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Friends of the Arboretum NewsLeaf

Contents

1 Native Plant Sale Reflections
2 A Change of Seasons, Welcome New Board Member, Your Donations at Work
3 Luncheon Lectures
4 Autumn Trip, Poem

2026 Native Plant Sale By the Numbers

354 trees and shrubs were sold.

32,681 native flowers, grasses, sedges, and ferns were sold.

More than **150** plant species, sourced from nine nurseries, were offered at the tent sale.

2,368 Pennsylvania sedge plants (a favorite native alternative to conventional lawn) were sold.

433 plant kits were sold, which will provide **9,700** square feet of habitat to support bees, birds, butterflies, and other native fauna.

535 hours were contributed by our volunteers.

20 people joined Friends of the Arboretum on the day of the tent sale.

$139,000 Revenue
$ 92,000 Expenses
$ 47,000 Net income

Friends of the Arboretum builds positive relationships between people and the land through support of the UW–Madison Arboretum



Volunteers gather to prepare for the tent sale.

2026 Native Plant Sale Reflections

This year's Native Plant Sale was a tremendous success! With the help of our volunteers and a lot of teamwork, the combined online and tent sales generated almost $50,000 to help fund our mission and provide important financial support for the UW–Madison Arboretum. (See the sidebar for details.)

Led by Allison Eyring-Green, Judy Cardin, and Birgit Bach, the plant sale committee and volunteers worked hard all year to plan and publicize the sale. The team included new and veteran volunteers, Arboretum staff, our board members, and former plant sale coordinators. We thank local businesses for providing boxes again this year. We're grateful for the time and expertise that nine nurseries put into cultivating over 150 species for many habitats—from woodland to savanna to wetland to prairie. The plants were fantastic this year.



A Green Mulch Kit on its way to a new home.

Most of all, we thank our Native Plant Sale customers. Your patronage provides essential support for the Arboretum and helps increase the ecological diversity of our residential landscapes. Seeing the increasing interest in native plants and pollinators over the past 30 years has been a delight, thanks to you!

A Change of Seasons



Jennifer Sereno

Many Friends mark the turn of the seasons by observing phenological events at the Arboretum. Around the summer solstice, the rare sight of healthy American chestnut trees coming into bloom might be a favorite occurrence, or perhaps it is the way fireflies decorate Curtis Prairie with their own fireworks at twilight around the Fourth of July.

For Friends of the Arboretum, midsummer is a season of change as well. In June, board president Kate VandenBosch passed the baton to Jennifer Sereno, who has served as vice president for the past two years.

In her term as president, Kate enjoyed supporting growth of the Native Plant Sale and witnessing the luncheon lectures and trips programs attract strong participation. "I'm grateful to our board, staff, and volunteers for their creativity and dedication that make these events successful," she said. She valued the opportunity to work with Patrick Bohlen in his early days as the Arboretum director and to acquaint him with the Friends' mission.

"Getting to know Patrick and the Arboretum staff has been a joy," Kate remarked. Another focus of her term has been to update our branding and communications tools. She noted that Jennifer Sereno provided valuable communications expertise to the effort and is well suited to move Friends forward.

Regarding the president's role, Jennifer said, "From conducting research on ecological restoration to strengthening people's relationship with the land, the Arboretum is leading the way. It's an honor to support this work as president of Friends of the Arboretum." Looking forward, she added, "I'm excited to celebrate the incredible contributions of our board and volunteers while exploring new opportunities to advance our efforts."

Thank you Jennifer and Kate for your leadership and service!

Welcome Meredith McGlone



Meredith McGlone

We are so happy to report that Meredith McGlone joined our board of directors in July. Meredith has worked in marketing, strategic communications, and media relations roles at UW–Madison since 2014 and currently serves as communications manager for the Center for Teaching, Learning and Mentoring. She previously worked as a newspaper reporter and editor in upstate New York and Norfolk, Virginia. She lives in the Vilas neighborhood, just across Lake Wingra from the Arboretum. With lots of help from Arboretum programs and the Native Plant Sale, she is slowly figuring out what native plants will thrive in her yard. She enjoys hiking, biking, birding, and kayaking in the Arboretum and hopes to one day see a least bittern. Meredith has two children: Norah, a Madison College student, and Maddy, a UW–Madison graduate now at Penn Carey Law, who wrote her history honors thesis on the founding of the Arboretum. Meredith will replace Andrew Savagian on the board of directors. We express our deepest gratitude for Andrew's important contributions over the past two years to both our luncheon series and our communications strategies. Thank you Andrew, and welcome Meredith!

Your Donations at Work

As our fiscal year comes to an end, we express our gratitude for your contributions to the Friends of the Arboretum Fund at the UW–Madison Foundation. With your help, over $180,000 was raised by more than 1,000 donors to support Arboretum activities.

We had record-setting years for our two fund-raising campaigns! If you donated during the Fill the Hill campaign last October or during the Day of the Badger campaign this spring, you helped to achieve our highest number of participants to date—135 donations, which generated more than $22,000 in support of the Arboretum. The fundraising campaigns are the best way for us to welcome first-time donors, and we are pleased to report that more than 40 first-time donors participated in the combined fund-raising campaigns.

Your contributions are essential to our work in many ways; here are some highlights:

- Free public programs led by expert naturalists for visitors of all ages.
- Our ranger unit and volunteer steward programs, which help maintain our trails and ensures that our areas are well-prepared, safe and accessible for visitors—especially during peak bloom and fall color seasons.
- Citizen science programs such as the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project, Dragonfly Monitoring Project, Fungal Diversity Project and Lake Wingra Chloride Springs Monitoring.
- Restoration work parties, which are in full swing during the growing season to manage invasive species.

Thank you so much for your continued support!

—Erica Lee,
Advancement Manager,
UW–Madison Arboretum

2026–27 Luncheon Lectures

We are pleased to announce another fantastic roster of speakers this year! Seats fill up quickly, so register soon. Luncheon Lectures are held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Arboretum Visitor Center. A buffet lunch, provided by Blue Plate Catering, is followed by an educational presentation. Register online at foamadison.org or send a check to: Friends of the Arboretum, 1207 Seminole Hwy., Madison, WI 53711. The cost of each event is $50. Registration closes 10 days before each event.

Wednesday, September 16, 2026: **The Sauk Prairie and the Origins of the Arboretum** by Curt Meine, senior fellow, Aldo Leopold Foundation and adjunct professor, UW–Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology. A hidden story connects the founding of the Arboretum with the fate of the Sauk Prairie in neighboring Sauk County. The story involves the Ho-Chunk Nation, European settlers and farmers, land, wealth, a secret gift, Aldo Leopold, World War II, and the ironies of history. Hear this fascinating tale of loss, continuity, and renewal and the lessons it holds for the future.

Thursday, October 15, 2026: **Wisconsin's Land Trust Community—Decades of Conservation Impact** by Mike Carlson, M.S., J.D., Executive Director of Gathering Waters. Wisconsin is home to more than 40 nonprofit organizations, known as land trusts, that work with landowners to protect wildlife habitat, water quality, and other conservation values. Gathering Waters is a statewide association for Wisconsin's land trusts. The organization advocates for public funding for conservation, works to strengthen its land trust membership, and promotes the value of land conservation. Learn about the land trust community and the history of this movement in Wisconsin.

Tuesday, November 17, 2026: **Southern Wisconsin's Glacial Landscapes** by Dave Mickelson, Ph.D., professor emeritus, UW–Madison Department of Geoscience and Badger Talks. How has Wisconsin's landscape come to be what it is today? Dr. Mickelson will show that in the past, glaciers covered more than two thirds of Wisconsin and resulted in the glacial landforms visible today in many regions of Wisconsin: moraines, kettles, outwash plains, lake plains, drumlins, eskers, and tunnel channels. And he will explain the geology of the Driftless Area in southwestern Wisconsin which wasn't glaciated—how its steep valleys narrow ridges, where limestone and sandstone abound, are the result of millions of years of stream erosion. Join us to learn why Wisconsin was chosen as the location of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve.

Tuesday, January 12, 2027: **On Fourth Lake: A Social History of Lake Mendota** by Don Sanford, author and former captain for Betty Lou Cruises in Madison. Don spent more than a decade collecting stories, interviewing dozens of past and present Mendota "water rats," and searching for photos that help explain why Lake Mendota holds a special place in the hearts of so many people. His 2015 book, "On Fourth Lake: A Social History of Lake Mendota," takes the reader on a leisurely cruise around Lake Mendota. Enjoy a collection of stories and photographs, which provide a new and unique perspective on the shoreline of Lake Mendota as it's known today.

Tuesday, February 9, 2027: **Wisconsin's Trumpeter Swan Recovery: The Role of Field Research** by Mike Mossman and Lisa Hartman, retired Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Ecologists and Educators. Nesting trumpeter swans were extirpated from Wisconsin in the 19th century. In 1987, the Wisconsin DNR began a recovery effort. Research played a critical role in the precarious early years of the recovery program. Hear a historical account from two field biologists about the program's research into developing and testing methods of rearing and release of trumpeter swans, determining their habitat needs, and monitoring the health and ecology of their slowly growing population.

Wednesday, March 17, 2027: **Damsels and Dragons of Wisconsin** by Dan Jackson, Master Naturalist, educator and record reviewer for the Wisconsin Odonata Survey. Enjoy a fun, informative, and fascinating introduction to the insect order Odonata, which includes damselflies and dragonflies! Dan will discuss the biology and life history of damselflies and dragonflies and offer pointers for identification.

Thursday, April 15, 2027: **Wisconsin's Changing Climate** by Steve Vavrus, Ph.D., Director of the Wisconsin State Climatology Office, Senior Scientist at UW–Madison's Division of Extension and the Nelson Institute. Like the rest of the world, Wisconsin is experiencing climate change and its impacts. The past two decades have been Wisconsin's warmest period on record, and the 2010s were Wisconsin's wettest decade. How can we put these climate change indicators into historical context, and what does the future hold for Wisconsin? Learn about some of the major trends and consequences of climate change and paths toward societal climate resilience.

Wednesday, May 19, 2027: **The UW Urban Canid Project: Living with Red Foxes and Coyotes in Madison** by David Drake, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, UW–Madison and Principal Investigator of the UW Urban Canid Project. Since 2014, Dr. Drake and his collaborators have been live trapping and radio collaring red foxes and coyotes in the greater Madison area. He will discuss urban canid ecology, the research project's methodology, and past and ongoing results of their work. Learn about his recommendations to facilitate a positive human-urban canid coexistence.

Thursday, June 10, 2027: **Wild Neighbors: Photographing Urban Conservation Stories** by Anne Readel, Ph.D., J.D., conservation storyteller. Dr. Readel will delve into how she finds and records compelling conservation stories in urban environments. Through her photography projects on city-dwelling birds, backyard bumblebees, and the American lawn, she will share insights on the photography of urban wildlife and related conservation issues. See how she creates visual stories that highlight the ecological importance and conservation challenges of often-overlooked urban inhabitants!

Kate VandenBosch, NewsLeaf editor
B.C. Brown, NewsLeaf designer

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Friends of the Arboretum
1207 Seminole Highway
Madison, WI 53711–3726
608–890–2555
foamadison.org

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Autumn Trip

Rib Mountain and *Birds in Art* Exhibition, Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum—October 13



Join us for a vibrant fall colors trip while experiencing one of Wisconsin's best views from atop Rib Mountain. The brilliant display of shades of red, yellow, orange and purple will be breathtaking from this sweeping vantage point. Then, soar with us through a guided exploration of the acclaimed *Birds in Art* Exhibition at Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau. The exhibition "celebrates avian wonders through fresh interpretations by some of the world's most talented artists" and reminds us that "with their stunning plumage, beautiful songs, and delightful mannerisms, birds inspire us in endless ways."

For lunch, enjoy a classic fish fry, prime rib French dip, or a mixed green salad followed up by chocolate or cheese cake.

The trip is scheduled from 7:30 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. The trip includes lunch, transportation by comfortable coach, and guided tours of Rib Mountain and the Museum. Bottled water and snacks will be provided on the bus ride. See the Friends website for meal options. Cost $130 per person.



Register online at foamadison.org or send check payable to FOA: Friends of the Arboretum, 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison WI 53711.

Leisure

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep and cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

–William H. Davies