



Kemp's Point

Volume 14, Number 1, Spring 2013

News from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Kemp Natural Resources Station

Great Expectations

By Keith Phelps & Meagan Backhaus,
UW-Madison Forestry Students

The expectation was mild April weather. I envisioned timber cruising with a sweatshirt conveniently wrapped around my waist. I saw myself taking in the emerging wildflowers and buds while contemplating the songs of bird species I could not identify. However, Mother Nature took a turn for the worse laughing at my romantic image. For the 2013 UW Madison Biometry field trip, spring had yet to receive the memo.

Knee deep snow was the harsh reality and the Biometry class soldiered through the inconvenience with fiery spirit. Our mission was to assess the timber volume, tree species distribution, and tree density using our own tailored sampling design and custom made maps. The class was divided into five teams and with GPS units and compass we entered the lonely Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. I enjoyed every minute of repeatedly wrapping my logger's tape around sugar maples, red oaks and red pines, marking waypoints, and



estimating saw log height. That was until I discovered jeans and non-waterproof boots somehow don't keep you from getting soaked as you trudge through knee deep snow. But luckily my spirits were lifted by the endless humor of my two fellow cruisers and the beauty of the forest. As much as I love warm weather, there's something about the deafening silence of winter that makes one let go of everything and just be if not for only a minute. In the classroom, it's difficult to remember the effect that being immersed in the wilderness has on the individual. On this field trip I rekindled my passion for the outdoors and rediscovered why my major was necessary for me, and to a greater extent, the world. We work to preserve these places for those just finding out what getting lost in the woods is all about (while providing the world with a vital resource in a sustainable way).

Thank you Kemp Station for providing us with a place to warm our numb bodies and allow us to hone our timber cruising skills. We owe you everything and I can't wait to revisit during the UW Madison Forestry Summer Camp! 🧢



Earlier this winter, Kemp Station along with partners from UW-Madison's Trout Lake Station, the Minocqua Public Library, the Lakeland Badger Chapter of the Wisconsin Alumni Association and the Minocqua Brewing Company launched a new outreach series called Science On Tap. The series links citizens and scientists for a fun evening of engaging conversation about the environmental research taking place in the Northwoods.

When you think of the Northwoods, images of crystal clear lakes and verdant forests jump to mind. What many people don't realize is that these same features—woods & waters—make the Northwoods a remarkable outdoor laboratory. A laboratory with incredible scope and impressive legacy. The catch is that, historically, much of this research has been invisible to the public. Science On Tap seeks to change that. Tim Kratz, director of the Trout Lake Station and

questions. What follows is an informative, entertaining and free-flowing conversation.

Response to Science On Tap has been outstanding. Events routinely attract 150 people and more. While this overwhelming attendance has generated some unexpected growing pains, the planning team has been busy making adjustments to accommodate the fantastic interest.



Photograph by Dean Hall.

So if you find yourself thirsty for a serving of Northwoods knowledge, swing by the Minocqua Brewing Company, grab a beer and join the conversation. 🍷

Science On Tap occurs the first Wednesday of each month from 6:30-7:30PM at the Minocqua Brewing Company, 238 Lakeshore Drive, Minocqua, WI. Events are free, fun and open to everyone. To learn more about series, see a schedule of upcoming speakers & topics, and view past events, visit <http://www.scienceontapminocqua.org/index.html>.

Funding for Science On Tap is provided by the generous support of the College of Agricultural & Life Sciences and UW-Madison's Speakers Bureau.



the person responsible for the idea of Science On Tap, notes, "We want to show our neighbors what we do and what we are learning about this place called home."

Science On Tap is unlike any other educational event you may have attended. It's not a lecture, not a seminar but an informal discussion in a wonderfully comfortable and relaxed setting. PowerPoint presentations are not allowed. Instead, speakers introduce their topic for 15 minutes and then open the floor for



Little Tiny Flowers

By Karla Ortman

Without a doubt, fall is my favorite season. I love the changing leaves, the cooler temperatures, and the scents in the air. And fall is the precursor to my 2nd favorite season – winter! I love the snow, the quiet, the freshness of cold temperatures. For me, spring comes in 3rd – once I get past the wet and mud, which do not go well with the two hairy dogs in my life – I just love the spring chorus of birds and frogs. At the bottom of my list is summer, with its heat, humidity and the biting, pestering insects. Fortunately, summer to me is not completely without merit. There is one thing I truly enjoy about summer and that is the blooming of the little, tiny flowers.

On our property and along the road in certain spots, a pretty little magenta colored flower grows. *Polygala paucifolia*, also known as gay-wing or fringed polygala, sports a small orchid-like flower, about $\frac{3}{4}$ " long. View the flower from just the right angle and you will see its resemblance to an airplane or bird in flight. In fact, the plant is known to some as "bird-on-the-wing." The name, *Polygala*, is from the Greek, *Polys* for "many or much" and *gala*, for "milk." It was believed that the presence of this plant in a pasture would lead to higher milk production from the grazing cows. Fringed polygala is a native plant in Wisconsin and blooms from May to June. The flower is cleverly designed to punch an insect in the belly with some pollen when the insect lands upon it,



thus ensuring the spread of its pollen. *Polygala* produces a second flower, hidden among the leaf litter, growing on underground stems, but it does not bloom. Instead, it self-fertilizes to produce seed. In the field of Botany, it is known as a cleistogamous flower. Who knew so much was going on with such a tiny plant?

While researching this little beauty, I came across an excerpt from the book *Riverby* written by John Burroughs in the late 1800's: *"I must not forget to mention that delicate and lovely flower of May, the fringed polygala. You gather it when you go for the fragrant showy orchis – that is, if you are lucky enough to find it. It is rather a shy flower, and is not found in every wood. One day we went up and down through the woods looking for it – woods of mingled oak, chestnut, pine, and hemlock—and were about giving it up when suddenly we came upon a gay company of them beside an old wood-road. It was as if a flock of small rose-purple butterflies had alighted there on the ground before us. The whole plant has a singularly fresh and tender aspect. Its foliage is of a slightly purple tinge and of very delicate texture. Not the least interesting feature about the plant is the concealed fertile flower which it bears on a subterranean stem, keeping, as it were, one*

flower for beauty and one for use."

Just over a mile from our house, right off the shoulder of the road, a patch of twinflower can be found. In Wisconsin, twinflower blooms anytime from June-August and my experience is that it doesn't bloom for long, so it takes a commitment on my part if I want to see this flowering beauty. Two small pinkish-white bell-like flowers dangle from a slender stalk about 4 inches tall. The flower itself is only about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. "Delicate" is a good word to describe this plant and its flower. It is an evergreen perennial, whose shiny, oval leaves last about two years before being shed and replaced with new. The plant creeps, growing low to the ground, among other groundcover type plants. This plant relies on cross-pollination to produce viable seed, but in the absence of this, once the plant is 5-10 years old, it produces stolons, which are above-ground runners that grow up to 18-inches long in a year, allowing the plant patch to enlarge in size. It is thought that large patches of twinflower are indicative of long-established woodlands.

Its common name needs little explanation, but the Latin name, *Linnaea borealis*, has an interesting origin. The plant was first named *Campanula serpyllifolia* in 1596, *Campanula* meaning "little bell." While on an excursion to Lapland in northern Sweden in 1732, Carl Linnaeus came across great quantities of this plant and it became his favorite. Upon completion of this excursion, a portrait of Linnaeus was painted

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Barking Up the Right Tree

By William Klase, UW-Extension Natural Resources Educator

In winter, my appreciation for tree bark is reignited. Framed by blue skies and snow and uncluttered by leaves, the uniqueness and beauty of bark truly stands out in winter. We often don't give it much thought, but bark adds a great deal to our forests and our society.

As a part of the aesthetic appeal of trees, bark is the subtle textures that backdrop the rest of the forest. Think about oak with its alternating broad plates, beech with its smoothness, balsam fir with its resin blisters, or basswood with its vertical furrows. Then there are the variety of colors that abound like the whites and coppers of birch, the red/grey of red pine, the nearly blacks of cherry, and the mottled colors of sugar maple.

Now consider some of the more extravagant barks like the diamond-patterned ash, the peeling and curling birch, the burnt cornflake look of cherry, or the haggard looking hackberry. These will quickly draw your eye and you can see them from quite the distance.

Additionally, I marvel at how bark changes as the tree ages. From the smooth and fragile nature that is common among saplings and small poles to the rough texture in older trees. This is especially true in aspen where you can see the change taking place as

the roughness creeps up the stem. And white pine where you can scratch the bark off with your fingernail when young and how it can be an inch and a half thick when mature.

And then I remember that what seems like just dead armor is in fact living tissue. The inner-most layer of bark is actually growing outwards creating new bark to replace the old. Another inner layer, called the phloem, transports the sugars produced in the leaves down to the roots. However, the dead tissues are the ones we see and they protect the tree from water loss and insects, diseases, fire, hail, and other damaging agents.

Finally, like other parts of the tree, bark has and has had a myriad of uses. Many cultures have used bark for practical things like tools, clothing, food and the creation of containers like baskets. We currently use bark as mulch for our gardens, as a source for medicines, and as a fuel for heating our homes. Researchers are constantly exploring the different ingredients in bark for the next aspirin or cancer treatment drug.

My personal uses for bark are simple (as a cover for my firewood pile and as fuel), but my appreciation for it is quite profound. Take a moment the next time you are in the woods to marvel at this wonderful part of our trees. 🍂

...Tiny Flowers (Cont'd from Page 3)

in which he wore traditional Lapland attire and held his favorite plant, the twinflower. Carl Linneaus is best known for his contribution to binomial nomenclature, which is the formal system of naming all living things, giving each a two-part name. The story goes that Linneaus wanted the twinflower named after him, but it was not appropriate for botanists to name plants after themselves. Instead, his teacher and friend, Jan Frederik Gronovius, renamed the plant "Linnaea," to which Linneaus added "borealis" to refer to the plant's northern distribution. The new name was officially published in 1753 by Linneaus himself. While this story seems a bit self-indulgent, it is interesting to note that in his 1737 book, *Critica Botanica* ("Critique of Botany") Linneaus wrote:

"...it is commonly believed that the name of a plant which is derived from that of a botanist shows no connection between the two...[but]...Linnaea was named by the celebrated Gronovius and is a plant of Lapland, lowly, insignificant, disregarded, flowering but for a brief space — after Linnaeus who resembles it."



Keep an eye out for these little tiny flowers....if you see them, you will be glad you did! 🍂



Learning Opportunities at Kemp

Learn about Wisconsin's natural resources at Kemp Natural Resources Station, a University of Wisconsin research and teaching facility in Woodruff. To register for a session, contact Karla at (715) 358-5667 or kemp@cals.wisc.edu. All sessions are free of charge unless specified otherwise. The complete schedule is available at www.kemp.wisc.edu.

Sessions may be held in the Boathouse Classroom, the Fralish Library & Lounge at the Mead Residence Hall, or in the outdoor Pavilion.

Experience Wildlife Field Camp

Join UW-Madison students for a taste of Wildlife Ecology Field Camp! Affectionately known as "Summer Camp," students spend two weeks at Kemp Station for an intensive study of wildlife ecology. You are invited to participate in select learning experiences. Enrollment is limited. Participants should dress appropriate for activity and weather.



May 22 (Wednesday) 7:00pm
Northwoods Wildlife Management & Issues
Fireside visit with Scott Craven, Extension Wildlife Specialist (Emeritus), UW-Madison.

May 27 (Monday) 7:00pm
Forest Management & Wildlife
Learn about early successional forest management for ruffed grouse, woodcock, and other associated wildlife.



May 29 (Wednesday) 9:00am - Noon
Fish Ecology & Management
WDNR fish biologists discuss fish ecology and management in northern Wisconsin. Watch the crew pull in a fyke net set along the shores of Lake Tomahawk containing a variety of fish species.



May 30 (Thursday) 1:00pm - 3:30pm
Managing Wildlife Conflict
USDA APHIS Wildlife Services team demonstrate how the agency manages wildlife conflicts in Wisconsin with a focus on beaver, bear, and wolves.



May 24 (Friday) 6:00 pm

Birds of the Night

Session Leader: Amber Roth, Michigan Tech University



Birdwatching at dusk can be as exciting as dawn. The main difference is in the cast of characters encountered. Following an indoor presentation the group will make a trip off Station to look and listen for thrushes, whip-poor-wills, woodcock, nighthawks, and owls under a full moon. With some luck, you'll see a woodcock in the hand too!

Personal vehicles will be driven caravan style to the outdoor program 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 or headlamp, as it will be dark when we finish. You may leave for home directly from the site after the program.

June 8 (Saturday) 9:00 am

Forest Discovery Walk

Session Leaders: Collin Buntrock and Scott Bowe, UW-Madison



Take a hike through the forest at Kemp Station to learn about the common trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants found in northern Wisconsin and how to easily identify them in the field (this requires some creativity!). There will be stops along the way to discuss ecological succession, forest sustainability, plant-animal relationships, and the importance of forests and the products they provide to us as consumers. Please dress appropriately for the weather, with appropriate footwear for an uneven trail.



Learning Opportunities....(Cont'd from page 5)

June 8 (Saturday) 1:00 pm

Habitat for Bats

Session Leader: Linda Winn, Retired WI DNR



Let's build a bat house! It's a great way to help these threatened animals who help us by providing free, organic pest control. First, learn about the bats of Wisconsin and why they are important to us. Learn where to place the house to increase your chances of having bats roost in it and return year after year. Then, assemble the bat house using pre-cut materials. Tools and materials to build the bat house will be provided but if you have a cordless drill driver you'd like to bring that would be appreciated. Registration limit: 15. Fee: \$10 per person

June 15 (Saturday) 9:00 am

Shiitake Fun!

Session Leaders: Scott Bowe and Glen Stanosz, UW-Madison



Back by popular demand! Join us for an introduction to Shiitake mushroom cultivation. Green thumb not required! This hands-on demonstration will begin with a discussion of the life cycle of Shiitake mushrooms. Did you know that Shiitake mushrooms grow on logs? We will demonstrate how hardwood logs are prepared, inoculated, and cared for to grow these delicious mushrooms. Come ready to work! Participants will be asked to form an assembly line to prepare and inoculate logs that can be taken home at the end of the session. You will have an opportunity to perform each step in the Shiitake process so you will have the skills to build your own mushroom garden. Mushroom samples will be served after the seminar to reward your efforts. Registration limit: 15

June 24 (Monday) 7:00 pm

Wood Products: From the Forest to your Home

Session Leader: Scott Bowe, UW-Madison



Learn about Wisconsin's forest industry and the types of wood products that are harvested from our forests. See how value is added to these raw materials to produce the finished products we use in our everyday lives. Some of these value-added wood products are produced here in Wisconsin, while

others are manufactured overseas. Be ready to discuss the pros and cons of our global forest products industry.

July 8 (Monday) 7:00 pm

Wisconsin's gray wolves: a story of survival and recovery

Session Leader: Jennifer Stenglein, UW-Madison

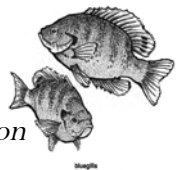


Wisconsin's gray wolves have rebounded from a handful of individuals in the 1980s to over 800 today. The obvious driver of this population growth is that more wolves have to enter Wisconsin through birth and immigration than leave Wisconsin through death and emigration. Though it begins with this simple story, there are fascinating twists and turns along the way. Wisconsin's wolves had to overcome a lot to grow into the population they are today. Jennifer Stenglein will share with you some of her research on wolf population dynamics. In particular, she will give some ideas for why wolves took so many years to exceed endangered status, and how wolf survival and causes of wolf mortality have varied over time and across Wisconsin.

July 23 (Tuesday) 7:00 pm

From Lake & Field to the Dinner Table

Session Leader: Scott Craven, UW-Madison



Join retired UW-Extension Wildlife Specialist, Scott Craven, for an interactive exploration of the various game and fish available in Wisconsin, as well as how and where to get it. Learn the proper way to care for your harvest in the field, in storage and prior to cooking or preparation. Scott will share some of his favorite cookbooks and recipes, share some tasty samples, and tips on cooking, pickling, smoking and beyond!



July 30 (Tuesday) 7:00 pm

What Vilas County's Carnivores Think of Lakeshore Development

Session Leader: Dan Haskell, Michigan Tech University

Northern Wisconsin is home to a variety of carnivores, including bobcats, fishers, fox and wolves. A recent study examined the impact that develop-

(Continued on Page 7)



Learning Opportunities....(Cont'd from page 6)

ment, specifically along lake shores, has on these animals. Join us for a discussion of this study and please bring your own observations and questions to share.

August 10 (Saturday) 9:00 am

Youth Forestry (Ages 5 to 11)

Session Leader: Scott Bowe, UW-Madison



Have you ever wondered what foresters do or how forests grow and change? Please bring your children or grandchildren to Kemp Station for a hands-on adventure to learn about the forests around us. We will learn how to age and measure trees. Use leaf rubbings to produce spectacular works of art and make leaf necklaces to help us remember what we learned about forests.

Individually Scheduled Turning Wood into Art

Session Leader: Scott Bowe, UW-Madison

Do you like wood? Do you like pens? If you answered yes to these questions, it stands to reason that you might like wood pens! Join Scott Bowe, Professor of Wood Products, for a hands-on demonstration of wood pen turning. Each session will last about one hour and each participant will make their own wood pen. Participants will learn the basics of wood turning, discuss common wood properties, turn and assemble a wood pen, and leave with their very own work of art. Sessions will be offered this summer (June-August) in one or two person groups. Participants should be 12 years of age or older. Contact Scott at sbowe@wisc.edu to schedule a time. Fee: \$15 per person.

Boathouse Classroom Gets a Face Lift

It may appear quiet at Kemp Station during the winter months, but there are usually some special projects underway. This past winter our talented carpenter, Gary Kellner, worked diligently in the most popular room on the property – the Boathouse Classroom. First on the docket was new window hardware. The 1930's vintage hardware was becoming more difficult to operate and in some instances had failed completely. Given the unique design of the windows, it was not easy to find appropriate hardware, but we did and now all of the classroom windows operate with ease!

Next up came new lighting and a new ceiling, a very pretty tongue and groove panelling. The entire room was given a fresh coat of paint



and all the chairs and tables were refinished. As this issue goes to print, preparations are taking place to paint the floor and the final step will be to install new window treatments....no more sprunged roller shades snapping up in the middle of a presentation! We hope our users will find these upgrades to their liking! 🍷



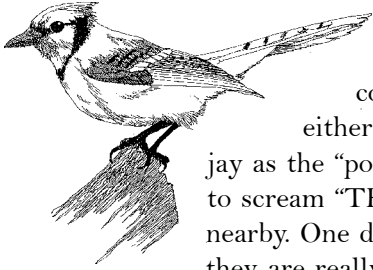
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Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta Cristata*)



I grew up viewing the blue jay as the “bad boy” of the bird world. Mom and Gramma were quick to complain of the blue jay going after the robin’s nest, either for its eggs or young. And yet they referred to the blue jay as the “police” (with the emphasis on the “po”), as the bird seemed to scream “THIEF! THIEF!” when there was trouble, like a hawk, nearby. One day this winter as I watched a blue jay, I thought, “Wow, they are really pretty birds!” And realizing it is probably the most colorful bird we have around here in the winter, I decided some research was warranted. One of the most fascinating things I read was about the blue feather color which results from light interference due to the internal structure of the feathers – if you crush a blue feather, the blue disappears because you have destroyed the internal structure. The bird does “police” an area, chasing predatory birds and sounding an alarm call when predators are nearby, which other, smaller birds will react to by hiding. Ironically, the slower flight of the blue jay makes them easy prey for hawks and owls. The blue jay diet is varied -- nuts, acorns, grains, seeds, insects, worms, human food scraps, but rarely eggs or nestlings. In fact, one study showed that only 1% of their diet was derived from other birds. Perhaps they are not such “bad boys” after all.

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This newsletter is also available as a PDF at the Kemp website, www.kemp.wisc.edu.

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