

Kemp's Point

A newsletter of the Kemp Natural Resources Station
Volume 6, Number 1 - Spring 2005

Students Learn How to Put Forest Stewardship into Practice

For many college students, Spring Break means heading south to Daytona Beach or Cancun to unwind under sunny skies. But that wasn't the case for a dedicated group of UW-Madison forestry students. Instead of south, their travels took them north to Kemp Station where they spent three days learning about forestry practices. The field trip was part of Forest Ecology & Management 305 – Forest Operations.

Forest Operations is an applied course that explores the equipment and methods foresters use to put management plans into practice. Emphasis is placed on the sustainable harvest of forest products as students follow the flow of wood from stump to mill. Mark Rickenbach, course co-instructor, notes "The practice of forestry is part art and part science. Students get a wonderful education about the science of forestry on campus. This field trip exposes them to the art."

Students visited several active harvesting operations where they saw a range of management prescriptions, from red pine thinning to high-quality oak regeneration of an aspen forest. Witnessing harvesting operations first hand was new for some, but familiar for

others. Senior Kay Kromm job shadows a state forester near Hartford so she has seen some harvest operations. Still, she said she was impressed by how very efficient the large equipment performs. Tom Webb had not been on an active harvesting operation before. He also found them impressive, especially in terms of how little site damage is done.



Students visited a variety of logging operations, big and small. Here a forwarder picks up sawlogs for transport to the landing at a larger operation where a red pine forest was being thinned.

Several of the students got a logger's-eye-view of forest management when they rode in the cab with the operator. Kromm said her experience riding in a forwarder was "very cool" and was the "best part of class." These hands-on experiences taught the students about the capabilities of modern logging equipment and the professionals who operate them.

Today's sustainable forest management requires teamwork between foresters and loggers. It's the foresters who prepare the management plans and the loggers who implement them. Tom Steele, the other course instructor, says "This was a great opportunity for students to see the actual process of forest



Logger Rick Cropley (center, plaid jacket) explains the finer points of operating a harvester to UW-Madison forestry students Cody Didier (left), Matt Kimmler (in the cab), and Kay Kromm (right).

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Forest Stewardship (Cont'd from Page 1)

management firsthand. They got to visit with the logging professionals who will one day be implementing the management plans they write.”

Wisconsin is only one of the three states in the nation that has a certified Master Logger program. Over the course of the field trip, students met several Certified Master Loggers, including Matt Jensen, the current president of the Wisconsin Professional Loggers Association.

In addition to seeing a variety of harvesting operations, students met the foresters who wrote the management plans and set up the timber sales. This



In contrast to larger operations, small-scale logger Leroy Marsh uses a farm tractor equipped with a specially-designed logging winch to skid some trees to the landing.



The final stop of the field tour was the Pukall Lumber Co. in Arbor Vitae. Students watch as logs are converted into lumber.

was the students' chance to experience a day in the life of a field forester.

No forest operations field trip would be complete without a mill tour. In this case, the students visited the Pukall Lumber Co. sawmill in Arbor Vitae, WI. Susan Pukall, Marketing & Communications Director and the third-generation to work at the mill, led the students on a comprehensive tour. Students followed the entire manufacturing process, from raw logs to green lumber to finished wood product.

Regardless of where they work – research, policy, management, etc. – all the students agreed that following the wood from stump to mill was an excellent learning experience. Cody Didier pointed out that seeing the different operations and processes provided him with a new perspective of and appreciation for each aspect of forestry.

So even though this Spring Break lacked sand and warm temperatures, it created a lot of memories that should serve the students throughout their professional forestry careers. - K.O. & T.S. 🐾

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I have read many definitions of what is a conservationist, and written not a few myself, but I suspect that the best one is written, not with a pen, but with an axe. It is a matter of what a man thinks about while chopping, or while deciding what to chop. A conservationist is one who is humbly aware that with each stroke he is writing his signature on the face of his land.

-- Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac



Wild Wonders

How do you feel about snakes? If that question made you shiver, then definitely keep reading! My family has a friend who is terrified of them. If a snake was recently seen in the yard, like yesterday, she won't go outside! She can't explain this fear; she claims she just doesn't like snakes. Her fear seems to be so strong it would require professional therapy and lots of time and commitment to conquer it. Maybe hypnosis is the answer! But some apprehensions are learned or simply based on a lack of knowledge or understanding.

Growing up in Madison, the only place I saw a snake was at the zoo. Once in a while I'd get a glimpse of a garter snake sliding through the grass at my grandparents' farm and I would keep my distance. During a vacation in Door County, my sister and I were playing in the lake when a snake swam near us. You've never seen two little girls hit dry land so quickly! We were afraid to return to our water games and to this day, I can't help but consider a repeat encounter while swimming. Screaming "SNAKE!" while playing in the water became a fun trick to play on each other.

Other than that one swimming encounter, I've never had a negative experience with a snake – I've never been attacked, bitten or constricted. Now that I live where it's more likely to meet up with a snake in my daily activities, I've been giving this "fear" much more thought. I can only conclude that my fear was learned when I was quite young. I know my mom does not care for snakes, so I'll wager a guess that I learned how to react to them from her. Now it's time to learn more about snakes and see about un-learning my fear.

I decided to write about snakes after meeting one during an evening walk. Now this was a small snake; maybe a foot in length if straightened out, and no bigger around than a pencil. He (or perhaps she) was in the road and despite my "fear," I didn't want to see him smooshed by a car. With strong resolution, I proceeded to pick up the snake to move it off the road. This did not go as well as I'd envisioned! The

snake didn't seem to appreciate my rescue attempt and began coiling, wiggling, and lashing out at my hand with its mouth. So here were two animals – human and snake – seemingly afraid of each other! But why was I afraid of this tiny snake?

Snakes move differently than other creatures we encounter in nature. Without legs, feet, hands or wings, they don't walk, run, crawl, hop or fly, all of which might make us more comfortable. Instead, they have "types of movement" which are determined by the surface they're on, where they're going, and the snake's muscular design. Snakes in Wisconsin use two types of movement. One is rectilinear locomotion, or moving in a straight line. The snake does this by moving the scales on its belly forward in waves. The scales catch on the ground allowing the snake to pull itself along with its muscles. The movement looks smooth to us because the process happens quickly and at any moment some scales will be moving forward while others are pulling. The other way Wisconsin snakes move is by serpentine locomotion, which is an S-shaped movement. This movement is all about the muscles and the snake pushes and pulls against any friction point. Wherever the head goes, the body and tail follows, as each muscle group follows the one ahead of it.

The way snakes defend themselves may be frightening if you don't understand what they're doing. Interestingly, the coloration and patterns of snakes indicates they don't want to be seen in the first place. Unfortunately, this lends itself to what I call the "startle factor." I won't see the snake and when I get too close, it'll move, making me jump, and probably scream! And then I laugh because I realize there's nothing to be scared of, right? Most snakes will try to hide or flee rather than interact with us humans or any other perceived "enemy." But if they can't do either, they may hiss, which is merely an audible warning. Some may emit a foul-smelling fluid from its anus and smear it over the attacker. This is common among garter and water snakes. If the snake really feels threatened, it might raise its head and neck off the ground in a striking position – it will strike if feeling very threatened. This is what that little snake was doing to me. Of course! I was trying to grab it, and in his mind, that was a very bad thing.

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A snake's tongue or eyes may be disconcerting to some. The primary use of the tongue is to locate food. The moist forked portion of the tongue detects invisible scent particles in the air which are transferred to a gland in the roof of the mouth called the Jacobson's organ. This organ sends "taste" information to the snake's brain. So when a snake flicks its tongue at you, it's simply checking you out. And what about those eyes? Snakes actually don't see well because their eye lenses do not move or change shape. However, their field of vision is wide and they can detect movement quickly, an important ability when foraging for small, live prey.

The bottom line is that snakes are pretty neat critters. They're not slimy to the touch, but are dry and scaly – their scales are made of keratin, just like our fingernails. As a snake grows and wears out its scales, it sheds, revealing newly developing skin. If you happen to find some shed snake skin, take a close look at it and wonder what it might be like to go through such a process.

Snakes are good to have around for several reasons. First, they eat a lot of insects and small vertebrates. The year we had loads of big grasshoppers in our yard, I saw more snakes around than ever – it was probably like a buffet for them! Snakes are a valuable food source for other animals too. Small mammals and birds eat little snakes and birds of prey, especially hawks, feed on medium sized snakes. And let's not forget about rodent control, especially in agricultural areas. Medium and large snakes help keep grain-eating mammals under control.

Understanding snakes, or anything for that matter, helps reduce any anxiety we might feel when we encounter one. And doing a little extra reading about something that makes us nervous can turn fear or dislike into respect and appreciation.

- K.O. 

Studying Humans to Help Reptiles

State natural resource managers are charged with protecting rare species. It might be easy to garner support for the protection of a pretty butterfly or a regal trumpeter swan. But what about an animal like the eastern massasauga rattlesnake? A 1980 national survey assessing public attitudes toward wildlife showed that 78% of respondents disliked rattlesnakes. How do you protect an animal that so many people dislike?

Rebecca Christoffel, Ph.D. candidate at Michigan State University, is conducting research that will help answer that question. Her goal is to enhance reptile management efforts by applying insights gained from her study of how people think and feel about reptiles.

In the first phase of her research, interviews were conducted at a shopping mall and an outdoor festival. Using pictures of amphibians and reptiles found in Michigan, participants were asked to consider the animal group represented by each picture and place them on like and fear scales. Rebecca asked the participants about their awareness and knowledge of state herptile regulations and what they thought were the advantages and disadvantages to sharing their properties with any of the animal groups. She also collected information about their personal experiences with the pictured groups.

Next up were in-depth interviews with people who own land within her study area. These interviews were structured to gather insights and determine relevant issues and local language associated with snakes and turtles.

Finally, Rebecca designed and distributed a self-administered mail survey. The results will determine respondents' beliefs, attitudes and behavioral intentions toward reptiles. It will also provide information about how wildlife communication resources are used by landowners.

Using data collected through interviews and the mail survey, Rebecca will develop guidelines for future educational materials and activities focusing on the conservation of Michigan reptiles. These will be aimed at reducing harmful behaviors toward rattlesnakes. As part of this project, Rebecca will conduct an outreach experiment to test the effectiveness of different teaching approaches. In addition, she will develop and assess a volunteer program of snake responders. Snake responders receive training in handling human-snake conflicts or management concerns. They receive training on safely moving a snake if absolutely necessary, on the ecology and conservation of snake species, and on how to communicate effectively with individuals about snakes, particularly venomous snakes.

- K.O.



2005 Kemp Outreach Program

1. All sessions require advance registration.
2. Class sizes are limited, so please register early.
3. Sessions are free of charge.
4. To register, contact Karla at (715) 358-5667 or kemp@calshp.cals.wisc.edu

Most sessions are held in the second floor classroom above the Kemp Boathouse. There is a short walk to the Boathouse from the parking area and the classroom is accessible by stairs only.

Participants are reminded to dress appropriately for the weather and planned outdoor activities.

May 9 (Monday) 6:00 pm

(Inclement weather date: May 10)

Flight of the Timberdoodle

Session Leader: *Amber Roth, Former WDNR Wildlife Research Technician*

Learn about one of our most unusual birds - the American Woodcock. Following the indoor presentation the group will make a trip off Station to observe displaying woodcock. Other birds active around sunset will likely be observed including thrushes, whip-poor-wills, night-hawks, and maybe owls.

Site visit details: Personal vehicles will be driven caravan style to the field site. Please anticipate approximately 30 minutes for travel. Detailed maps and driving directions to the site will be provided before Station departure. Be sure to dress for the weather, remembering that temperatures drop after sunset. Wear outdoor shoes/boots to protect against muddy conditions. Please bring a flashlight, as it will be dark when we finish. You may leave for home directly from the site after the program.

May 23 (Monday) 6:30-8:30 am

(Inclement weather date: May 24)

May Madness!

Session Leader: *Jim Baughman, WDNR Forester*

It's May and that can mean only one thing — it's the best time of the year to be a birdwatcher! Join us for an early morning hike around Kemp Station to observe birds on spring migration.

June 4 (Saturday) 8:00 am – Noon

(Inclement weather date: June 5)

Bird Monitoring

Session Leader: *Amber Roth, Former WDNR Wildlife Research Technician*



Ever wonder whether the numbers of birds are changing in your yard or neighborhood? Learn simple techniques to monitor birds on your property or any place you like to watch birds. It's easier than you think! Also learn about ways your birding data can be used to help support research.

June 7 (Tuesday) 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Discover Dragonflies & Damselflies

Session Leader: *Bob Dubois, WDNR Ecologist*

Learn about the dragonflies and damselflies of Wisconsin! This indoor presentation will include an introduction to the 8 families of Odonates, the basics of life history and highlights on behavior and ecology. Also learn about the Wisconsin statewide survey of these mighty fliers and how you can become involved.

June 8 (Wednesday) 9:30 am – 4:00 pm

(Inclement weather date: June 13)

Dragonfly & Damselfly Field Experience

Session Leader: *Bob Dubois, WDNR Ecologist*



Join us for a fun, hands-on field experience with dragonflies and damselflies! Learn how to net, examine and collect adults. Be trained in the search for larval skins along the water's edge. Learn the basic principles of field identification with the use of field guides. Discover how Odonates interact with their habitat. Participants are asked to bring their own lunch and beverage. Waders or hip boots are strongly recommended as much of the field activity will take place around a bog lake.

June 24 (Friday) 1:00 – 8:00 pm

Amphibians & Reptiles with Field Experience

Session Leader: *Rebecca Christoffel, Doctoral Candidate*

Join us for an in-depth look at Wisconsin's amphibians and reptiles. We'll start indoors with a presentation about the frog, turtle, snake, salamander and toad species of Wisconsin, their life history, ecology and behavior. Learn about the methods used to monitor populations and how you can monitor these animals on your own property. The outdoor portion of the session will give participants hands-on experience with monitoring techniques. Participants are asked to bring their own dinner and beverage.



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Outreach Program (Continued from Page 5)

July 27 (Wednesday) 10:00 am – 1:30 pm

(Inclement weather date: July 28)

Aquatic Plants – Wet & Wild!

Session Leader: *Susan Knight,*

Assistant Scientist, Trout Lake Station



Dive into the world of aquatic plants in this two-part workshop! You will learn to identify the most common aquatic plants in the lakes around our area, including exotic plants such as Eurasian Water-milfoil and Curly-leaf Pondweed. The first part of the workshop will cover plant habitats and which plants often occur together or look alike. Then learn how underwater plants differ from land plants and how plants can spread from one lake to another. There will be an excellent and inexpensive book on aquatic plants, “Through the Looking Glass,” available for purchase. (Class 10:00 am – 12:00 pm) After a lunch break (12:00-12:30), you will have the option to snorkel in a shallow bay of beautiful Lake Tomahawk, near Kemp Station, to hone your new plant identification skills (12:30-1:30). This bay is home to a wide variety of aquatic plants in a spectacular underwater garden setting. Enjoy these plants in their natural habitat and learn to appreciate their diversity and quiet beauty. (Those who wish to participate in the snorkeling part of the session should bring swim and snorkel gear. Life vests will be available for use. Participants should also bring their own lunch and beverage.)

August 15 (Monday) 2:00 pm

Shoreland Wildlife

Session Leader: *Scott Craven, UW-Extension*

Wildlife Specialist



Shoreland exists along lakes, rivers, streams and other natural waters. Many birds, mammals and herptiles utilize shoreland for nesting, feeding and other activities. Join us for an exploration of the wildlife that rely on this important habitat — who they are and how they use the space. Learn how land owners can help ensure shoreland habitat is available to wildlife. Included will be a hike to look at the shorelands at Kemp Station and the potential wildlife habitat they provide.

September 1 (Thursday) 6:30 pm

Introduction to Mushrooms

Session Leader: *Dan Czederpiltz, Research Mycologist*

Come learn what mushrooms are, how to find them, and how to identify them to determine if they are edible or poisonous. Mushroom ecology (why mushrooms grow where they grow), as well as taxonomy (why mush-

rooms are named the way they are named) will be covered. Learn about some of the most common species in northern Wisconsin, including some of the best edibles as well as poisonous look-a-likes.



September 2 (Friday) 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Mushroom Field Experience

Session Leader: *Dan Czederpiltz, Research Mycologist*

Join us for an introduction to field collecting, followed by an excursion where participants can learn how to collect their own specimens. Collections will be brought back to the lab, where participants will be guided through the identification of their collections. There will be an introduction to the most popular mushroom field guides, as well as some of the technical literature needed to do advanced identification. Explore the microscopic characters of mushrooms, as participants will have a chance to look at structures such as spores under a microscope. We'll wrap up with an overview on mushroom cookery, including a cooking demonstration of fresh mushrooms. Participants are asked to bring their own lunch and beverage.

Wisconsin NatureMapping

Now your wildlife sightings can help researchers and natural resource managers. Wisconsin NatureMapping (WNM) is an on-line reporting tool citizens can use to report their wildlife observations. Whether you see a badger digging along the side of a road, or hear a bull frog while on a camping trip, WNM provides a reporting place. Begun as a joint project with the Beaver Creek Reserve in Fall Creek and the Wisconsin DNR, NatureMapping is starting to really take off in the state.

Citizens can report sightings in two ways, as an unregistered user, or as a trained NatureMapper. Trained NatureMappers receive email updates about the WNM program. Data logged by trained Mappers is seen as more reliable by the WDNR, the primary user of the data.

NatureMapping training can be held at Kemp Station on an “as needed” basis. If you are interested in training, please notify Karla at (715) 358-5667 or kemp@calshp.cals.wisc.edu. To learn more about WNM, visit www.wisnatmap.org.



Kemp Station Needs Your Help

Kemp Station is building a new residence hall. Over the last several years, our research and teaching programs have grown dramatically. However, we have reached the point where we can no longer accommodate the large number of scientists and students who wish to study at the Station.

The new residence hall will meet this need. When completed, it will provide students and researchers with an exceptional facility where they can investigate the amazing world around us.

The building is a public-private partnership. The National Science Foundation awarded Kemp Station a grant for a portion of the construction costs and the Station is working hard to raise the balance of funds.


We have been very successful to date, receiving several generous gifts including a major donation

from the Mead Family for whom the facility will be named. However, there are still funds to raise and we need your help to make this project a reality.

Your financial support will ensure that:

- scientists are able to conduct important and innovative environmental research,
- students receive exceptional educational experiences in a one-of-a-kind setting, and
- the Northwoods community can participate in the Wisconsin Idea that believes the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of the state.

Each donation brings us one step closer to our goal. Donors of \$500 or more will be recognized on a plaque prominently displayed within the new residence hall. Also, a \$75,000 challenge fund has been created that will match your gift dollar for dollar.

If you are committed to natural resource stewardship, we ask that you consider a donation to this exciting project. Thank you. 

Kemp Natural Resources Station -- Mead Residence Hall Project Pledge Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

I/we wish to join other friends and alumni in enhancing the teaching, research and outreach programs at the Kemp Natural Resources Station by contributing as indicated below to the Mead Residence Hall project.

____ Enclosed is my/our contribution to the Mead Residence Hall project:
____ \$5,000 Eagle ____ \$1,000 Loon ____ \$500 Chickadee ____ Other \$ _____

____ I/we wish to pledge \$ _____ each year for ____ years beginning in _____ (year).
Please remind me/us of the annual amount I/we have pledged in _____ (month).

____ Please charge \$ _____ to my: ____ Master Card ____ Visa ____ American Express

Card number _____ Exp Date ____/____

Cardholder's Name (please print) _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____

Please make your gifts payable to the **UW Foundation-Mead Residence Hall Project**
University of Wisconsin Foundation, 1848 University Ave, Madison, WI 53726



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