Kemp's Point

Volume 20, Number 1, Spring 2019

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

A Wildlife Mini-Symposium -- Share, Learn, Bond

Kemp Station means different things to different people. For researchers, it is home while conducting science in northern Wisconsin. For university students, it is an outdoor classroom. For natural resource professionals, it is a meeting and workshop venue, often with fond memories of their time at Kemp as students. And on a cold weekend in February, it was a place for a UW-Madison Forest & Wildlife Ecology lab group to share, learn and strengthen bonds.

Since February 2016, Dr. Tim Van Deelen has been making an annual visit to Kemp Station with "his lab" -- the graduate students he advises. The Van Deelen Lab specializes in various areas of wildlife ecology, including:

- Management of large mammals, including population estimation, hunting, and interactions of Wisconsin's large mammals
- Population dynamics, including the effects of competition and predation
- Movement of large mammals through complex landscapes and their effects on population management
- Interaction of deer life history and chronic wasting disease
- Growth of Wisconsin's wolf population and its effects on white-tailed deer

Students advised by Van Deelen are pursuing a degree, masters or doctorate, or are working as postdoctoral researchers. During their tenure, each student conducts research on a particular topic, usually within the bulleted areas mentioned earlier.

The visit to Kemp Station includes what Van Deelen refers to as a "mini-symposium." This year's three hour event, which ran just a bit longer, was a treat to attend, and would be for anyone interested in wildlife.

The morning began with refreshments -- a generous spread of pastries, fruit and beverages. What better way to kick things off?! Once we took our seats in the Gordon R. Connor Lecture Hall, we were welcomed by Van Deelen. Casually clutching his coffee cup, he explained that we would hear talks from graduate students, post-docs and one professor from UW-Stevens Point. Van Deelen explained that when a person is asked to present their research at scientific conferences, they are restricted to a 15 or 20 minute time block. His students need to learn how to stretch the material to fill the time, or recognize that they have packed too much information into their talk. This visit to Kemp Station provided them with an opportunity to practice this skill.

Van Deelen introduced the first speaker, Morgan,

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who is from California and was especially enjoying the below zero temperature of the day. Morgan's presentation was titled "Is there anybody out there? Detecting the carnivore community of the Apostle Islands." She discussed the methods and results of monitoring carnivore activity, with an analysis of distribution in relation to the mainland. A highlight of her presentation was a collection of trail camera photos of the various carnivores observed.

From the carnivores of the Apostle Islands, the presentations took us next to the orangutans of Borneo with Olivia and then to the mule deer of the western United States with Jennifer. Returning to Wisconsin – first, Megan discussed white-tailed deer migration; Alison followed with the population effects of Chronic Wasting Disease and finally, Heather discussed summer range habitat suitability of two state threatened bat species.

An intermission gave everyone a chance to stretch their legs and refuel, as even more snacks had been set out for attendees to enjoy. This break also gave the students and guests a chance to visit and provide feedback or ask questions.

Next, as if our minds were not already reaching the point of saturation for a Saturday morning, UW-Stevens Point Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology, Shawn Crimmins, a former postdoc with Van Deelen, gave an overview of the research being conducted in his lab. Crimmins studies furbearers, carnivores and game species with specific topics including swift fox and black-footed ferrets in Kansas and river otters and beavers in Wisconsin.

To close out the last hour (or so) of talks, the next three students took us out of Wisconsin again. First with Alyssa to the sage grouse leks of Colorado to examine how disturbance from a coal mine will affect bird population; then, with Tricia, to the north slope of Alaska to assess polar bear health in a changing climate; and, with Nicole, a visit to the snake temples of Myanmar where Burmese pythons are worshipped. Wrapping up the day, Lucas brought us back to moose in northern Wisconsin.

The visit to Kemp Station is not all work and no play. Another important part of the adventure north was relationship building and what better way to do so than with a XC ski outing?

Each talk was meticulously timed by Rachel, who, from the back of the room, held up a colored piece of paper to alert the speaker of the remaining presentation time. How did we know this? One speaker commented, "Red, already?! How is that possible?!" At the end of each talk, the presenter entertained questions from the audience. Between each talk, Van Deelen introduced the next speaker, often sharing humorous anecdotes about the particular study or an experience with the student.

When asked about the experience of giving a talk during this "mini-symposium," feedback from the students was fairly consistent. Jennifer appreciated the opportunity to share her research from the western U.S. and to prove that mule deer are the "cuter deer." Valuable to Tricia was learning more about what other lab members were doing in greater detail. This was important to Alyssa as well, since she spends a great deal of time doing field work outside of the lab.

As far as the venue, Tricia thought the room at the Connor Forestry Center was a great place to give a talk – the size and atmosphere of the room was just right. Rachel, who has presented in previous years, noted that this is a good opportunity for students to present and get experience in a low stress environment with a friendly crowd.

In terms of that friendly crowd, several attendees mentioned their reason for attending was to

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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. This year you are invited to participate in some of their learning experiences. Participants should dress appropriately for activity and weather. Enrollment is limited. To register, contact Karla at kortman@wisc.edu or 715-358-5667.

Thursday, May 16, 9:00-11:30 am - join John Kubisiak (WDNR Fisheries Supervisor) and Zach Woiak (WDNR Fisheries Biologist) as they discuss fish ecology and management in northern Wisconsin. Attendees will get to see the crew pull-in a fyke net set along the shore of Tomahawk Lake containing a variety of fish species. A short walk over uneven terrain is required.

Friday, May 17, 7:00 pm - join Scott Walter (WDNR Large Carnivore Specialist) in a fireside discussion on managing Wisconsin's large carnivores (bears, wolves and cougars).

Monday, May 20, 7:00 pm - join Jon Steigerwaldt (Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society Wildlife Biologist) for a presentation on early successional forest management for ruffed grouse, woodcock, and associated wildlife.

Thursday, May 23, 1:00-4:00 pm - join Bob Willging (District Supervisor) and the USDA APHIS Wildlife Services team as they explain through demonstrations how the agency manages wildlife conflicts in Wisconsin with a focus on beaver, bear and wolves.

Wisconsin Insect Fest
July 26-27

Learn about and celebrate the diversity of Wisconsin's insects and other arthropods with members of the UW-Madison Department of Entomology. This first-time event will feature lectures, guided activities, and The Great Wisconsin Bug Hunt. Activities kick off Friday evening and continue through Saturday. A main focus of the event will be The Great Wisconsin Bug Hunt—an arthropod BioBlitz activity on Saturday.

It doesn't matter if it's been decades since you last collected an insect or if you're a regular insect observer—The Great Wisconsin Bug Hunt offers a chance to join entomologists and fellow insect enthusiasts to see just how many different arthropods can be observed at Kemp Station in a single day. Saturday's schedule will feature a number of educational breakout activities to supplement the BioBlitz activity. Persons of all interest levels are welcome – come for some or stay for all. More information and a detailed schedule will be available in June at www.kemp.wisc.edu/outreach/events.

Mini-Symposium... *(Continued from Page 2)*

fulfill their desire to learn, they were "lifelong learners." For Keith McCaffery, a retired WDNR white-tailed deer researcher, this event was an opportunity to engage with students on specific topics and to touch base with people on the cutting edge of research. Dick Jenks, who regularly attends outreach sessions at Kemp Station, was particularly impressed with the variety of topics and research and with the capability and sophistication of the researchers.

Van Deelen plans to be back with his students. If the "mini-symposium" sounds like something you would like to attend, keep an eye out for an announcement of the event next year. It is a neat way to spend a Saturday morning.

When it Rains, it Pours: Water Damage at Mead Residence Hall

It was early evening, January 14, when UW-Madison researcher, Jonathan Thom, pulled into the parking area at the Mead Residence Hall. Before getting out of the truck, he noticed flashing lights in the building. Jonathan has worked out of Kemp Station for several years, so he recognized the flashing lights meant the building's fire alarm system had been activated. In the summer months at Kemp, it is not unusual to lose power during storms. Power loss triggers the building alarm and causes a very loud disturbance that can be silenced easily with a push of a button. However, in this instance, Jonathan was unable to silence the alarm. His next action was to contact Scott Bowe, Station Superintendent. "I hadn't really paid attention to the soaking wet rug in the vestibule until I left the building to call Scott. And it wasn't until we walked downstairs to shut the alarm off that we realized how bad it was."

It is unclear what caused the 1.5-inch pipe in the building's attic sprinkler system to fail. But when it did, the fire suppression system was triggered and all 9,000 gallons of water from the underground tanks were pumped into the attic space. Based on the capacity of the fire pump it is estimated that the tanks were emptied in less than 30 minutes. From the attic, the water ran down through interior walls into the kitchen area, flooding the hard maple wood floor in the kitchen and a portion of the hall. The water then drained through the floor system and "rained" down into the Library & Lounge on the lower level. The water spread out and soaked all of the carpet in the lower level, eventually draining out the back doors of the building.

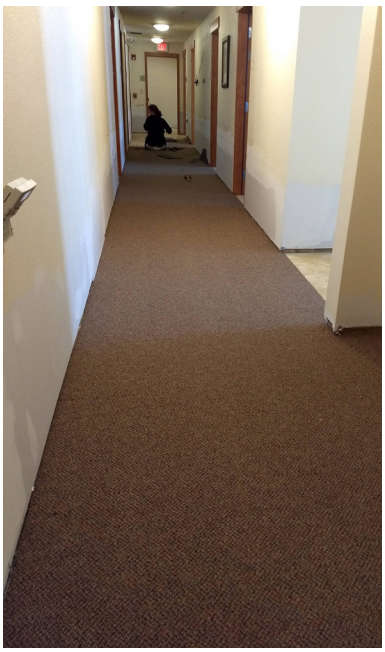
Below: The culprit. Right: Much of the water flowed out of the building from the double doors on the lower level, leaving a ravine in the snow.

Left: Water beneath paint on walls and ceiling. Below: Water pooled on tables in the lower level Library & Lounge making it appear as though it had rained in the room. Fortunately, the tongue and groove ceiling was spared of damage.

If there is a silver lining anywhere in this story, it is the timing. Had this happened in the middle of summer with the building at or near full capacity, the challenge would have been much greater. Instead, planned winter projects were delayed or postponed as clean up and replacement occurred. Kemp staff removed damaged paneling, drywall and insulation. While furniture was not damaged, a great deal of it had to be relocated numerous times during repairs. The large tasks of tearing out and replacing the hardwood floor and carpeting, and the installation and painting of new drywall were contracted out.

Thanks to a lot of hard work by Kemp staff and contractors, by the time researchers and students begin arriving for the summer field season, it will seem as though nothing went awry at the Mead Residence Hall during the winter!

Top, left: Large fans were used to dry out the wall interior in the dining room; the water caused the hardwood floor to buckle in many places. Top, right: Water damaged drywall and insulation in the Library & Lounge on the lower level required replacement. Middle, left: Gary Dalka, Kemp Station's Facility Maintenance Specialist Advanced, shown installing new insulation in the Elevator Equipment Room. Middle, center: The bucket on the tractor came in handy for transporting construction debris from the rear of the building to the front where a large collection dumpster was located. Middle, right: Water damaged panelling and drywall in the lower hall was torn out and replaced. Lower, left: The water damaged carpet was removed and replaced with new carpet squares throughout the lower level. Lower, right: Just how much water, you ask? The ash bucket on the fireplace hearth was full with water upon discovery. Chances are it did overflow at some point!



DISCOVERY WALKS AT KEMP STATION

Kemp Station is home to numerous habitat types -- old-growth forest remnants, second-growth forests of hemlock, pine, and northern hardwoods, lake coves, bogs, a bog lake, ponds and over a mile of lakeshore. We are pleased to offer "discovery walks" on the property, each lead by experts in their field. These walks are open to all knowledge and interest levels. Dress appropriately for the weather, wear comfortable walking shoes for rough trails and possible wet conditions, and bring insect repellent. Unless otherwise noted, meet at the Outdoor Pavilion. No registration required.

Discover the Birds of Kemp Station, led by David Drake, UW-Madison
Saturday, May 25, 7:00 am (Inclement weather date, May 26
Note: Binoculars recommended; field guide optional.

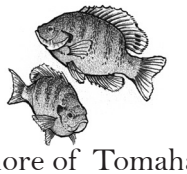
Discover the Sedges of Kemp Station, led by Libby Zimmerman, UW-Madison
Saturday, June 8, 2:00 pm (Inclement weather date, June 9)
Note: Park and meet at the green space by the white house. Binoculars and hand lens optional.

Tree Walk & Talk: The Life, Death & Rebirth of Trees
Saturday, June 15, 10:00 am
What natural events or human decisions lead to forest establishment, shape forest composition and tree growth, and influence natural mortality or plans for harvests? What is "silvics"? And what is "silviculture"? Are trees just trees, or a "systems" of organisms vital to forest productivity and sustainability? Join Forest and Wildlife Ecology professor of tree and forest health Dr. Glen Stanosz for a morning walk and talk about the life, death, and rebirth of the trees at Kemp Natural Resources Station. In case of inclement weather, an indoor talk and discussion will substitute.

Discover the Bees of Kemp Station, led by Wayne Newby, Local Beekeeper
Saturday, June 22, 9:30 am
Learn about and visit the special hives at Kemp Station and the bees that inhabit them.

Just for Kids

Fish Up Close!
Tuesday, June 25, 10:00 am
Location: Outdoor Pavilion



Join us at Kemp Station on the shore of Tomahawk Lake for a close up look at fish – the life history, unique characteristics, anatomy and the environment in which they live. Learn how scientists determine the age of a fish. Various specimens will be available to view and touch, along with special equipment used to study fish. Register for this program on or after June 11 by calling the Minocqua Public Library at 715-356-4437.

Fun In the Forest (Ages 5 to 11)
Tuesday, July 2, 10:00 am
Location: Outdoor Pavilion

Join us for an exciting forest adventure to learn about the forests of Northern Wisconsin. Our trek will show us how forests change over time and how much we depend upon our forests for products that we use every day. We will end our trek with a stop on the Jyme Lake bog. Please wear old shoes or sturdy sandals since your feet will get wet on the bog. The hike distance will be about 1 mile. Parents and grandparents are welcome to join in the fun. Register on or after June 18 by calling the Minocqua Public Library at 715-356-4437.

EVENING PRESENTATIONS

No registration required. Location: Connor Forestry Center

Peenting Timberdoodles

Friday, May 10, 7:00 pm

Perhaps no other Wisconsin bird is as bizarre as the American woodcock. Learn about the woodcock's unique biology and the current research being done by graduate student, Christopher Roelandt. Following the presentation, those who wish may travel by personal vehicle to a nearby field site. At the site, we anticipate observing the male woodcock's strange courtship display. If conditions are right, we will attempt to use mist nets to capture, band, and get an up-close look at the woodcocks strange appearance. Hiking will be on a maintained trail for a short distance. Be sure to dress for the weather and bring a flashlight or headlamp.

An Intro to Wildlife Identification

Wednesday, May 29, 7:00 pm

If you have ever looked for your bird guide when a strange bird shows up at the feeder, then you have tried your hand at wildlife identification. However, there can be a lot more to it than just looking at color pictures until you find the right bird. Plus … there are over 500 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians ("wildlife") to get to know here in Wisconsin. Join Scott Craven, Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Ecology, for a primer on wildlife identification. You will learn about wildlife diversity in Wisconsin and how to identify small mammals, amphibians, and other species groups. There will be photos, skulls, and stuffed specimens to work with. Learn how to use a "key" and to effectively use a field guide. Books and other helpful aids will be available. Never again ask "I wonder what that was?"!

The Seasonal Round of the Ojibwe

Monday, July 15, 7:00 pm

Explore the 'seasonal round' of the Ojibwe people with Jonathan Gilbert of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. The seasonal round refers to the resources harvested by the Ojibwe people to meet their nutritional, ceremonial, medicinal and economic needs. The Ojibwe people have been called 'seasonally nomadic' people who used to move around from area to area harvesting resources as they became available. In addition to describing the seasonal round of resources, we will explore the methods of harvest, the uses of these resources, the way in which they are managed and attempt to describe the importance of each in the lives of the Ojibwe. Threats to these resources will also be discussed, especially as these resources are vulnerable to climate change.

In the Kitchen with Wild Game
Wednesday, August 19, 7:00 pm

You do not need to be a hunter to find yourself in a position to cook or eat wild game. There may be a hunter in the family, or a friend or neighbor who hunts or you might be invited to a game dinner. Join Scott Craven, Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Ecology, for an introduction to and tips on using wild game in meal preparation. You will learn about the nutritional characteristics of common game meats, how it should be handled in the field and stored to ensure top quality, and about the many ways to prepare game. Cookbooks will be available to review, recipes shared, and you will be able to enjoy a few samples. The emphasis will be on deer (venison) and game birds but other species, as well as fish, will be discussed.

The "All Things Fungi" Festival - August 23 & 24

Activities begin Friday evening and continue through Saturday. Various topics will be covered, including introductory mushroom identification and the medicinal use of fungi. On Saturday morning, participants will collect from the forest of Kemp Station and discuss findings afterwards. Saturday afternoon will feature smaller group breakout sessions on a variety of topics. Persons of all interest levels are welcome. Come for some or stay for all. More information and a detailed schedule will be available in June at www.kemp.wisc.edu/outreach/events.

Kemp Natural Resources Station
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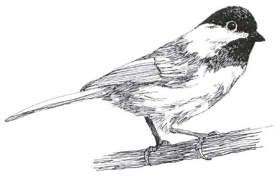
Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*)



One February morning while out for a walk, I heard the "Fee-bee" call of the black-capped chickadee. The combination of the sunshine and this sound immediately gave me a feeling that spring was near. According to Stokes' "A Guide to Bird Behavior," the fee-bee call becomes frequent when chickadees break up their small winter flocks and the call becomes more frequent when breeding males start to define their territories. Because males give this call often, it can sometimes seem like they are answering each other. But how do they know it's time to do this? We have some answers because birdsong has been studied quite extensively. It all begins with the increase in daylight. A study by Japanese scientists, published in the journal of Nature, showed that cells on the surface of the bird's hypothalamus, a portion of the brain, respond to the longer daylight hours. These cells produce a hormone that triggers the release of additional testosterone in males. A University of Washington study learned this additional surge of testosterone in spring enables new brain cells, which are constantly being created, to survive and grow. The result is that the parts of the bird's brain responsible for birdsong double or triple in size. Vocal skills improve and the birds have maximum brain power to defend territory, attract a mate, and raise a brood. The study also showed that after the chicks fledge and fall arrives, the testosterone level in males drop and brain size reduces again, until spring. Yet another wonder of nature! Happy spring!

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