

My Healthy Wetlands

Resources for wetland landowners

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WWA envisions a state where wetlands are healthy and plentiful and support ecological and societal needs and where citizens care for, appreciate, and interact with these natural treasures.



Painting by Judi Ekholm

WWA Programs

Defending Wetland Laws

- Tracking and responding to state & federal wetland bills, issues
- Intervening in precedent-setting policies or projects (e.g., Bergstrom wetland, West Bend wetlands)
- Responding to requests for assistance on local wetland protection issues from communities and individuals



WWA Programs

Supporting Local Wetland Conservation

- Collaborating with local governments (county planning, zoning and land conservation staff)
- Developing publications to assist local governments
 - *Land Use and Wetlands Series*
- Assisting lake and watershed advocates
 - Improve local wetland decision-making
 - Increase funding opportunities for wetland-related lake projects.



WWA Programs

Training and Wetland Information Sharing

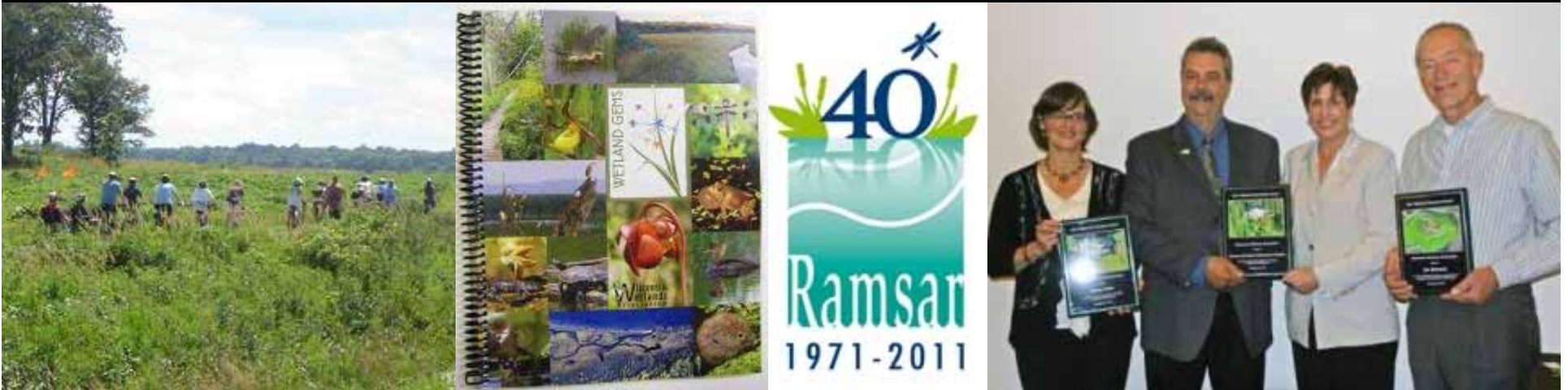
- Annual Wetlands Conference
- Workshops for targeted audiences
- Wetland Summits



WWA Programs

Promoting, Enjoying, and Celebrating Wetlands

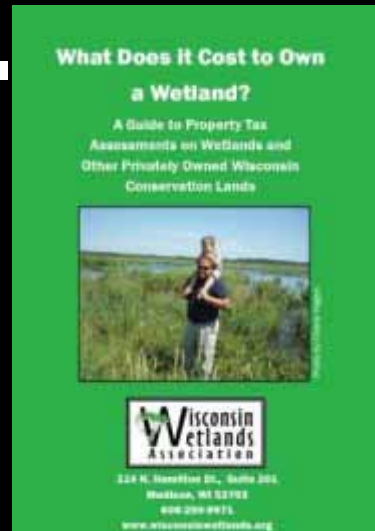
- Wetland Field Trip Series
- *Wetlands Awards* for recognizing local wetland heroes
- *Wetland Gems*™
- Work to designate more *Wetlands of International Importance*



WWA Publications



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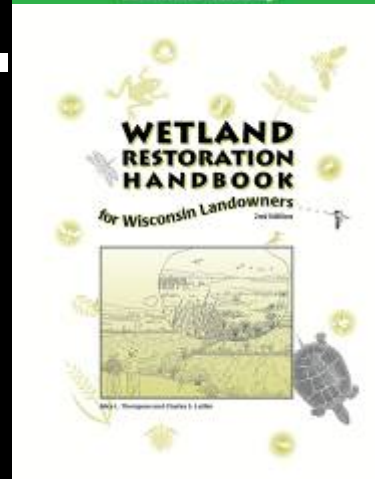


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- What Does it Cost to Own a Wetland?



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- Wetland Restoration Handbook for Wisconsin Landowners

New Outreach Program

- 75% of Wisconsin's wetlands are in private ownership.
- As much as 85% of Wisconsin's potentially restorable wetlands are in private ownership. (i.e., areas with hydric soil that are not currently mapped as a wetland and that have a current land use compatible with restoration)

Private landowners are a key audience to reach with information and tools about wetland protection and management.

My Healthy Wetlands

Do you own wetlands?

Do you *think* you might own wetlands?

Do you know what *kind* of wetlands you own?

What are you doing to *care* for your wetlands?
(management, restoration, monitoring)

How can we help??



My Healthy Wetlands

2012: Needs Assessment of Programs and Resources to Encourage Private Wetland Restoration and Management



My Healthy Wetlands

Talking with partners:

- Wisconsin Lakes Partnership
- Wisconsin Woodland Landowners Association
- Aldo Leopold Foundation & *My Wisconsin Woods* Partners
- Gathering Waters Conservancy & Lake Michigan Shorelands Alliance Member Land Trusts
- UW-Extension
- USFWS Partners for Fish & Wildlife
- USDA-NRCS
- Ducks Unlimited
- ...and many, many more



My Healthy Wetlands

Build on good existing training opportunities

- Wisconsin Lakes Partnership conferences & events
- Lake Association regional meetings
- Wisconsin Woodland Landowners Association conferences
- Learn About Your Land workshop series
- Others?





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Restoring Wetlands

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Contact Us!



Western Chorus Frog

Wisconsin Wetlands Association

222 S. Hamilton St. #1 Madison, WI 53703 (608) 250-9971

Preserving Wisconsin's Wetland Heritage

My Healthy Wetlands

Did you know that 75% of Wisconsin's remaining wetlands are in private ownership?

Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA) understands that private landowners care about their land and want to do right by it. We have long recognized the importance of private landowners. Nobody knows a piece of land quite like the person who owns it and spends time on it regularly. Many landowners, however, want to know more about how best to care for their land. WWA wants to help wetland landowners around Wisconsin be the best wetland stewards they can be.



We believe that, with the right information and tools, landowners will not only develop a sense of pride in the importance of the resources for which they are stewards, but will also take active responsibility for managing and restoring their wetlands. Among WWA's long term goals are reduced wetland destruction and improved wetland quantity and quality across the state. Supporting private landowners is a key strategy for accomplishing these goals.

This suite of webpages is intended to be a clearinghouse of resources for private wetland landowners to better know and understand the wetlands they own and to care for them using the best practices and approaches.

A disclaimer: Many of the resources listed in this clearinghouse are older or were developed for other parts of the country. As such, some of the information in these resources may not reflect the latest wetland restoration and management science and techniques or discuss approaches that may not be appropriate for Wisconsin. We do our best to highlight the strengths of each resource in the description. We also welcome

Wisconsinwetlands.org/MyHealthyWetlands.htm



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Click on one of the links below to access a list of resources on that topic:

- [Identifying Wetlands](#)
- [Protecting Wetlands](#)
- [Enjoying Wetlands](#)
- [Managing Wetlands](#)
- [Restoring Wetlands](#)
- [Promoting Wetland Wildlife Habitat](#)
- [Understanding Wetland Regulations & Property Tax Assessments on Wetlands](#)
- [Funding Wetland Work](#)
- [Other Resources](#)

Wisconsinwetlands.org/MyHealthyWetlands.htm

Identifying Wetlands

<p><u>Wisconsin's Wetlands: A Guide</u></p> <p>Wisconsin Wetlands Association</p>	<p>This four-page, full-color guide written and produced by Wisconsin Wetlands Association in 2009 includes a photograph and written description of the twelve major wetland types found in Wisconsin. This is a very good starting document when you are trying to determine what type of wetland you may have on your land.</p>
<p><u>Locating Wetlands</u></p> <p>Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources</p>	<p>Wetlands are not always obvious. Wisconsin has more than a dozen different types and some may be dry for most or all of the year. But all wetlands are protected by law and permits are required before you build on wetlands or otherwise affect them. The Wisconsin DNR collaborated with the Wisconsin REALTORS® Association, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and government organizations to create this set of tools to help landowners identify wetlands on their property.</p>
<p><u>Arboretum Leaflets</u></p> <p>UW Madison Arboretum</p>	<p>The aim of these Arboretum Leaflets is to summarize the most important findings from research conducted at the UW Arboretum (or in support of its mission) for a broad public audience. Many of these leaflets are about wetlands. For example, "Why Are Wetlands So Valuable" (Leaflet #10) and "Demystifying Fens" (Leaflet #17).</p>
<p><u>Managing Your Wetlands</u></p> <p>USDA and Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service's National Learning Center for Private Forest and Range Landowners</p>	<p>This website introduces landowners to the many facets of wetlands ecology and management. The content (developed in 2007 by West Virginia University) can provide landowners with knowledge to protect and utilize wetlands. Among the goals of this module are to provide landowners and managers with a basic appreciation of wetland types, uses, functions, and values; a solid understanding of wetland hydrology, soils, and vegetation; and an overview of the ecology and status of different wetland types.</p>
<p><u>Managing Your Wooded Wetland</u></p>	<p>This guide, produced in 1993 by the Minnesota Department of</p>

Resources for Shoreland Owners

<p><u>Michigan Natural Shorelines Partnership</u></p> <p>Variety of partners</p>	<p>The objectives of the Michigan Natural Shorelines Partnership are to train contractors and landscape professionals about shoreline technologies and bioengineered erosion control; educate Michigan property owners about natural shorelines and technologies that benefit lake ecosystems; research, demonstrate, and develop natural shoreline technologies that benefit lake ecosystems; and encourage local and state policies in Michigan that promote natural shoreline management. Of particular interest to Wisconsin landowners may be the library, which offers publications and links to various guides for natural shoreline management.</p>
<p><u>Natural Shoreline Landscapes on Michigan's Inland Lakes, Guidebook for Property Owners</u></p> <p>MNSP & Michigan State University Extension</p>	<p>This 2011 publication is a guidebook for property owners interested in natural landscapes on Michigan's inland lakes. The book promotes the use of natural vegetation to protect property that fronts bays, streams and lakes, mimicking the wilderness of an undeveloped shoreline to preserve the natural habitat of the lakes' ecosystem and provide habitat for rare fish and wildlife.</p>
<p><u>Natural Shorelines for Inland Lakes (pdf)</u></p> <p>Michigan Department of Environmental (DEQ) and Michigan Sea Grant</p>	<p>This pamphlet provides basic information about what natural shoreline landscaping is, why it can benefit a property owner and a lake, and how landowners can incorporate natural shoreline landscaping on their property.</p>
<p><u>Preserving Wetlands: Shoreland Best Management Practices</u></p> <p>Minnesota Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources</p>	<p>Best Management Practices (BMPs) are actions people can take to reduce their impact on the environment. This fact sheet describes BMPs Minnesota landowners can adopt on their shoreland property to help protect and preserve water quality. In many cases, the best management for shorelands may be retaining the natural characteristics of private property.</p>

My Healthy Wetlands

Limitations of available resources:

- Dated – most are not current (1990s), don't reflect current science & techniques
- From outside Wisconsin (WA, MD, etc.)



My Healthy Wetlands

Talking with landowners

- *What do landowners need – what questions do you have?*
 - Information
 - Training
 - Support
 - Technical assistance
 - Other??
- What's the best way to get you this information?



I want to hear from
YOU!!



My Healthy Wetlands

Do you own wetlands?

Do you *think* you might own wetlands?

Do you know what *kind* of wetlands you own?

Are you *doing* anything with your wetlands?
(management, restoration, monitoring)

How can we help??



My Healthy Woods

A HANDBOOK FOR FAMILY WOODLAND OWNERS IN SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN

My Healthy Woods

A HANDBOOK FOR FAMILY WOODLAND OWNERS

managing woods in
Southwest Wisconsin



A publication of the Aldo Leopold Foundation
and the American Forest Foundation

Model:

My Healthy Woods Handbook

- Aldo Leopold Foundation
- American Forest Foundation



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Oak Savanna

What is it?

Oak savannas are defined by having scattered oak trees that are "open-grown" (broad spreading branches). There is typically a lot of sunlight that reaches the ground (50 percent or more). The flowers and shrubs growing beneath these open-grown trees can be unique to this level of partial shade.

What maintained it?

Fire reduced the number and species of trees in this plant community. Bur oak, with its corky bark, is better insulated from the affects of fire.

Historically, large mammals such as elk played a role in browsing on shrubs and young trees, helping maintain openness.

Where is it found?

This plant community historically was extremely widespread in Southwest Wisconsin, covering nearly 7 million acres. It was found on a range of soil moisture types (dry, dry-mesic, mesic and wet-mesic). Savannas on the more moist soils were converted to other land uses (likely agriculture) or quickly grew up to

more closed canopy woods in the absence of fire.

How would I recognize it?

Today, this plant community is very uncommon. A good place to look is on the south or west slope of a hill. The "savanna trees" are the most obvious clue. Look for large oak trees (bur and white oak) that have large, horizontally outstretched branches. If you find one, the neighboring trees are almost certainly much younger. This competition from other trees can result in the savanna tree's lower branches dying from a lack of sunlight.

What more common plants can I find in savannas?

Tall anemone, shooting star, woodland boneset, late horse gentian, leadplant, and little bluestem.



Prairie skink



Savanna tree

John Gitt



Little bluestem

What unique animals can I find in savannas?

Savannas provide a unique habitat for some animals. Brown thrasher, red-headed woodpecker, field sparrow, Blanding's turtle, bullsnake, northern prairie skink, ornate box turtle, prairie racerunner, prairie ringneck snake, timber rattlesnake, Franklin's ground squirrel, and woodland vole all make their homes in savannas.



Bur oaks leaves have a pair of deep indentations that makes them distinctive. Compare with white oak (p. 18).

BUR OAK

INVADER

Invasive Plant Profile: Garlic Mustard

Why is it a problem?

Garlic mustard grows well in cool temperatures, so it is actively growing before many native plants. It forms dense stands, out-competing wildflowers and even tree seedlings—it can out-compete almost any native plant in your woods. And the seeds survive in the soil for up to seven years, so multiple years of control are needed to exhaust the seeds in the soil.



Seed pods hold hundreds of tiny seeds that are easily transported by people and animals.

stalk grows out of the cluster of leaves on the ground. The flowers are very small (1/4" in diameter) with four white petals. By May or June, the petals have fallen off and the seed pods are developing and getting longer, which usually mature by July. After seed production, the plant has completed its life cycle and dies. The dead stems remain standing for the rest of the year and shed seeds. All green parts of the plant have a distinctive garlic odor when crushed.

Below, second-year garlic mustard plants about to flower.



Jeff Matlin

Where does it grow?

It grows best in slight to heavy shade. It will grow on almost any soil type, but spreads most quickly in moist, rich soils.

How does it spread?

The seeds are small and easily attach to any wet or muddy surface, such as boots, hooves (deer or horse), animal fur, mower decks, logging equipment, tires, etc. Populations usually start along a trail, roadside, deer path, or logging road.

How do I control it?

HAND-PULLING – Small garlic mustard infestations can be controlled with hand-pulling. Be sure to pull out the entire root because roots left in the ground can resprout and produce seeds. Plants with mature seed pods should be bagged and removed from the woods.

HERBICIDE – Large infestations are best controlled by spraying with the herbicide glyphosate (the active ingredient under many trade names) mixed with water to make a solution of 1.5-2% active ingredient. Apply herbicide in early spring or late fall when native plants are not actively growing and will not be harmed.



Treating a large patch of garlic mustard with herbicide

Woodland Wisdom: Your shoes had better be clean!

Growing up, you may have heard your mother or father yell this to you as you ran into the house for dinner. Now, you need to yell it to friends, hunters, loggers, and hikers before they enter your woods. And if you have invasive plants in your woods, clean your boots off when you leave, too. Boots, tires, hooves are all capable of carrying invasive plant seeds from one place to another, planting them in your woods and elsewhere.

My Healthy Wetlands

Proposed project:

My Healthy Wetlands: A Handbook for Wetland Landowners in Northeast Wisconsin

- Core handbook information is statewide
- Some key information is region-specific
- First edition for NE Wisconsin, subsequent editions for other regions to follow as partnerships, funding allow