was taking part in the monarch tagging at Goose Pond last fall. Although out of the two of us Deb was the one to actually tag a butterfly, it was a fun event with time to learn about monarchs which we've enjoyed since we were kids.

When we put together a new financial plan for our estate it seemed to be a perfect fit to include Madison Audubon. We wanted to help ensure that Madison Audubon is able to continue its important work as a good environmental stewards for our local community. We hope that the coming generations will be able to enjoy nature, birds and the outdoors just the way that we have.

*Learn more about our Legacy Society at [madisonaudubon.org/legacy-society](http://madisonaudubon.org/legacy-society)*

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