

2023 SPRING/SUMMER

THE CANOPY

The Official Seno K/RLT Conservancy
Newsletter



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SENO K/RLT CONSERVANCY

**"FOSTERING A MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE LAND THE WATER
AND THE PEOPLE."**

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SEEDING THE FUTURE

WINTER AND SPRING AT SENO K/RLT CONSERVANCY

Many a mild winter day were spent at the Seno Woodland Center this year. While we waited for the weather to warm up, we took advantage of our recently burned prairies to do some broadcast seeding with the helping hands of many wonderful volunteers. As we slide into summer we are starting to look and see what comes up after our supplemental seeding with growing excitement!

We joined Girls Inc. for their annual G.E.M.S Conference in January and hosted a variety of students for field trips, including our new Winter Wildlife program where students explored Seno Woodland Center to learn all about the signs of life animals leave behind in the colder months.

We kicked off the third annual year of our Maple Sugaring family program in early March and enjoyed seeing both new and familiar faces! We're cooking up some fun ideas for 2024, and hope to see some of you then for this sweet treat of a program.

As the weather warmed we started on some other projects, tracking and monitoring oak wilt, repairing our bog bridge, and keeping the trails ready for the coming spring.

Seno K/RLT hosted local farmer Charlie Tennesen in April for a fun and delicious workshop on heritage wheat and breadmaking. Charlie taught participants about Anarchy Acres, his sustainable farm in Pleasant Prairie, and how he revived historic heirloom varieties of Wisconsin wheat. This, of course, was accompanied by some delicious hands-on demonstrations! Seno

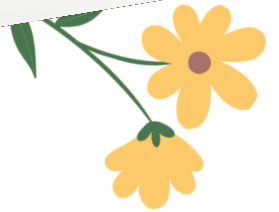
K/RLT Conservancy volunteers have been working hard on clearing buckthorn from the area south of the tamarack bog. You'll note the area has a much improved view! In May and June our Woodland Center saw many new faces for field trips and workshops alike. Seno K/RLT board and staff paid visits to local landowners throughout the first half of 2023 to provide information and resources on conservation easements. In June we gathered up eggs and caterpillars with Monarch Rearing Workshop participants and helped them assemble rearing boxes to take home. All participants learned about the Monarch's unique migration and life cycle, and how to rear their monarchs until the end of summer when they begin their long journey South.

We are looking forward to summer and already planning for a busy fall. We continue to be excited about the future of Seno K/RLT and continue to look forward to many exciting new projects and events. We hope you'll continue to support and join us as we work towards a bright future for conservation in Southeast Wisconsin!





SPRING



BATS JUST THE WAY IT IS

Wisconsin's Native Bats & How You Can Help Them!

The US Fish & Wildlife Service has changed the status of the Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) to endangered as of March of this year. This change in designation is largely due to white-nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has spread throughout the obligate cave-dwelling bats in Wisconsin. White-nose syndrome has had a dramatic effect on bat populations as a whole and has contributed to the decline in Northern long-eared bat, big brown bat, little brown bat, and tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) populations most drastically out of the 8 species of native Wisconsin bats. Little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*) and big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*) are the most commonly sighted. Even though our little brown bat friends who often make homes in our attics and other areas are common, they are also now designated as a threatened species within the state.

Landowners that have roost sites are key to assisting with the protection of bats, by protecting critical roosting site habitats and limiting disturbances to sites of hibernation. These sites where bats hibernate are called hibernacula, and if stumbled into in winter those intruding can wind up waking bats from torpor. Bats in torpor reduce their metabolism and body temperature to extremely low levels that require far less energy. Interrupting torpor costs them some of that precious energy needed to get the bats through until spring. This is another way that the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome has devastated bat populations across North America, causing bats to interrupt torpor and burn through the fat and energy reserves they need, on top of injuries directly from fungal infection.



Northern Long-eared Bat (Photo credit: Andrea Schuhmann)



Tricolored bat with white-nose syndrome.
(Photo Credit: Gabrielle Gaeter/NCWR)

Continued on Page 4...

BATS JUST THE WAY IT IS (CONT.)



A variety of types of bat houses (Credit: WI DNR)



A little brown bat hanging upside down in a cave.
Credit: Ann Froschauer, USFWS

Bat habitat use often changes over the course of the year, and varies depending on whether the bats are reproducing females or not, but many of the native bats in Wisconsin are forest-dwelling bats. Little brown bats and big brown bats commonly roost in human-made structures but can also be found in the summer under tree bark, in rock crevices, and in tree hollows. They prefer mature old-growth forests for roosting and share this preference with many of the other native bat species of Wisconsin. Dead trees, called snags, are often a prime choice for roosts with their peeling bark and other hollow crevices. In winter bats move to caves, cliffsides, and mines to hibernate. As always there are exceptions though! Eastern red bats (*Lasiurus borealis*), for example, burrow into leaf litter for the winter. During these journeys between roosts, edge habitat (areas where woodlands and open prairies or fields meet) is integral. Not only does edge habitat allow for safer travel as it protects them from predators and wind, but such habitat also often has an abundance of food. In fact, woodland edge habitat is the preferred habitat for the tricolored bat, especially if near a body of water.

Looking to help your local native bat populations? If you own valuable bat habitat consider installing bat houses. For multiple resources on how to construct a bat house on your own, or where to obtain one, as well as the best places to install them on your property you can visit the Wisconsin DNR website at:

dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/Bathouse

You can also join Wisconsin's Official Bat Monitoring Program through the Wisconsin Bat program and collect data as a citizen-scientist! Learn more about the program at:

wiatri.net/inventory/bats/



Cartoon by Tom Toles, Washington Post

MARSHES & BOGS & FENS! OH MY!

DO YOU KNOW YOUR WETLANDS?

Wetlands are an essential part of our planet's ecosystem, providing habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species. However, not all wetlands are the same. There are different types of wetlands, each with unique characteristics and ecological functions. You may hear people toss around the words marsh, bog, and swamp, interchangeably, but these three types of wetland ecosystems are all different!

BOGS

Bogs are wetlands that are characterized by their acidic nutrient-poor soil. They are typically dominated by sphagnum mosses. Bogs are able to preserve organic matter, such as dead plants and animals, for thousands of years. This organic matter accumulates over time and forms peat, which is a type of soil that can store large amounts of carbon. In fact, bogs are estimated to store more carbon per unit area than any other ecosystem on

Earth! Because of their unique nutrient-poor soil conditions, bogs are home to a variety of specialized plant and animal species, including carnivorous plants.

Carnivorous plants have adapted to thrive in these nutrient-deficient environments via insects and other small organisms rather than absorbing nutrients through the soil like other plants! Southeast Wisconsin is home to a few bogs, including the Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area and portions of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.



Pitcher plants & Sphagnum Moss
(Photo Credit user psweet, iNaturalist)



Frozen sphagnum moss in Seno Woodland Center's bog winter
(Photo Credit John Bolt, iNaturalist)

FENS

Fens share a lot in common with bogs, in that they are also nutrient-poor wetlands. However, unlike bogs, fens have a neutral or alkaline pH and are often fed by groundwater or surface water. Fens are often characterized by their diverse plant communities, which can include sedges, grasses, and wildflowers.

Continued on Page 5...

BOGS & FENS & SWAMPS! OH MY! (CONT.)



Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area

SENO WOODLAND CENTER'S TAMARACK BOG

Seno K/RLT Conservancy is lucky to protect a 27-acre tamarack bog at our Seno Woodland Management Center location. But based on what we've just covered you may be thinking, "Hold on, tamarack trees would make that a swamp!". Seno Woodland Center's bog is a unique type of ecological community called a Relict Bog. These are semi-open wetlands dominated by tamaracks and shrubs at the very southern range limit for most of the species present and supported by such habitat. Due to this it's likely that the impacts of climate change in our region will have a profound effect on our bog in the very near future. We are beginning to think about how to implement climate adaptation strategies into management practices to assist in managing these impacts. We hope your newfound knowledge inspires you to explore not only our Woodland Center's bog but other wetland habitats in southeast Wisconsin.

MARSHES

Marshes are wetlands that are characterized by their nutrient-rich soil and shallow water. They can be made up of both freshwater and saltwater environments and are often dominated by grasses, reeds, and cattails rather than woody plants. Marshes are important habitats for a wide range of bird species, including herons, egrets, and ducks. They also provide important ecosystem services, such as helping with water filtration and controlling flooding. Marshes are abundant in southeast Wisconsin, with the Horicon Marsh being one of the largest freshwater marshes in the United States!

SWAMPS

Where marshes are dominated by herbaceous plants species, swamps are largely home to dense woody vegetation and standing water. They are typically found in low-lying areas and can be either freshwater or saltwater.



Explorers of our Seno Woodland Center Tamarack Bog

UPCOMING EVENTS



NRF Field Trip: Paddle The Root River - September 30th

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Racine, WI (Location Provided with Registration)
Registration through the NRF website. \$23/Adult, \$13/Child. Trip #242



Autumn Open House - October 7th

2:00 PM - 6:00 PM at Seno Woodland Center - Free to attend!
Live music, trail rides, food, drink, vendors, and the vibrant fall colors.
More information coming soon!



Boot Scootin' Brews - Line Dance Fundraiser- October 27th

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM at Seno Woodland Center - \$15 Registration
Beginner, Intermediate, and Open Dance sessions!
More information & registration coming soon!



VISIT OUR WEBSITE'S EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS PAGES & FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR DETAILS AND OTHER UPCOMING WORKSHOPS & EVENTS!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Environmental Education Volunteers

Help run educational programs both at our Seno Woodland Center in Burlington and throughout Racine and Kenosha counties. 2-4 hours per program + training days.

Contact Nancy Carlson at education@senokrlt.org for details

Board Members

Help direct and grow Seno K/RLT Conservancy! Board members are expected to participate in 6 meetings annually & serve on a committee. If you have an interest and experience in natural habitat management, fundraising, natural resources education, or marketing we'd love to have your expertise!

Contact Stacy at stacy@senokrlt.org for more details & information

VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

WISHLIST

- Gas Cards
- Picnic Tables
- Leopold Benches
- Firewood
- Bird Houses
- Hand Lens Magnifying Glasses
- Acrylic Paints
- Paint Brushes
- Markers
- Painter's Tape
- Marbles
- Plastic Storage bins
- Printing Paper
- Rubber Bands
- Sturdy Tote Bags
- Ziplock Bags
- Small Baskets
- Apple Cider Press

To make a donation please contact Mark Lesko
mark_lesko@icloud.com
262-210-1424

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR EXTRA GENEROUS DONORS & SUPPORTERS:

- | | |
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**The LUMW Foundation
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BECOME A MEMBER OR MAKE A DONATION

Every donation towards Seno K/RLT Conservancy is used to support our mission of providing environmental education, promoting sustainable management of forests, wetlands, prairies, and wildlife, and opportunities for permanent land preservation. We are a registered 501(c)3 non-profit education organization and land trust. All dues and donations are tax-deductible under IRS rules.

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Name:(s): _____
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- Membership Level (Please check one)
- Individual\$25
 - Friend of Seno \$50
 - Forestry Friend\$100
 - Land Protector\$500
 - Patron \$1000
 - Benefactor\$5000
 - Other amount\$

All dues and donations are tax-deductible under IRS rules.

We also accept donations via our website: senokrlt.org/donate--membership

Make your check payable to Seno K/RLT Conservancy and send with this form to:

Seno K/RLT Conservancy
 3606 Dyer Lake Road
 Burlington, WI 53105



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